MARGARET: Great. So, this is Margaret Winslow, Associate Curator for Contemporary Art interviewing former Delaware Art Museum Executive Director Stephen Bruni at the Delaware Art Museum on March 1, 2013. Okay, then we can just ignore that.

So, I had the opportunity to visit the Queen right before they started renovation. I went through with Tad Hershey with [inaudible], and we went through the side entrance of Fifth Street. So, we’re walking into the space and, you know, it’s dark or whatever, and we’re noticing the gallery signage on the left side of the wall going up the stairs, Gallery, Gallery, Gallery, just repeating in the great kind of, like, 1970s rock poster font.

STEPHEN: Yeah, psychedelic.

MARGARET: Psychedelic. I’m like, what is this? This is obviously old, this is not late ‘90s, mid ‘90s, early ‘90s. So, we went up there, went through the entire thing which was incredible just to see the building before they did the renovations, so I came back to the office and I said, “Margaretta, was there a gallery on Fifth Street in downtown Wilmington?” “Yes, that was Fifth Street Gallery and I worked there.” Margaretta [Frederick] worked at the gallery with—

STEPHEN: She did?

MARGARET: She did. That was one of her first gallery jobs, one of her first museum experiences [inaudible]—
STEPHEN: Let me tell you, that had to be an experience.

MARGARET: I can’t even imagine. So, it started this whole kind of fascination and research project for me to really look at what was happening in Wilmington in the 1970s and because the DCCA [Delaware Center for the Contemporary Arts] was celebrating it’s—what at that point—35th, I think anniversary, 30th or 35th?

STEPHEN: I think they opened officially in ’79.

MARGARET: Right, so that was happening at the same, at the same time I was involved with the New Wilmington Art Association [NWAA] and at the same year, which I think it was 2010, I should remember, Rick Rothrock and Michael Kalmbach both received Christi’s. The Christi Award from the Christina Cultural Arts Center, and Rick was doing the exact same thing in the city that Michael was doing with the NWAA 30-plus years later. And, of course, Michael and NWAA unaware of this history and these activities within the city, so of course, you know, contemporary arts historian, I thought this was the perfect time to really document this history that isn’t—I don’t think it’s been forgotten, but it’s started—it hasn’t been lost, it’s starting—

STEPHEN: Isn’t that why it’s history? If we knew it was history when we were doing it we would have taken better care of whatever it was we were doing. A museum’s a little different because obviously if we have a painting or we have this from that year, but for people—

MARGARET: Yeah, you’re not thinking about documenting your personal life.

STEPHEN: Sure, it’s a bore.

MARGARET: Yeah.

STEPHEN: To anybody else but yourself.

MARGARET: I know, I know, so anyway, so I thought that this was just the perfect time to really revisit this history and look at these incredible activities that were taking place here at the Museum and downtown Wilmington, the establishment of the DCCA, the [inaudible], all of these things that you know about. But, like I said, I think that that’s the thing is that it’s not been lost, but people are starting to maybe forget some of those moments.

STEPHEN: Well, and many aren’t around.

MARGARET: That’s true, that’s [inaudible] so—

STEPHEN: [Inaudible] die.

MARGARET: Well, I should tell you that I had a brief telephone conversation with [Robert H.] Bob Frankel and I need to follow up with a more in-depth conversation with him, but I’ll be speaking with [Charles L.] Pete Wyrick [Jr.] this afternoon.

STEPHEN: Oh, good. Please say “hello” for me.
MARGARET: I definitely will. I certainly will. So, let’s begin. I know this is a very loaded question to start with, lots of things to discuss, but let’s begin by discussing your early experiences here at the Museum and if you could tell me when you first joined the staff and the positions you held prior to becoming the Executive Director in 1985. I know, that’s a lot [inaudible].

STEPHEN: Okay. Well, I’m able to date the day that I walked in here not really expecting to get a job. I graduated from George Washington in ’71, enjoyed myself for a year and knew I wanted to see what it was like to work in a museum field, in an art museum field, as more of an avocation rather than a vocation. So, it was 1973. It was on a Tuesday because they had just closed the Golden Age of American Illustration exhibition, so I can almost—by the day by looking at the catalogue. So, that’s how I always judge it. I got here, a friend had introduced me to Bruce St. John, who was the Director at that point, and told him I wanted to get some experience, you know, that I’d like to have a part-time job.

I was planning to go back to school at some point, but why go back to school if you weren’t sure what you wanted to do. Bruce St. John talked to me for about five minutes and said, “well, why don’t you get started now? Go downstairs and—” he didn’t even take me down. He said, “there’s a gentleman downstairs, tall gentleman with a goatee and his name’s Rowland Elzea, and he could sure use some help right now and then we’ll talk about what other things you might do.” So, it was a serendipitous kind of thing. So, my first duty was to go downstairs, introduce myself to Rowland who was in the galleries by himself taking down the entire show by himself.

So, we laughed a little bit and I—this is going to be a complete—I mean, “you’re going to let me touch these things?? We took the show down. I was there for like three days to get the show down and to learn how to pack it up, which was not your professional kind of situation. There were only seven people working at the Museum at the time.

MARGARET: At that time, seven on staff?

STEPHEN: Seven on staff and that included—

MARGARET: That’s incredible.

STEPHEN: —the security guard, bookkeeper, librarian, maintenance janitor—except for the education department. That’s actually an important factor in all this. The education department in those days was figurative and literally segregated from the rest of the museum because the Director of Education at the time, Marion Johnson, and Bruce St. John did not get along. In the old museum there was literally a door at the back where [inaudible] gallery, and the door remained lock. It was the only way that one from inside the building could go to the education department if they had a key. There’s a philosophical [inaudible] with the whole thing.

But in any case, so in my case I think—I showed up to work every day and started learning, you know, even little conservation jobs, cutting mats, things like that. There were, I think, some students from Winterthur [Museum and Library] that would do a lot of that with the Winterthur Program, so I learned things from them. So, I suppose my first position was as a curatorial
assistant working with—oh, the other person that was here was [Elizabeth H.] Betsy Hawkes. She was the assistant curator. Other people came and went. I’m not sure they were ever necessarily employees of the museum, but students from the University of Delaware that were there on a short-time basis doing different things, so for myself it went from doing curatorial work, helping Rowland do research on exhibitions that were coming up and with Betsy Hawkes.

We were starting a docent program. In those days it was called a Tour Guide Program, so I was involved with that. I had the good fortune of being at the museum when so much didn’t exist, and so if there was any—if I came up with an idea or anybody did it was sort of like, well, go ahead. We don’t have time to help you, but do it. So, things developed from that. I think my next position was—the official one would have been maybe Program Director. It was easy to give out titles. [Inaudible]. So, that was the time, in ’75, we started a store. So, I was not only Program Director, I was the Museum Store Manager. We started the [inaudible] gallery, so I was in charge of that.

Although, in most cases these things started off with volunteers and I was the staff member—whether it was the docent program or any of the projects we were working on. But still, every time a new show came up you worked on it. The bookkeeper would have to work on it in those days, so it was very hands on.

