

MEMORIES OF NEW BERN

THURMAN E. BROCK

INTERVIEW 913

This is Dorothy Richardson representing the Memories of New Bern Committee. My number is 900. I am interviewing Dr. Thurman Brock, interview number 913. This interview is being conducted on February 10, 1993. We are at 3403 Windsor, New Bern, North Carolina.

DOROTHY RICHARDSON: Dr. Brock, could you fill us in on your background, where you're from, your parents, your training, your general experience.

DR. BROCK: I'm originally from Cumberland County North Carolina of which Fayetteville is the county seat. I'm a graduate of the Cumberland County School System. My baccalaureate degree I received from North Carolina State University. My master's degree from East Carolina University, and my doctorate degree, back at NC State University. I taught in the public schools for five years in Lenoir County. After teaching there for five years, was employed by Mr. R. L. Pugh, Superintendent of Schools in Craven County, to be the first Director of Vocational Education for the Craven County School System.

DR: What did that entail?

DR. BROCK: The Director of Vocational Education, of which we didn't have that much at the time, entailed the developing of an expanded vocational education program as well as the practical arts.

When I came to Craven County, they only had vocational agriculture, home economics, and one industrial arts teacher. Also, at the same time I was employed to do this for the county school system, Superintendent Pugh also wanted me to coordinate and develop an adult education program in cooperation with the Lenoir County Industrial

Education Center in Kinston.

DR: Do you remember how many schools were involved in Craven County at that time? What year was that?

DR. BROCK: I came to Craven County on August 15, 1961. The number of schools in the county at that time, I was only working with the high school program and junior high, and at that time, if my memory serves correctly, we had the high school in Havelock: one in Vanceboro, which was called Farm Life High School; one in Dover; and one in Jasper community. I believe that's all the high schools that we had. But this was during the time of racial segregation, so we also had a black high school in the Fort Barnwell area which was called Newbold High School.

DR: Did many students participate in this training in your classes? Did you have many students?

DR. BROCK: Are you referring to the high school program or the adult education?

DR: High school.

DR. BROCK: Yes, there were. Of course, I worked with the teaching faculty and was not that much involved with the students, but I do not remember any problem whatsoever with having adequate numbers of students to participate in those programs as we began to expand them.

DR: Mr. Pugh was a far thinking man and he realized the need for this other, didn't he?

DR. BROCK: Yes he did. Not only for the need of adult education but also for the need for an expanded vocational education program

in the public schools. You see, Craven County was the first public school system in the eastern part of the state, except for the Wilmington-New Hanover school system, to hire a director of vocational education. There were only four or five of us in the entire state of North Carolina at that time. The others were located in your larger cities like Charlotte, Winston-Salem, Greensboro, and Raleigh, and I believe Asheville had a director.

DR: Have you noticed that eastern North Carolina, this wouldn't be a blanket statement, but they've been a little ahead of their time in their planning to some extent?

DR. BROCK: I'm not sure I understand your question.

DR: The fact that these small communities still were pushing for better training for the students and for the community.

DR. BROCK: Yes. I would say that Mr. Pugh, Bob Pugh, as you've already mentioned, was a very forward thinking individual in terms of education. He should have been our state superintendent. But the problem that Mr. Pugh had was that he was marching ahead of the troops so far that they couldn't keep up with him. It was very difficult for the rest of the county and the state, this part of the state, to comprehend the vision that he had, which is a shame because I think the public school element has developed quite well. Craven County and the city of New Bern have merged and have, I think, a superior system as far as they go in this day and time; certainly from the brick and mortar standpoint, and they have very capable people employed to work in the system. However, from the community college side, Craven County

was one of the last counties in this region of the state to get an institution.

DR: Tell us the steps. That was interesting to me, the steps. They were baby steps, but they were there.

DR. BROCK: Establishing a community college in Craven County took a long time. New Bern was picked early on by the Carlisle Commission Report to be the home for a state supported community college. However, this institution began, actually the first classes were held in either 1962 or 1963 in the county school buildings. I believe the Brinson Memorial School was one of the first. At that time we did not have access to the buildings in the city of New Bern, because at that time we're also two separate school units.

DR: How did it start? The first step. Were the businesses interested? How did it originate?