MARGARET: Right, so Program Director/Art Handler/Preparator.

STEPHEN: Art Handler, Preparator, Curatorial Assistant—

MARGARET: All of them.

STEPHEN: Yeah, and I remember when Bruce St. John was still here, every once in a while I would have to go and say, “Bruce, is there any way I could get paid?” He would pay me in cash because the bookkeeper’s office was basically a metal box with a ledger for doing things, paying utility bills and things like that. The museum didn’t have much money. He would pay me in cash, but it was in an intermittent kind of way. So, from there, Bruce St. John retired and that’s when Pete Wyrick came. This all sort of crosses over. I think it was when Pete Wyrick got here, he wanted to call me something more consistent so I think it was Program Director, something like that.

There was nothing formal to it all, but that’s when things really changed. Up until he came—of course, I think he came in maybe ’74 or ’75.

MARGARET: I think it was ’73.

STEPHEN: Okay, so Bruce St. John wasn’t here that long, and up until then the museum was very, very provincial, I guess is the best way to put it. That even though wonderful collections brought good exhibitions in, Rowland was very much—he became the expert on the Pre-Raphaelites and the expert on American Illustration—I’d say in this country, not by anything but hands on experience with dealing with them. So, that was the, sort of, thrust of it all, the American Collection, Illustration, Pre-Raphaelites. But Rowland was very contemporary—
minded. He was what would have been considered a bohemian. He was with the Tenth Street Group in New York.

He knew a lot of the artists who in New York at the time were well known but hadn’t graduated to a national kind of exposure, but he knew them, studied with them. I think Rowland studied with Hans Hofmann and a few others that became well known. It was a group and they hung around in the area quite a bit. Bernie Felch was a part of this group. So, this is sort of the pre-change. They all existed here, very intellectual, very literary minded, and it was a whole group of people that had this connection between the Wilmington area and New York. So, they were ahead of the curve in terms of this area in terms of the [inaudible]. To them, that’s what’s going on. In Wilmington—

MARGARET: Not yet, right.

STEPHEN: We don’t like that stuff. So Rowland did exhibitions of things that were a little bit pushing the envelope at the time, and if you look through—and I don’t know if the records show all of them, but Rowland and Betsy pretty much organized the history of exhibitions at the Delaware Art Museum and I don’t know whether they’re still in the [inaudible] boxes on racks, but I remember going through them. You had to go up a spiral staircase to the business office and a spiral staircase to the “archival storage”, as they called it, which was literally an attic with boxes and things all over it. But I remember going through them and seeing this, sort of, really interesting thing from—I think it goes all the way back to maybe 1912 when they were exhibiting at the library and the hotel.

MARGARET: Downtown, um-hum.

STEPHEN: The library at the hotel, the saloon. So, if I’m getting off topic—

MARGARET: No, this is wonderful. It’s great.

STEPHEN: So, there was a very small nucleus of people who would have been a generation older than me, just to put it into some kind of chronological context, of which Rowland Elzea was a big part of. Very supportive of a higher level of intellectual approach to contemporary art, but it was very hard for him, having such a small staff to do the collections and exhibitions related to the Pre-Raphaelites. He was doing so much in terms of doing major exhibitions of the Pre-Raphaelites and Howard Pyle students that it was hard for him to organize anything large. And the support wasn’t there.

It’s interesting and I suppose political, but the board obviously plays a role in these transitions and when I came—it always makes me realize how old I’ve become; this was a museum that was sort of being taken care of by the landed gentry. Obviously the DuPont Family but that extended—where the museum was placed that the wealthy people here, the philanthropists in the true sense of the word, just knew that a community like Wilmington had to have a good museum and even though it started in 1938. Over this time it was growing, education department was built, but there really wasn’t fundraising. There was membership but that was almost negligible.
It was a very homey kind of place and not particularly exciting but you didn’t raise money because the end of every year—and this went on for probably my first four years here—there would be in the fall, sometime in September, all of the important people would have a black tie event in the museum. Bruce St. John would present paintings sometimes that the museum should buy, but also at the end of the meeting they would ask, well, how short are we going to be on money to make sure that we end the year with a balanced budget?

We were on that sort of federal October—September 30 was the end of the year, so they would have this small gallery event and they would ask, okay, how much do we have to write checks out for to make sure that the money’s there? In retrospect, politically it was this notion of we’ll take care of our own, that if you need anything we’ll cover it. So, you know, you look at the collections; they put out quite a bit of money for some great paintings over this period of the ‘60s and early ‘70s. The [inaudible]. Most of the great stuff in the American Collection was purchased that way.

MARGARET: Well that model kind of worked though, didn’t it? [Inaudible].

[Crosstalk]

STEPHEN: Wouldn’t everybody like that.

MARGARET: I know! How do we get back to that?

STEPHEN: Yeah, how do we get back to that? You don’t.

MARGARET: Yeah, unfortunately.

STEPHEN: So, and by virtue of that there wasn’t a great expansion of programs running like that. It was, you know, make sure the doors are open, the paintings are hanging, you know, you’ve got a nice building. So, contemporary art was not—and it’s funny to call it contemporary art now in retrospect. This stuff is so, you know, non-edgy, but it was edgy to them. It was when Bruce St. John retired, Pete Wyrick came in, and he was a real shot in the arm because he was much more contemporary-minded. He didn’t have what you would say was a real strong art history background or experience, but he could see that the museum needed to move into the next century.

No, had to move into the current century. Sorry about that. I remember how exciting it was that his—I think it was one of the first shows that he organized and it was fairly easy for him to do, but the Sydney and Frances Lewis Collection in Virginia, in Richmond—Pete Wyrick had worked with Sydney and Frances Lewis. I don’t know if you’re familiar with them, but they were probably at the time—yeah, they were the most important, biggest collectors of contemporary American art. They were connected to the Virginian Museum [of Fine Arts] but it was still long enough ago that they had not formally turned the Sydney and Frances Lewis Collection over, and being friends with them, Pete Wyrick went to their collection and was allowed to pick anything he wanted.
You’d have the year on there, but he brought that show to the Museum and for the Board it was very difficult. Oh, God, the artists—I became such a fan of some of the people that were in that show because I saw that show.

MARGARET: So, they must have been—were they collecting Minimalism, Conceptual Art?

STEPHEN: I wouldn’t say any Conceptual Art, but you talk—you know, from Frank Stella—there’s a catalogue somewhere in the archives that would have all of this. Jack Beal. In fact, I might even have the catalogue at home. In any case, that’s when people either complained hugely. Philip Pearlstein, a nude. I’d love to see a catalogue just to go through it in my own head again, but it caused quite a stir. The Board was, I think, taken aback, that is that what this museum’s going to become? Yet, there was this group, an important group, still small in Wilmington that loved it. The museum was finally not sitting on the mount with their traditional views.