DR. BROCK: Mr. Pugh appointed a committee, an advisory committee. It consisted of business and community leaders to work with me. And, of course, you understand that at this time I'm wearing two hats; one to work with the public school system, and then during the evening hours and late afternoon hours I would wear the other hat working with the adult population.

DR: And that was teaching the literacy program?

DR. BROCK: Literacy, high school completion, but we did not do that early on. Our first classes were those designed to improve people already employed; for example, Riverside Iron Works, I believe Cyril Edwards was the owner at that time, and Carolina Telephone. Both these

companies, Riverside Iron Works and Carolina Telephone were the first two that come to mind that had employees they wanted to take courses in blue print reading and also in basic electronics, which electronics was a new and coming phenomenon on the industrial side. We really began as a branch of Lenoir Industrial Education Center. That began with our own unit in 1965. But you see, we began this process in 1961.

DR: When Mr. Pugh appointed...

DR. BROCK: That advisory committee.

DR: Do you remember any of the people who were on that committee?

DR. BROCK: Yes. Lynn Kelso an insurance executive who was a former Marine and "Pop" Beasley, they were partners and they operated an insurance and real estate business. Lynn Kelso was our first chairman of the group. Evelyn Haire, she and her husband Billy operated Coastal Electronics, and still do. Don Deichmann who was the owner of Trent Olds and Cadillac dealership on highway 70E. Albert Salem from Havelock who was an auto dealer and a New Bernian. A Mrs. Weatherington from Vanceboro was on the committee and there was a black gentleman from Cove City by the name of Dawson. I'd have to check my records to be sure of all those names, but these names come to me.

DR: That's a pretty well rounded group.

DR. BROCK: Yes, it's a cross section. You see, Craven County had Cherry Point which is a very sophisticated operation. Actually, it's an airplane garage that they have where they repair airplanes for the Navy and the Marine Corps.

DR: I never thought of it that way.

DR. BROCK: That's what it is. It's an airplane garage. Of course they have the other side. The air force of the Marine Corps is what we have at Cherry Point. Most of the other industry at that time, we're talking about the early sixties, was not that much in New Bern and Craven County, so I'd say this advisory committee was a good representation of the community.

DR: What was their thinking?

DR. BROCK: Their thinking was that they wanted a community college like the other communities had. They were developing one in Kinston and in Goldsboro, Greenville was beginning to develop one, and Jacksonville, and Washington. They were all around us. Even Pamlico County had secured a unit.

DR: In Washington, North Carolina?

DR. BROCK: Yes. And Morehead City. So we're surrounded by those institutions; but yet, Craven is the youngest of those institutions.

DR: I'm surprised.

DR. BROCK: Well, it was not Mr. Pugh's wishes that it be that way, but it just took time to motivate the people.

DR: And to educate them to the need.

DR. BROCK: That's right. We began operating on July 1, 1965 as a unit of Lenoir Community College it had become at that time; in fact, on that date I believe.

DR: Wonder if we had many people from this area going there for training.

DR. BROCK: Oh yes. Yes. You had more in the late sixties, I'd

say up until probably 1970 or '71, you probably had more students enrolled in Lenoir Community College from Craven County than you had in the Craven institution. There's a fundamental basic reason for that. They had the name "college". It was Lenoir Community College and we were Craven Technical Institute and people did not understand technical institute, but college they understood. We've had students drive from Morehead City to Kinston to take a one year program in welding because it was called Lenoir Community College and Morehead City was Carteret Technical Institute. I know for a fact that Carteret Technical Institute had better facilities and a better program than Lenoir did, but they didn't have the word "college" in their name and that made a difference.

DR: The image.

DR. BROCK: The image.

DR: From Mr. Pugh's group, what happened?

DR. BROCK: We had to conduct a number of surveys and get letters of support. There was a committee of the state board of education that was responsible for the operation of the community college system, which was begun under the name "community college" under Governor Terry Sanford's tenure. We had to submit a request, and of course, Lenoir was very supportive. Dan Wise who was the first president, and Ben Fountain who was the second president, were very supportive of the efforts to establish our own institution here.

DR: How many students did you have in your little nucleus there? You did have nursing too, didn't you?

DR. BROCK: Practical nursing is the oldest program at the college. I don't remember the enrollment that we had at the beginning. I would say probably eighteen or twenty students. It was a one calendar year program of practical nursing. But that program was operated in the old St. Luke Hospital building in New Bern because Craven County had built a new hospital facility and we were allowed to use the top floor in that building.

DR: Were you still with the county schools?

DR. BROCK: Momentarily. I was with the county schools until October 15, 1964. I became an employee of Lenoir Community College but I was to remain in Craven County to coordinate the adult education classes and to supervise the practical nursing program. My title was Director of Extension for Craven County. Of course Lenoir, as well as a number of other original community colleges and technical institutes, did serve counties that surrounded them that did not have an institution in the early days. So that's not unusual. Asheville probably had more counties to serve and more extension units than any of the other older institutions because of the geography of the state.

Let's see, now where was I. I began, as I stated earlier, in October 15, 1964 with Lenoir Community College. The following July 1, which would have been 1965, we were able to establish our own independent extension unit. There were a series of steps that you could follow in establishing a new institution to become a part of the community college system. Unfortunately, I guess, Craven County had to follow each of those slow, tedious steps all the way to the community college

level. So we operated from July 1, 1965 until April, I believe it was, of 1968 as a unit of Lenoir. Then from 1968, I believe, and this is on the records; but it was in the early seventies, like '71 or '72, from 1968 to 1971 or '72, we operated as Craven Technical Institute and then we were allowed to use the title community college. Also in 1971, we occupied the permanent campus on what was then called Racetrack Road, it's now called South Glenburnie.

DR: To go back, Dr. Brock, the support in the community, how did you gain the support in the community to get firmly established?

DR. BROCK: Well, we had key citizens in the community which came directly from that advisory committee. In 1968 when we established our own technical institute, we were then eligible to have our own board of trustees which were twelve in number. Four were nominated by the governor; four were elected by the school boards, which in our case, at that time there were two systems, the Craven County and the New Bern City, so they had to do this election jointly; and the county commissioners elected four.

DR: Was Charles Barker on the first one?

DR. BROCK: Yes. Yes. Coming to this charter board, we had Lynn Kelso, Albert Salem, and we had Evelyn Haire. I believe that's all the advisory committee members that we had on the charter board.

DR: How was it received in the community, the publicity? Did you get support?

DR. BROCK: We had support and then we had a lot of non-support, or negative support. I really did not feel like that the community

was behind us until we occupied the new campus building.

DR: You weren't really perceived as...

DR. BROCK: As being a viable education agency. Although, neighboring communities like Kinston and Jacksonville and some of the others in the Piedmont area of the state were off and running and had been for a dozen years, we still had a struggle. But we were in leased facilities. I know that when we were in the what's now called the Harvey Mansion Restaurant, it was a classroom building, (we moved there from the St. Luke's building because we were in the way. They were using that for other county offices.), people said that it was a place for unwed mothers and that type of thing. It was difficult to find quality employees who wanted to work with you, because they saw it as a temporary fly by night organization that wouldn't last.

DR: And you had such good people pushing it.

DR. BROCK: We had good people pushing it, but you also had people that were not necessarily helping you and they were not necessarily hurting you either, but were just...

DR: ()

DR. BROCK: Right. I don't mean this in a negative way, and maybe it is, but I have always observed Craven County to be what I call a "me too" community. Let me explain what I mean by that. They did not want a community college until they had one in Kinston, Jacksonville, Greenville. When they saw what they had, then they said, "I want one too."

DR: Were they afraid of the cost? That it was going to cost

taxes?

DR. BROCK: I don't think so. I think it's just the mentality, "you don't necessarily care for that much change cause everything's all right like it is."

DR: And change threatens.

DR. BROCK: It does. Well, you have to remember during this period of time that Craven County for decades had been a county in which all of its youth left. They had no choice but to leave for employment elsewhere. If they went to higher education, you went out of the county and you never came back. So this was a drain on the youth, the young thinkers, the forward thinkers. All you had left were people, if they were young people, and I remember very well eating in local restaurants, it was very unusual to see a person under thirty years of age that was living and working here to come in the restaurant and eat.

DR: Gainful employment.