The museum was very much in the theme of museums at that time: 1938. You know, from the Philadelphia Museum. We were a mini version for a smaller community, but the Museum calls the shots and they decide here’s what you should be seeing, or that was the perception. There was never one of, well, you can only do so much, but I think there was definitely a view of a lot of people who were more contemporary-minded, not just in art, in fine art, but in all different disciplines from theater to dance to music.

So, that was a real turning point and I can remember as a perfect example, John Jenney, who had been with—he was on the Board and at the time he was the President of the Board and he was connected to the DuPont family by marriage, but he was very far to the right and sort of represented the family in terms of what happened at that museum. I can remember he would always come and get me because I was like the new little kid, and every time there was a show he said will you walk through and tell me what you think about it, which I loved doing, but then this show came along and instead of going to the Director and saying [inaudible], he wanted somebody he could [inaudible].

So, we’d walk. “Tell me why you would call this piece of crap art.” So I would have this discussion with him, which I knew when somebody asks you that question that way you’re not going to convince them, so—

MARGARET: I have to look at the catalogue because it sounds like it’s not even like it’s just that [inaudible]. I mean, there’s figurative work in here as well.

STEPHEN: Oh, there was figurative work. I think there was a beautiful [Jules] Olitski in the show, there may have been a [Yves] Klein; lots of big work. There was sculpture. I would have to look through, but if you sort of looked at [inaudible], this is the sort of blue chip post-war now. It’s laughingly called contemporary, but that obviously shifts. These were people who were pop artists, Al Held I think was in the show, and a lot of them became—we ended up collecting some of these artists. New York would have looked at that show at the time—oh, [inaudible] having a show right now. The sculptor, the real life people with their cameras and flowered shirts on and oh, my God.
MARGARET: Oh, Duane Hansen?

STEPHEN: Duane Hansen, yeah, he’s having a show somewhere in New York right now as sort of a look back. He was in the show and that’s because he was placed as his work always was, somewhat inconspicuously. I’m trying to think whether it was the security guard—it might have been the security guard that stood in the gallery and freaked everybody out [inaudible] would have videotaped—

MARGARET: Right, well it’s not like—I mean, if it wasn’t the heroin addict then I could see that—but it’s interesting, and again I’ll look at the catalogue, but it’s figurative work, whereas kind of looking back at some of Otto Dekom’s criticism—

STEPHEN: Oh, well, that’s—

MARGARET: I mean, and that’s, my goodness, you know, abstraction, terrifying, and Gene Davis was here for the annual exhibition. So, it’s interesting because in hearing people talk about, kind of, brand new [inaudible] tradition versus contemporary at Wilmington, it had felt so much more about abstraction versus figuration, but I don’t think that’s necessarily the case.

STEPHEN: Anything that was recognizable—you know, the difference between figuration and abstraction at the time, it was either it was a realist painting or it’s something I’m not comfortable with. I’ll try to see if I can find the catalogue to see what’s in there because that will jar things, but it was, there was abstraction as well as figurative work in there. So, Rackstraw Downes. It’s a little hard for me to—

MARGARET: Sounds like a great show.

STEPHEN: Oh it was, it was a terrific show and it did some real good. The Board was not real happy with it, but Pete Wyrick was also—and this was an important part. He was a real devotee of photography, both contemporary and vintage photography, and so he developed relationships with a lot of photographers, people at the University of Delaware. John Weiss at the time was sort of the guy at the University of Delaware who was looking to be the guy who sort of slapped people around, you know, the community. Show them something, you know, shock kind of thing, a bit at the same time that Rob Jones was. I need to get to Rob Jones—

MARGARET: [Inaudible].

STEPHEN: But I do remember we did a show—I forget where he got it, [Jean] Dubuffet, and there was a 15 foot high Dubuffet sculpture in the middle of the main gallery, Gallery I. They were all named that, one, two, three, and not in any order that you could really follow, but that was another one. Here was Dubuffet, you know, world renowned at the time, here was a show with this in there and, of course, it was so wonderful because children ate it up. There were a lot of school groups in those days, there still are I’m sure, but they were just so fascinated by this. They were so clean, but again, the board was, “I guess we have to do it.”
But, in order to do all these things it started to cost money to do these things, and the funders, the philanthropists weren’t going to go all that far with it. It’s interesting—I’ll get to it, but in ’76, I think, the world changed quite a bit for the art museum. In any case, while Pete Wyrick was here he became friends with Rob Jones and if you read about Rob Jones, Rob Jones is the drum major, he’s the guy that—

MARGARET: Yes, I have an image actually of him.

STEPHEN: Yeah, he was head of the band.

MARGARET: Yeah, at Delaware.

STEPHEN: At the University of Delaware. The man with the white tails on and strutting his stuff.

MARGARET: Yeah, well, I’ll find it.

STEPHEN: He was an entertainer, he was a great promoter, he was so openly effeminate at times but a tough guy other times. He was a character. He knew he was and he, even then I think, was getting well connected to people in New York. He was famous in New York. He was—I guess he did this on weekends or after he got out of college, but he worked at Raoul’s in the Village, and Raoul’s was this real up-tempo nice restaurant and he was a waiter, bartender, and at certain times during the evening he’d be waiting on a table and then go put on—he would cross-dress and do—he would sing to the audience.

It was unbelievable. Female impersonator and he would put on a different costume of a different—you know, he’d be Mae West one night, somebody else the—that was a part of his character, but he became friends with a lot of people in New York and with Pete Wyrick as someone who had an open mind to let’s do something that’s really, really current. And even though Rob wasn’t really—he was a, you’d call it a conceptual artist. He did happenings all the time. This is sort of before he had the Fifth Street Gallery, and they did—Pete Wyrick let him have one of the big galleries and said do whatever you want to do. So, he took—what’s it called? He made arms out of polyurethane, foam.

The stuff was so toxic but I can remember he had his, sort of, coterie of—oh, people that just wanted to hang around with Rob Jones, all very young, and they would come in and he molded all these arms in the gallery—

MARGARET: In the gallery?

STEPHEN: In the gallery. He wanted so many of them that they finally had to go to a warehouse somewhere else and make them [inaudible] people, and these arms were suspended everywhere in the gallery. On the walls. He would pour this polyurethane out of the bucket because it’s a liquid and then it—it’s just like the insulation foam.

MARGARET: Right. Oh, and I can’t help but think of Lynda Benglis who—
STEPHEN: Exactly.

MARGARET: Wow, that’s so—because in the—unfortunately, in the exhibition file the only thing we have is a letter that Rob wrote to Rowland Elzea. We have no images of the work. The exhibition file was really quite thin which made me curious to know if the exhibition actually happened. I know it is in the exhibition history so at least I had some sort of assurance that it did, so it’s good to hear more about the show.

STEPHEN: He actually—and this was dangerous from a toxin point of view. It was all lightweight but he had wires hanging from the ceiling where he would pour this liquid foam, let it harden, and then it would hang from the ceilings. So, these dark clouds—it was all black, everything was black. I’m just trying to think of where something like that might be. He also did, and I think it was the same time, he had another small space in the gallery. He would do a cast of somebody he knew. He’d just pour plaster over them, cut it in half, take it apart on them, you know, the straws out of their nose, and then he would drape wet—not poly—polyurethane I guess it was.

He would drape a sheet over their heads making it look as if it was a shroud kind of thing. He would soak it with this material that would harden. These became very real figurative pieces of sculpture. He was working with chemicals that at that time that were all of a sudden real cool to use as a medium. Some of those still exist. In fact, Frolic Weymouth if you know Frolic, he was good friends with Rob. Rob gave him one of these figures that—Frolic has these beautiful English gardens at his home in [inaudible] Florida, had it in his garden and it was a very eerie kind of thing, you know, this figure draped in a shroud. He went and had it cast and bronzed and it still sits at the end of this English garden. It’s a neat piece.

MARGARET: That’s probably the only remaining work.

STEPHEN: You know, I don’t know if it’s possible to do. When I think of the people who worked with Rob, were closest to Rob, certainly Frolic Weymouth was one of them, people have them. I can remember when the show was over, people were dining and Rob just handed out the arms to people, you know, his friends were like, what are you going to do with it all? Half of it went to the trash, and I’m sure people had them in their apartments all over Wilmington and I’d give some thought to who might know about such things. So, Rob was the performer, promoter, everything like that, and he owes a lot to Pete Wyrick because Pete Wyrick was open to letting him do this.

Now, back to the conservatives that by far—the support base, not just the philanthropists that funded it, but I think the general population that came to the museum were shocked. This, by any standard—not today, but this was cutting edge.

MARGARET: Oh, certainly at that time.

STEPHEN: It certainly wasn’t—that was the whole thing. Okay, it’s fun now but let’s not do this stuff anymore. It was a happening and the parties that he has to open it—when you could still smoke in the museum. I mean, we’d be sitting in Rowland’s office with a table about half this
size and you’d have this meeting for a couple of hours working on something and I can remember Rowland had this ashtray and it was just—he must have emptied it once a month or something. You couldn’t see the person at the other end of the table. This went on—I’m sorry, I thought I turned that off. But you could smoke. They’d have an opening and people were smoking.

MARGARET: With the paintings, yeah.

STEPHEN: We were not real professional at the time. But it did make a big difference. And then we started collecting. I remember the first thing Pete Wyrick, I would say, he bought—he did a show in cooperation with the Nancy Hoffman Gallery and the Nancy Hoffman Gallery—at the time you’d call it contemporary—you know, it was a New York, you know, Soho gallery, well known, and he developed a relationship with him and so they had this show. It couldn’t happen today because the relationship between the gallery and museum isn’t supposed to be that close, but in those days, especially at the Delaware Art Museum there wasn’t a professional ethic about those things. He bought for the collection—or, it was given.

Nancy Hoffman Gallery gave it to the museum, I think. Rafael Ferrer, and I don’t know whether it’s still here. It was a galvanized pipe about 6 feet long with a neon circle.

MARGARET: Yes, Neon Corner.

STEPHEN: And not only had it been exhibited, it was part of—that’s what it was. It was part of the show that was done in collaboration with the Nancy Hoffman Gallery. He was in the corner and had a boat that he did. He was famous for doing dugout canoes, very Latin. Rafael Ferrer, obviously, but the boat was [inaudible] and it was called The Che, and it was this boat. The Che are a people in South America, but anybody who was watching, it was about Che Guevara. In big neon lights it said “Che” in the museum. Of course, these people see this and of course everybody got away with it saying, see, you’re making the wrong interpretation.

The Che are a native people of South America that were—they’re life was made through these dugout canoes and, of course, the dugout canoe was not real. It’s just a slapped together piece of—there were major complaints, people dropping off the Board. I can’t be part of this, but you were building this community of people who thought, yeah, the museum is the place you need to be doing these things because how do you educate people in the fine arts about things that are happening now? So, it was embraced by the younger community and ostracized by the old guard.

MARGARET: Right, so I need to look up some of the reviews that Otto Dekom would have been writing at that time because I imagine he had strong opinions to say.

STEPHEN: Yeah, mostly negative. Of course, he was mostly negative.

MARGARET: That’s what I’m finding.

STEPHEN: Well, first of all, he was the music critic, the food critic, the art critic, he was the garden critic—
MARGARET: He criticized everything.

STEPHEN: He was the Renaissance man and he was pissed off.

MARGARET: About everything.

STEPHEN: He’s unbelievable, but—tell me if I’m getting off track here. I’m trying to stay within the—

MARGARET: No, within the larger—I do want, let’s see, if you could talk a little more about getting us up to when you became Director in ’85 and then talk about some of your initial concerns between the middle to the late ‘80s when you became Director in ’85 up through the ‘90s. So, talk about that transition a little closer, so going into Bob Frankel and then—

STEPHEN: Yeah. I think when Bob Frankel came, and I think Bob was here for three years or four years—four years I think. At that point I had started and it was under Pete Wyrick. We had to be raising—we had to start raising money if we wanted to do these things because the Board—first of all, the old guard was dying off, there wasn’t that same kind of—well if you were going to expand the budget. So, this group maybe had to become more public and I can remember Pete Wyrick came and that’s when the CETA Program started, and this is sort of connected, Comprehensive Employment Training Act was funded heavily—Nixon started it when I was looking back on that.

The fact that Nixon started anything that benefited the public sector—excuse me, that’s a point of view. In any case, it meant that there was money, federal money, given to the states to hire unemployed individuals, people just out of school who couldn’t find a job and they would pass the money locally and the Museum, the Delaware Art Museum became, I think, the primary recipient of funds to hire people that fell within these guidelines. It’s probably somewhere in the archives. Ended up there were 60 people working at the Delaware Art Museum and more than half of them were CETA employees. This is a sort of important historical/political/social—is that under the administration of Jimmy Carter this program was funded heavily.

So, in our case, I think we had eight photographers, a lot of MFAs who obviously couldn’t find work, all sorts of creative people who were involved with the performing arts, music, and so we had all these people so all of these—in a sense, we had to get all these programs up because we had the manpower to do it and some funding to do the programs.

MARGARET: Right. Now, were all of the CETA employees part of ArtReach?

STEPHEN: ArtReach was one of many parts of this period in time and ArtReach was certainly one of them. There were—that part was to get into the community obviously by CETA, but there were people working in the education department—we were able to do far more marketing and promotion for the Museum because we had photographers, we had a dark room at this point that expanded and I was in charge of the CETA Program. I think I was still the Program Director or something like that. At the same time, we were involved with raising money from corporations for the first time, interestingly, so I was the Director of Development as well.
The idea is making connections with the corporations that were here. The DuPont Company would give a certain amount of money. There was no proactive development. They just weren’t used to—you’d go to them and say I have this program, do you want to put your name on it? So, all of a sudden this was happening and they saw because we had this money and the people here, ArtReach Program was one of the big ones where we’re going into the community—the murals still exist. We would go into communities and take all the people that lived on a block, take an abandoned building and have the community do huge murals on the east side of Wilmington primarily. Amazingly, they’re still—some of them are still there.