DR. BROCK: Right. So, I think that was part of the problem. Fortunately for me, I came to the county at the time when this was beginning to change. Weyerhaeuser was coming into the county to build a nice facility and Stanley power tools came and provided some employment and then a few others came in. Of course you had the naval depot at Cherry Point which employed a lot of people, but they did most of their training either there or elsewhere and really did not see the community college at that time as being anything of value to them, and I can understand that. They were so far advanced to capabilities that we had. Of course that is 180 degrees from today. It's changed quite

a bit. Of course, the whole concept of the college has changed. It's very well received, with one exception. We still have not convinced this county that their community college is in dire need of buildings. That has been the biggest detriment to the growth and success of this institution since day one and it continues today.

DR: After you finally reached your goal of becoming a college, where did the funds come from for starting your building?

DR. BROCK: The community colleges operate under general statutes of North Carolina. I think its chapter 115-d. You'll find in those general statutes that the county has an obligation to provide facilities, the brick and mortar for a community college.

DR: That's from the state level?

DR. BROCK: That's from the state. That's part of state law. However, the state may, and the law reads "may", it doesn't say "shall", it says may, when funds are available, provide some funds to assist the counties. But that is a county responsibility. And also it's the county responsibility to pay for the electricity, the telephone, and for the people that are necessary to keep the place clean and the grass cut.

DR: Maintenance.

DR. BROCK: Maintenance, right. That is a county responsibility. The state's responsibility is to provide money for the educational programs, the salaries of all the people that work there, except for those that are required for maintenance. That's still a county responsibility. The county has done superbly well in providing

maintenance money and salary money for the county paid employees at the college. But I am at a loss to tell you why we have failed on the other side of the coin of getting the brick and mortar that we did to expand the facilities. For example, I could have gotten an additional hundred thousand dollars for the last building that was built from the EDA. Economic Development Administration Funds, provided the bulk of funding for the library building on the campus, which is called Building A, which is the Learning Resources Center.

We could have gotten two for one if the county had given me one dollar, I could have gotten two dollars of federal monies. They would not do it. They wouldn't do it. The last two buildings on campus that were finished in 1990, the general assembly appropriated one and a half million through efforts of Senator Joe Thomas to secure that money.

The county had to match it, which meant we needed a million and a half. It took four to five years for the county commissioners to find one and a half million dollars to match that one and a half million dollars, which meant that we lost a third of those two buildings to inflation during that period of time. We could have built a third more building if they had matched it earlier. And yet during this same period of time, the county provided several millions of dollars to build county school buildings.

DR: I remember that.

DR. BROCK: Which are needed, and I'm not criticizing that. I'm just pointing out that the priorities did not seem to be there for the college; and yet, the college is the place that educates the people

who are going to remain here, buy homes here, and pay taxes here.

DR: And help the community to grow.

DR. BROCK: Help the community to grow.

DR: I was very disappointed that bond issue didn't pass. Well, when did your position become with the community college? When did you leave the school?

DR. BROCK: Well, I've been an employee of the state since I graduated from NC State University with my first degree with the public school system, but I actually became an employee of the community college system on October 15, 1964. My boss was the president of Lenoir Community College. In April of 1968 when the new board of trustees held its first meeting, I orally applied for the position that I'd been holding for three years. They gave it to me, but they were not required to. They could have chosen someone else and I would have been unemployed. But I remained until December 31, 1989 in that position with the college.

DR: The change that you saw in the number of classes...

DR. BROCK: Fantastic.

DR: When you started, Dr. Brock, what was the college like after you moved on Glenburnie?

DR. BROCK: When we moved on the permanent campus of South Glenburnie, it was like we had gone to heaven, because for the first time we had classes and shop classes in facilities that were designed to accommodate that type of instruction. Up until that time, we had been in makeshift facilities and in some facilities that leaked each

time it rained. It was marvelous. One of the things I'm most proud of is the fact that despite the newness of the concept, we came along later, I suppose, ten or twelve years behind Lenoir and some of the older institutions, but we were able to attract very capable, dedicated, and competent employees.

DR: Let me ask you Dr. Brock, do they work under a state retirement plan?

DR. BROCK: The very same as the public school system or the university system.

DR: They have the same benefits. The medical?

DR. BROCK: Yes. We are really a hybrid. We're funded more like the university system, on a block grant of dollars per number of students, and the public schools are more highly structured from Raleigh than we are. We are allowed through our own local board of trustees to develop our own vacation and sick leave schedule, but there are limitations, state guidelines that we must follow.