MARGARET: Some of them are still there.

STEPHEN: Because it was successful. Not only did the community get involved, but they made it something that’s part of the neighborhood. So, they didn’t get destroyed, didn’t—so, it was a wonderful successful thing. Charles Burwell, I think, was the person who’s a—he’s an artist in Philadelphia, if you know Charles. He was a Yale [University] graduate and he was in charge of that, directing kids, and there were so many people around. It was wonderful. I never had more fun.

MARGARET: I know. Looking at the staff list is just really quite incredible, and this is looking primarily—

STEPHEN: Because they are. There’s Carson [Zullinger], you know Carson?

MARGARET: Carson, yeah.

STEPHEN: Carson’s in the picture.

MARGARET: And it seems like—now, what was curious is it looked like there were two—were there multiple outreach classes, maybe for lack of a better word? It looked like there were different staff involved with different—

STEPHEN: People came and went as well. It was real tough to administrate that many people who were very creative, but they were footloose and fancy free and I suppose that was a good thing. But it wasn’t just—ArtReach was a part of it, but there were other things—well, you know John Gatti?

MARGARET: Yes, and I think we have—

STEPHEN: He’s my wife’s first cousin too.

MARGARET: Oh, really? Actually, Caitlin Davis, the intern who’s been working on this project as well, did an extensive interview with him and some—this is a great image of Carson. I don’t know—

STEPHEN: Dave Tonnesen. David was—he became, I think, a silversmith, a studio artist silversmith. I think he may still be around in Philadelphia. That looks like—this is unbelievable to look at these pictures.
MARGARET: So they had their own exhibition at the Downtown Gallery, so were they exhibiting their own work as this kind of public art practice, or were they typically projects more directly involved with community, like mural art projects? Or, was it a combination of the two?

STEPHEN: It was a combination. I’d say a majority of them were artists in their own right, so they’re always doing their own work when they weren’t working on the projects. They were also a—from the inside, they were very critical of the Museum. They loved the job, but if you think of the time, the—

[Crosstalk]

MARGARET: Oh yeah, it’s institutional critique, all of that going on, yeah.

STEPHEN: Oh yeah, so let’s shake this place up and it was, it was wonderful, but I had to deal with some of the other side of—

MARGARET: The logistics.

STEPHEN: First of all, “What are these hippies doing in the museum?”, which I was. These people aren’t—they’re my age. So, that was [inaudible]. Joe Morrow would be a good person if you don’t have—John Gatti, Joe Morrow—Joe Morrow runs, I think, a marketing graphic design business in Wilmington.

MARGARET: I don’t think we’ve connected with him yet.

STEPHEN: Last I—this was years ago, but he had a pretty successful business doing—he was trying to get the Museum as a client, I remember. Of course, Carson and some of the other people. There were people—Bill Pugh and David Pugh, brothers. Bill Pugh runs a fundraising consulting firm in—it’s out of Kennett Square, but he got involved in a lot of these things that happened. He was part of the ArtReach Program. He was a photographer, but then he got involved—whether it was with the DCCA when it started, a lot of these people made the shift over to when the DCCA started. Try to get myself back on track here.

MARGARET: Sorry, but that’s just wonderful though that the art museum, the CETA Program, was really, one could argue, the incubator possibly for the development of something like the DCCA Foundation coming up in ’79.

STEPHEN: Well, I have my—and I think a very accurate—you know, the Delaware Art Museum was absolutely at the core that caused the DCCA to start.

MARGARET: And not just—before though, I think that there’s this idea of a reaction against, which may be part of that institutional critique that the Museum itself has created that—

STEPHEN: Environment.

MARGARET: Environment for it to happen.
STEPHEN: Exactly, but not enough because—this is a microcosm of what’s going on in the country, you know, and if you really look through social history of the time, or political, this was going on everywhere. The Board of Trustees I remember at regular meetings—and I’m still, at this point I’m still matting pictures and making sure there’s toilet paper. We now have receptionists that are there every day all the time, new phone systems, you know, it’s an explosion of public money and the Board said—they obviously for the most part didn’t like what was going on. They were ticked off at Pete Wyrick.

Pete Wyrick was making good friends with people in the community who were more contemporary minded, but they said, and they said it over and over again at every board meeting, “we just want to make sure that you’ve heard us, that once the federal government pulls all this money out—“and what they were foreseeing was that Ronald Regan was going to become President and cut federal funding for these things. Jimmy Carter was really primed and pumped, so what happened was that having been able to do all of these things there was no way to withdraw. We became so much a part of the community, attendance was increasing, and there was much more of an interest even with the traditional collections.

We became more important as a museum and education was our real thrust. There’s a difference—the educational component of ArtReach was pretty much separate from what used to be our education department, which was primarily in studio craft almost. Marion Johnson was one of those highly recognized people, and this needs to be part of your work as well because we were better known, at least from a contemporary point of view, far better known because of what we called the education department did in those days. We had the Delaware Show every year before it became the Biennial, and in the same year we would have—no, it was every other year.

The Delaware Show would happen one year, the next year it was the Craft Show. Well, the Craft Shows were very cutting edge. I mean, they were the best people. You name any great—ceramics, silver, you know, you look through the collections that we had, they all were friends of Marion Johnson and wanted to be here. It’s an interesting part of our history, the art museum, but also this whole notion of why was craft always placed as this discipline and fine arts over here? It still goes on, but the Museum was the only—a few museums not only exhibited these on a museum level, but we bought them as well. They’re getting put into the collection.

So, we were very well known at that time and Marion—no, Jack—best experience I ever had to show—Jack Lenor Larsen was the major New York designer of the time. He also designed textiles that are still very collectible. Having a show of his that was part of this craft art banging of heads, and the door was still locked between the two spaces. You had to walk outside through the parking lot if I had to go over and see Marion or the people over there, but. So, it had— because these artists, when this was all happening, they were much more of a kindred spirit to the fact that what crafts people were doing was much more in tune with what was happening in the fine arts, breaking away from any traditional view of things.

There was two parts to the museum and it was definitely a schizophrenic kind of time of the traditional point of view, and they were important collections. These people didn’t say they were going to throw them away. They weren’t, you know, let’s burn down the Pre-Raphaelites. This
went along—so yeah, the museum was creating an audience and they were servicing the audience with contemporary things to the point where the doors were open to protest. John Gatti was the worst one, and I mean I say worst in a very affectionate way. He would just do things. He didn’t really care. “What, are you going to fire me? I’ll just go to the next place.” But he was a nice guy, everything like that, plus he’s my cousin-in-law. But they would do things.

They would—when they had the shows, they had one at the Downtown Gallery, which at the time was in the Bank of Delaware Building and not all that—it served the purpose of having a presence in a city center.

MARGARET: A quick question about that. So that was established—Downtown Gallery first exhibition was held there in 1970?

STEPHEN: Yes, it was all run by—at the time it was called The Women’s Committee.

MARGARET: The Women’s Committee, and that was primarily to have a space in downtown Wilmington—

STEPHEN: That was one of my first jobs too. Bruce St. John, who was hysterical, he saw me as a godsend because he didn’t have to drive back and forth into town with these ladies all the time who had become overnight curators.

MARGARET: Right.

STEPHEN: It became my job to work with them on the shows they were doing, and they were all very traditional kinds of things. Bruce St. John and Rowland Elzea did have a hand in overseeing that the quality was high enough to do this, but they would run it—but it was pretty much a women’s committee, you know, botanical paintings, every once in a while they would do a themed show, they would take things from the collection and put them down there; but as time went by it became more of a space for things like this. We were actually—we started actually running the Downtown Gallery. We being the professional staff and I think at the time Judy McCabe, who—Judy’s still with us.

She’d be a great one too. Judy McCabe, who was on our Board is a good one to talk about this because she came here. From—she and her husband I think came here from Tennessee, from Nashville I guess it was, but they love contemporary art and they befriended Bruce St. John and she’s been involved with it all along and in the community she was very involved with Carol Balick.

MARGARET: Who I have spoken with, yeah.

STEPHEN: Good. They were part of the time on a generation ahead of this group.

MARGARET: Okay. And was the Downtown Gallery—so, there was—the Museum felt a presence was needed in downtown Wilmington? It’s just interesting thinking about, kind of, the divide. Obviously Wilmington is an incredibly small city, but there still is, and I think there is
still now, this divide between where the Museum is up here on Kentmere Parkway and then downtown Wilmington, so that was felt at that point as well?

STEPHEN: Oh yeah, to the degree that—God there was probably in the early ’80s, huge discussions about taking over the courthouse and moving the Delaware Art Museum.

MARGARET: Really?

STEPHEN: Oh yeah. There are drawings somewhere in the archives of how—I’d have to look at the year, but probably—we built the new wing in ’87, this probably was, like, ’81 or ’82, then there was a discussion of moving—instead of expanding the museum here, taking over the Bancroft Mills that were going to be sort of given to us. We hired architects, got a grant, architects to at least move the entire education department and offsite shops and things like that for this fear of having to raise money to expand the current building. So, a lot of talk about: “You need to be addressing the populations of the City of Wilmington. You’re out there on Tower Hill ignoring [inaudible].” That was an actual thing.

It happened in Baltimore at the Baltimore Museum, Philadelphia Museum. It was just far enough away and more gentile, so the Downtown Gallery became an important part—or at least we were operating in a small space, but we were there and so we would do programs that were a little bit more progressive. And the ArtReach people, that group exhibited their work, but then they came back and they had exhibited in the main museum as well. They were making statements. This whole thing was very political, very conceptual. Naïve, but naïve in the sense, in looking back at it, they would all say, “of course, you’re 21. What else are you going to do?”

All this is happening and the Museum is certainly in the center of it, but in order for any of this to really occur where a community begins to protest, there has to be something to protest against, otherwise it just sits dormant. The museum was the perfect part, not so much because of the art but because of the old guard and [inaudible] was too far away. In fact, when the Brandywine River Museum opened in ’71 or whatever, there were plenty of people who said why don’t you give all the illustration collection to the Brandywine River Museum? Serious people, have the university take over the Delaware Art Museum.

That’s pretty well documented in the archives that John Jenney, the president at the time, presented the whole idea of—in a sense, let the University of Delaware take over the Museum. And that didn’t sit well, luckily. We did a lot programmatically. A lot. Some of the most intellectually important shows the museum ever did came through a collaboration with Bill Homer at the University of Delaware. The American avant-garde—there’s a catalogue on that as well. I’m getting way—you’re reminding me—I’m reminding myself of too many events.

MARGARET: Yeah, no, this was wonderful.

STEPHEN: But in terms of—my situations was that now we were raising money. We had a lot more programs. When Bob Frankel came here I was made Deputy Director and what did that mean? I [inaudible]. We were more professional then, you know, you wore white gloves. But,
my primary focus was on raising money. Money had been—once it happened, the Regan administration came in—I’m not blaming the Republicans or Democrats, but it’s pretty clear.

The deficits in the US are so bad because Jimmy Carter allowed all this spending, public programs, and it was a pretty big faucet that got turned off pretty quick, but we had become such a good, important part of the community because we were—there was dance going on, it was multi-discipline, that we had to save part of it. And so, we had to raise a lot more money. Whether it was through the National Endowment for the Humanities, the National Endowment for the Arts, corporations, starting major gift giving programs in membership… So that became the thrust of my job. And Bob—I’m not sure Bob Frankel had a particular [inaudible] in contemporary art at all.

He likes speaking most about the collections that we had, the Pre-Raphaelites and which—to me, having Rowland who was the guy seemed—there ought to be something that pushed us in a different direction. The drive was still to be involved with the community, and that was in everybody’s heart. Don’t forget where you came from, but time to move on, and we—the Latin community, we did an exhibition which caused a political problem. It was Dos Mundos was the name of the exhibition. It was a travelling exhibition and it was primarily based on graffiti art in Latin communities, New York, Philadelphia.

We did a film series, invited artists in to speak to the Latin American audience here in Wilmington and they were doing a movie—I’m trying to remember the—a very political based movie on, you know, our treatment of Hispanics and how they are living. Not unlike today with, immigration—and we were running film and we got two bomb threats that if you show that movie we’re going to set off a bomb at the Delaware Art Museum. This was—

MARGARET: That’s incredible.

STEPHEN: And Rowland and I had to get everybody out of the building. Everybody went out of the building and the police came, searched the whole building. Got another call saying don’t think about showing that tomorrow night because you’ll never find the bomb kind of thing. They never found any bomb, whether there was one or not, but I remember Rowland and I spent the night in the museum. What a stupid thing. There was nothing—[inaudible] said during a bomb threat, clear the building, don’t stay—

MARGARET: And then leave, yeah.

STEPHEN: I even had my dog with me. I had a bloodhound at the time and Rowland felt much better if I had the dog there. I don’t know what the dog was there to do, other than to sniff out bombs. I hadn’t taught him how to do that, but—so, those kinds of things stick in my head because that was the way things were in the community.

MARGARET: That’s incredible. I’m trying to look quickly at the year that that would have taken place.
STEPHEN: *Dos Mundos, Two Worlds*, was the exhibition and then there was a program that I forget the name of which was a series of different educational programs connected to the show.

MARGARET: Okay, I’ll find the year.

STEPHEN: So, this was going on by ’82 or ’83. We had done so much to expand the museum, not only in terms of collections, but what we were doing outreach-wise that we couldn’t do anything more unless we had more space. It just became virtually impossible. So, that’s when these discussions of why don’t we move the museum downtown—right down to all the drawings being done, but they were all being drawn by people who had a financial interest, real estate people who gave money for architects to show how the galleries could look at the courthouse, what could be done to this building, what could we get for it?