DR: Your instructors, they have guidelines to meet too.

DR. BROCK: Absolutely. And again, we're pattern more like the university system.

DR: You have tenure?

DR. BROCK: We do not have tenure. That is a state law that we do not have tenure, and it's a college board policy also. But, our faculty are required to teach longer hours than they would if they were teaching at a unit of the university system.

DR: What about class size?

DR. BROCK: I'd say our classes on the average are probably smaller, though not always. I'm talking about undergraduate level now. You have to understand there's a basic fundamental reason why.

An English instructor at the community college would teach longer hours, more students, than his counter part would at East Carolina University, because a true university is expected to also be involved in research, which they call research institutions. They also have tenure, which I think is an impediment in anything; university, public schools, or what have you. So that is why we can require our instructors to teach more students and more clock hours a week than we would at the university.

DR: Going back, Dr. Brock, when you first moved to your campus, your curriculum grew too didn't it, the number of courses that you could offer?

DR. BROCK: As facilities would permit. The curriculum grows as the facilities grow. I'd say the campus now has about fifty to fifty-five percent of the facilities that it needs to serve the population of this county.

DR: With the things that they need.

DR. BROCK: With the things that they need. Not what they have now, but what they should have. You can draw your own conclusion on this, and it's very easy to do. All you need to do is get into your automobile and drive to another county that has adequate facilities, a county that has about the same population base as this county, look at what you have in New Bern and then compare that to what you have

in those other counties, and you'll see the contrast. That's where I'm coming from. That's what I have done over and over. And that's what our board of trustees have done also.

DR: When you became president, how many teachers, instructors, and helpers did you have when you started?

DR. BROCK: Well, when I started, I had one full time teacher, and one part-time teacher, and I had probably a dozen part-time people.

These were people who were employed elsewhere and just taught at night in the county school buildings. By the time we moved on the campus on South Glenburnie, the permanent campus, I'm guessing in the low twenties. But again, that is something I don't have before me. I'm just guessing. We use a lot of part-time instructors. I think that is one of the strong suits of Craven Community College; that we have so many capable retirees in the community that have worked with Fortune 500 companies that have chosen to retire from metropolitan areas, of primarily the northeast, have chosen to retire here and we're able to secure them to teach at the college on an hourly, part-time basis. Those people are fantastic.

DR: I think you should publicize that more, or I think it should be publicized more. I don't think the public realizes that.

DR. BROCK: I think you're right. We used to publish a little college paper in which we tried to emphasize that. We have emphasized it over several years. I think you're probably, well, I know you're right, that this ought to be something that you continue to put before the public because it's a plus.

DR: I had not really thought about that. I think maybe the Sun Journal, since they're Fortune 500, they might be willing to run an article about that. Who were some of the people that worked under you Dr. Brock?

DR. BROCK: The first person that I employed after July 1, 1965 was Steve Redd who is now the president of the college. Steve was an industrial arts teacher at New Bern High School. I was working with the county school system at that time. We both were working on our master's degrees at East Carolina University and we stumbled on to one another on campus and found out we both lived in New Bern. You have to remember at that time, now, I worked only with the county schools, I did not work with the city schools. So, we started commuting back and forth. When I could hire someone, I asked him if he was interested and he was. He was the first person in a non-teaching job that I hired. We had been close friends. I think our educational philosophies are so similar and we are different personalities for sure and he's younger than I am, but we worked so well together for all those years.

DR: And that was a real plus to have something new that you were trying to establish.

DR. BROCK: Right. I still say today that he was my choice obviously to be my successor and I'm glad the board chose him. Clifford Swain, of course, dean of students. Russell Sutton is in charge of the financial operation. Of course they have different titles now.

Since I retired, they've done some reorganizing. But Clifford Swain

is head of student services and Russell, the physical plant. Of course Steve, when I was working, was in charge of the educational program. Those three were the people I depended upon to run the institution.

DR: Ya'll really had a real job.

DR. BROCK: We communicated and we worked so beautifully together that they made my job so much easier. But you have to understand, it took me fifteen years to find that combination. (laughter)

DR: Dr. Brock, the thing that stands out to me is the newness of the community college concept and having it put into practice; the young community college, and you had nothing in the past to really guide you.

DR. BROCK: That is correct. However, we had a gentleman in Raleigh by the name of Dr. I. E. Ready who was our first state director for the system, who had the audacity to open his high school in Roanoke Rapids when he was principal or either superintendent, I'm not sure which of Roanoke Rapids school. A lot of people don't know this, but he let adults go to his high school at night and finish high school.

Nobody ever heard of it. They thought that he was loony, and yet, he did that. He did things like that; putting in programs in his schools that they didn't have in other schools to help students. That was the kind of leadership that we had. It's true there was no education to help you to build a community college, at least none that I was aware of, at that time. These institutions are oriented to nontraditional higher education. I'm a vocational educator and so was Dr. Redd. He and I worked together longer than any two people

at the institution up until this date. We were products of traditional higher education. Higher education that you find at the University of North Carolina, at Wake Forest or Duke University, or whether it be Mt. Olive College, is a copy of European higher education. The community college is not a copy of anything. Only the transfer program that we have, which in the case of Craven, I'm guessing, about a third of the enrollment would be traditional. The other two thirds is non-traditional. That is training people to earn an associate degree, or a one year diploma, or a certificate to work in the job market. Not to learn Shakespeare, but to learn to do applied mathematics, how to apply the principles of mathematics and other sciences to work in business and industry. That's what you need today. These people work for people who do go to your traditional institutions. Their boss may be an engineer graduate from Clemson or NC State, but they are an associate engineer that got their degree from one of our community colleges, and that's where we're different.

DR: Think what that can do for a community, having those kind of people come out.

DR. BROCK: Well, if people that live in the community, if they don't have access to that, and that's something else that the leadership in this county does not understand is that our people, because of the lack of space on that permanent campus out on South Glenburnie, to expand into these new employment opportunities, these people have either got to go to a neighboring institution or take something that will not help them as well. So it's very simple. If you have got

it in your local community college and can train your people, educate your people to fill those job vacancies, it helps your community prosper.

DR: The industries will come.

DR. BROCK: That's right.

DR: If you build it, they'll come.

DR. BROCK: That's right. And if you don't have it, then you don't succeed. Get in your car and drive around and see the evidence, it's there.

DR: Boy, I'm with you Dr. Brock. Students that never dreamed that they could go any further sometime, I've seen that.

DR. BROCK: Well, our own District Attorney, David McFayden, began his higher education with this community college, and also the county manager. Of course, they took the traditional college transfer route.

But that traditional route of the college transfer is important also because we do help people get started toward that traditional baccalaureate degree.

DR: You broaden their thinking; what they can do, where it is, what potential there is.

DR. BROCK: That's right, you get them started and they get the first two years here, then they can continue elsewhere. I also made it possible, and I don't like to talk about this because you can be criticized for it, but I encouraged Wesleyan College, and Bruce Pettaway who was president there and I have worked together at Lenoir Community College at one time, (he's originally from Kinston area),

to bring his junior and senior year classes to New Bern because I've got people who cannot go to Greenville, and that's the closest place they can drive to get that third and fourth year, and they did it and it's working.

DR: Great. Well, Dr. Brock, can you remember names of people that worked from the early time on, some of the older ones who have retired that were New Bernians? Can you remember any of those that taught or worked?

DR. BROCK: That were employees at the college or with the board or both?

DR: Uh huh. Like in your nursing field and your other programs.

DR. BROCK: The nursing program is unbelievable. Not just the one at Craven, but in the entire state. People don't realize that our nursing, I'm talking about registered nurses, it's a two year program, two calendar years, two times twelve, twenty-four months, that they must pass a state board exam in order to get their license to be a register nurse. I'm amazed at the people that don't realize that our nurses have to take the same exam and pass the same score that the ones that graduate from the four year universities with a baccalaureate degree.

DR: They do?

DR. BROCK: They do. And guess what the results is? Ours do better.

DR: Now you see, that isn't publicized.

DR. BROCK: It has been in the New Bern paper time and time again.

DR: I haven't seen it.

DR. BROCK: People read it but they don't understand it. But that's a fact. Quite often we will have a hundred percent pass it and we will have people most often in the ninety percent passing rate.

DR: The same exam?!

DR. BROCK: Same exam and they must make the same passing score as a four year degree nurse.

DR: Well, at UNC, their first two years are general college.

DR. BROCK: That's right, and that makes the difference.