It was being taken serious by a lot of people, but looking back we were sort of like, it isn’t going to happen. First of all, it’s too much work and the people who are running the show aren’t going to devote that much time to it, which it failed. So the Bancroft Mills, that became another thrust of, well, instead of building a museum here, expand a museum, why don’t we go to the Bancroft Mills, they’ve agreed to give it to us, the space, and I was in charge of—

They wanted to give us the space because they didn’t know what to do with it, and it was going to cost something like $4 million to renovate the spaces so that we could use them for offsite storage for collections and things like—that, bigger studios, which all sounds great, but it was at a board meeting when all the numbers have been run, here are the options that we have, and Emily DuPont, who is—her and [inaudible] by far are the most philanthropic people supporting the museum. Every year they gave the biggest amount of money.

She would sit at the meetings, she was president this time, and she would start the meeting and she always had—she was knitting all the time and then she lost [inaudible]. She’s got her needles and she’s sort of dozing, but she was listening. It got to the point where we’re going to have to decide which way we’re going. We’re either going to have to go out and raise money for a new building—and she said, “Well, seems sort of silly to me to go down to the mill and spend $3 million when we figured out for $2.5 million we can build right here, so I think we should build right here. All in favor? Aye.”

So that was the beginning of why the museum, the new wing in ’87 expanded at the same time when I was made Director. I was the acting Director for a while when Bob Frankel left—

MARGARET: Okay, so that would have been in ’85.

STEPHEN: That would be ’85, right. I became the acting Director and then I think formally became the Director in early ’86 with the primary charge of raising money and building the new Delaware Art Museum. And along with that was with knowing the new space was coming along that it would be designed—that was another part of it. There had to be where’s the focus going to be, and the new wing itself, the ’87 wing, was designed to allow for big installation shows. It was definitely for contemporary—
MARGARET: Contemporary art.

STEPHEN: Not only to hang—it wasn’t so much to hang collections as it was to do public programs in the new auditorium where it still is today. It’s one of the few things left that I can walk around and, oh yeah, that’s the way it worked. So, it was the whole wing—and more inviting. It wasn’t this sort of stereotypical steps up from the Philadelphia museum, our little version of Rocky running up four steps, but sitting out in the parkway keeping people out—but nobody wanted to mess up the Parkway side, the brick building, symmetrical, all those things, so it got built the other way but with a much more inviting presence to it: big spaces, open lobbies, places to put sculpture, you know, a library that became much more public and open.

So, even the first show—the show that we opened the wing with was a Donna Dennis—

MARGARET: *Deep Station*.

STEPHEN: Was a coolish—you talk about people coming—people couldn’t wait to get to the new museum, you know, new building, new museum. Even the ones that didn’t understand or hated it couldn’t walk away without, there’s something cool going on at the Museum.

MARGARET: Right, I know, that’s an incredible—she was at—I wonder if she was at SUNY Purchase College at the time. That’s where she is now, and she did *Deep Station* so the installation of the subway station.

STEPHEN: The subway station, yeah.

MARGARET: So how—who brought her here? That’s one of the exhibitions I wanted to ask you about.

STEPHEN: Best answer that—I’m not sure whether it was Rowland. I’m trying to remember when Nancy Batty came here. I don’t think she was here in ’87, but she might have been. She was—Nancy Batty, her strength was in modern contemporary art. She may have been the one, but if it wasn’t it was Rowland. But it was that kind—in the lobby, in the new wing that looked out onto the Parkway, which is sort of still there, was a George Segal of construction workers up on steel girders, real steel girders and they’re sitting up there with ladders.

Before the museum even opened up we had that brought in, put there with lights on it, and for five months after the museum opened people would call and say we see that the place is still under construction because you could see it from the Parkway. People would gauge when it was time to go by this thing being in there. We tried to buy it but it was too expensive. George Segal came—

MARGARET: The Al Held?

STEPHEN: The Al Held was in the lobby. We bought it because what were we going to do with it? So yeah, a lot of that was all done. I think the Deborah Butterfield was—we were actively
using acquisitioned funds to buy work that was somewhat site specific. Because what would be
the point of that big wall if we weren’t—

MARGARET: Right, and that’s when the Bernie Felch wall was done at the same time for the
expansion. And that’s when—well not—well, yes, so and then the Biennial, the annual and the
craft exhibitions were combined for the Biennial in ’89 as well.

STEPHEN: Finally the barrier had been broken down. Even having meetings to try to make a
distinction, you know, why is this going to be in a show and this isn’t? And even the choosing of
the jurors for the exhibitions, oh boy, when I think back on that. Her name will escape me. New
York Times—

MARGARET: Oh, Roberta Smith?

STEPHEN: Yeah, who—there was a very strong feminist political bend to the work at the time,
but I’m sure Penny—after Otto Dekom left it was—

MARGARET: Penny Cope.

STEPHEN: Penny Cope was the critic, but it was the same. There was just this movement and all
of a sudden to choose which was wise. Somebody like Roberta Smith could do it knowing, you
know, it isn’t like she’s going to choose landscapes. She came in and she did, she took things
that—if it was politically correct it didn’t get in, and it was a great show, but I caused—we lost
one of our biggest donors because of it. There was—I forget who the artist was but it was
beautifully painted, but this sort of looking down—there was a **inaudible** of toilet seats looking
down straight on top of them and one had this beautiful blue water and the other one had blood
in it.

One of the—and the meaning of it had nothing to do with it, but this woman came screaming in
after she saw the show. She’s still around here. “I am never going to give this museum another
penny. You’ve got some woman who menstruated in a toilet on the painting and why would you
put that in the show?” It became this unbelievable—she never set a foot in the museum again,
after which everybody was, whew, that’s not such a bad thing. But this is all going on after—this
is long after the DCCA started, but the DCCA quite literally as an organization, started as it was
the exhibition **inaudible** that the work that was chosen in probably—it was still the Delaware
Show and Rick Rothrock was certainly one of them, Carson, Graham—

MARGARET: Graham Dougherty, um-hum.

STEPHEN: You could write a whole book on his—why he didn’t end up going to prison just on
the threats he would make when he would walk into the lobby of the Museum and—

MARGARET: I haven’t interviewed him yet.

STEPHEN: —scream. Because he wouldn’t say, “can I see Steve Bruni?” Or “can I see
**inaudible**? He’d walk into the lobby and scream at the top of his lungs **inaudible** “place up”
and the receptionist would be sitting there, “do I call the police or—“he would just go screaming through the museum because he got turned down for the show. So, a group of, like, five or six people I’d say goes, “well, let’s show our work. Let’s find a space in Wilmington and show our work.”. And I think that might have been in the—I think it was a fire station and then they, from there, moved to a metal fabrication—

MARGARET: They were down at the Water Works—

STEPHEN: For a long time.

MARGARET: For a long time and then—yeah, and then I guess to the Riverfront.