DR: I've got it now.

DR. BROCK: But you've got to understand, we've got some intelligent people that live in Craven County and other communities, for whatever reason, they cannot go to Chapel Hill or to Greenville but they are intelligent, and we get those intelligent women and young men and they make fantastic nurses. And they do it without ever leaving the community.

DR: That's great. People in the different companies, do you remember any that taught?

DR. BROCK: Yes. Fred Wheeler, he was at one time president of the Stanly Tools, division of the Stanly Works which used to be here in New Bern and later was purchased by Bosch which is an international company, a German company. But Fred Wheeler is a Fortune 500 man.

DR: And he teaches there?

DR. BROCK: He has taught at the college. He's a, I'm not sure if it's Yale or Harvard Business School graduate and he's been all

over the world. That's just the kind of credentials that they don't even have at some of the universities.

DR: No. He probably couldn't teach because he didn't take the education courses. (laughter)

DR. BROCK: That's one thing that is not required. We have the same teaching requirements that the university system have for that level, but for the associate and applied science or technical level, we can hire people that know what needs to be taught.

DR: Practically.

DR. BROCK: That's right. Some have only a baccalaureate degree. Some are only high school graduates but they may be a journeyman, like a machinist, or have certifications in various technical fields with a baccalaureate degree, or they may not have it. But the key point is that they have the knowledge that you need to be taught in the classroom.

DR: They've been there.

DR. BROCK: That's right. They don't have a piece of paper. Remember, your traditional colleges is an imitation of European higher education. We hire people that work. Jacob Kaminsky who worked at Stanly Tools, still working at Bosch, I don't know if Jake has an engineering degree or not and I don't care. Jake knows what he's doing and he's done some fantastic teaching for us. We've just had any number of people from industry and business that have taught. I wish I could think of the names of more of them, but right now my mind seems to be asleep. (laughter)

DR: Dr. Brock, I know you can look back and feel good about what you've been able to do, not only for young people in Craven County but older people. It's been a real contribution.

DR. BROCK: Well, it has, and of course I loved the work I was doing and I just felt so blessed being at the right place at the right time to help build from the ground up an institution that's going to be here a long time.

DR: What do you hope to see?

DR. BROCK: I just hope that the seed has been planted and has germinated and is growing. I just hope that various governments that are responsible for the watering and the fertilizer will make that available and let the institution do for the people what it was put here to do. But I have not done anything any different from what any number of individuals haven't done in other communities throughout the state. You have to remember that this was a team effort. It took dedicated trustees, advisory board members, a dedicated faculty and staff. We've had some duds, but by and large; and I think any organization of any size will have a few duds, but by and large, the vast majority of our faculty and our non-teaching people are superb, superior. They're dedicated. I've seen them work hours on end, not expecting any additional compensation; whereas in other agencies, people just won't do it unless their paid overtime. And for our people that doesn't even cross their mind. They love what they're doing.

I worked real hard to try to build a climate in which people would enjoy their work and have fun working and be able to laugh and joke

and have a good time; and yet, do a serious job of serving the people that we were hired to serve. And I think we did that quite successfully.

DR: From what I have heard, Dr. Brock, you did. Now, do you plan to stay in New Bern?

DR. BROCK: I jokingly tell people that I do, because I know who most of my enemies are and this is where most of my friends are. You don't worry about your enemies anyway, it's your friends you gotta watch out for. (laughter)

DR: Oh me! Well, we're very fortunate to have you. Your wife taught in the Craven County schools.

DR. BROCK: My wife taught in Craven County school.

DR: What's her name Dr. Brock?

DR. BROCK: Agnes Barrow. She's originally from Greene County.

DR: You have a daughter.

DR. BROCK: We have a daughter, Elizabeth. She lives in Des Moines, Iowa, she and her husband. But we intend to remain here.

DR: What church do you attend Dr. Brock?

DR. BROCK: West New Bern Presbyterian Church.

DR: That's a new thriving church I understand.

DR. BROCK: I think it was chartered the year before I graduated from high school. (laughter)

DR: That's how long I've been away. Well, Dr. Brock, we do thank you for sharing this with us. The community college has done so much and I'd like to see it go forward as you would like to see it. I really would. Well, thank you so much sir.

DR. BROCK: Thank you.

END OF INTERVIEW.