STEPHEN: But they were. It wouldn’t have happened if it hadn’t been for—I can’t say the museum is proactive in wanting to form this group, but it was quite literally, “now is the time, let’s have a show of work that the museum should be showing.” Yes, it was self-serving but it was more than that. It was, “we need to change things around here. Everybody can’t be painting barns.” Even though the museum was exhibiting and buying, starting to buy contemporary work I think we were ignoring the contemporary artists that worked in this area. So, you know, they put on another show, there was enough support, it was fun. I’m trying to think of when the Fifth Street Gallery—because we haven’t even touched upon that.

MARGARET: I know, I know.

STEPHEN: Is all right to get a glass of water or—I’m drying myself out.

MARGARET: Oh, no, no, and you know, I should have thought about that and I’m sorry I—what I’m going to do is pause this.

[Break in Audio]

MARGARET: Okay, so this is part two of the interview with Stephen Bruni on March 1, 2013. Okay, so—

STEPHEN: [Inaudible] DCCA.

MARGARET: DCCA, and actually in general talking about spaces, Galleries, and non-collecting institutions like the DCCA outside of the Museum at that time, so the Wilmington Circulating Gallery of Paintings, Somerville–Manning, Carspecken-Scott, Station Gallery, LB Jones Gallery, and Fifth Street Gallery as well, so kind of overall impressions and any specific memory.

STEPHEN: Well, for the most part most of them were—a few of them—the most well-known ones were primarily framing galleries, though exhibiting art was an important part of it, but maintained a very traditional—I’m talking Somerville–Manning, Carspecken-Scott— they probably still exist because they sold work that was more in tune with the sensibilities of the major population and the money. But, interestingly, the Grand Opera House is obviously a very important factor in all of this because it did move attention to the city, but it was sort of like
putting a Delaware Art Museum—when you just happen to put it in the middle of a city doesn’t mean you’re attracting, necessarily.

Economically you’re doing good things for the population in the city but you’re not really paying much attention programmatically. So, that became another—that took some of the heat off of us quite frankly because they have the big gala celebrations and like that and when Rob had Fifth Street Gallery—do you know the years that—

MARGARET: So, he had Fifth Street Gallery between ’73, I think is the earliest when it opened, and it went through—I want to say ’78 or ’79. Of course, like you were saying earlier, documentation on these activities is obviously not the best.

STEPHEN: I’m sure Rob did not give any files.

MARGARET: No, and finding a way to talk to anyone to see if there are any archival materials is tricky. I have been in touch with Tom Watkins.

STEPHEN: Oh, good one.

MARGARET: Yeah, and it seems like he was pretty involved with some of those activities as well.

STEPHEN: Oh yeah, it wasn’t much different. Tom Watkins was doing things, a comic book and all these other things, but that was as fine art as anything else was at the time.

MARGARET: In the time, yeah, of course. I’m looking. There is an announcement of the closing of the gallery in here, and that’s what I’m trying—I’m pretty sure it’s ’78.

STEPHEN: Here it is.

MARGARET: Yeah. Looking at this, that’s the phosphorescent polyurethane sculptures that Lynda Benglis was doing at the same time.

STEPHEN: At the time, for Wilmington—it had never been seen but you’re right, and I’m not sure if Rob came up with it entirely out of the blue.

MARGARET: Right, but he has not—he’s pretty contemporary with the work that she’s doing as well. Now, of course, I can’t find it. I know it’s ’78 or ’79, but of course—

STEPHEN: It’s—because I would have thought it didn’t last that long.

MARGARET: No, it was pretty short lived.

STEPHEN: Yeah, but that really became the—maybe because I was involved. I probably should think about it more objectively. I thought it was so cool what he was doing, and I knew it was performance as much as anything. Rob loved having parties, but the bizarre thing—some of the things he would show at the gallery were—it wasn’t Mapplethorpe I don’t believe, but the
subject matter was maybe even rougher than the Mapplethorpe work of the time. I’ll never forget going—everybody—it became a social event for the wealthy, the young, you know, artists of the area, politicians. This was the greatest thing because it gave everybody a sense of “I feel like I’m in New York,” and people flocked to it.

When you went to the show—I remember going to an opening. The gallery maybe was the size of this room, two of them or maybe three, but he had an exhibition of this photographer. From a distance I couldn’t tell. It looked like abstraction and then I went up and I was looking at them. I thought, oh my God. I’m looking around and see board members going around with their wine and isn’t this wonderful. I didn’t see a single person go up and look at the pictures and I know that Rob had to just eat it up. He always had a camera with him, whether it was a throwaway, but he would take pictures [inaudible] all these people sipping and you could see the artwork that was on the wall.

I mean, it was off the charts, but nobody complained. I don’t think there was an article written, or I don’t think anybody must have looked because that would have caused such a stir in Wilmington, which Rob would have loved that as well. But people wanted to go there and Rob knew how to get them there, but he was also very supportive of the working contemporary artists. They were all people connected with DCCA. Rob was making friends with everyone because Wilmington needed that.

MARGARET: And it seems like that was the only space showing contemporary art, aside from what was, you know, the presence of the Museum at the Downtown Gallery, but showing any sort of work in downtown Wilmington.

STEPHEN: Yeah, that was—maybe some of the restaurants might on occasion.

MARGARET: Right—

STEPHEN: Cromwell. Not Cromwell, Cavanaugh’s.

MARGARET: Oh, I know Crumbs Restaurant—

STEPHEN: Yeah, on Market.

MARGARET: Yeah, is that where—was Crumb’s where Cavanaugh’s—

STEPHEN: Yes.

MARGARET: That’s what I—

STEPHEN: I’m trying to think if they’re the same. Was it Crumb’s at the time?

MARGARET: Crumb’s would do—

STEPHEN: I forget that they would do—on the upper and lower floors, they would exhibit the work of the artists. We did have—well, they had no other place to show. Philadelphia wasn’t any
better. It was bigger, but Philadelphia also suffered great controversy with the Philadelphia Museum of Art who used to do an annual show. I think it was a juried show for local artists, Philadelphia artists and they just, boom, cut it off and said we’re never going to do that again right around the time—it helped the people at the DCCA because people in Philadelphia couldn’t believe it. There was no place in Philadelphia other than the Marian Locks Gallery and you had to be part of the gallery to be showing any work.

MARGARET: There’s some connections with the Works Gallery, which would have been now with Snyderman, correct?

STEPHEN: Rick Snyderman, who still owns—well, it’s the Snyderman Gallery but the Works Gallery there was two galleries. They started right on South Street and it was very contemporary but primarily studio craft.

MARGARET: Studio craft, yeah.

STEPHEN: And he was very knowledgeable. We did some shows. He helped us with certain shows, so yeah, and he knew—I think he took some of these artists on, but it wasn’t until he opened up the gallery on Cherry that he actually started showing paintings. Before that it was all craft. But, we were still involved in the craft world and the line was—that’s the other thing about this time. That line was broken down between down between, okay, this is craft and this is art, because these people [inaudible], the people that started the DCCA, that you know, it’s an object, it’s—they helped with that.

The museum was still in its own way still very much ahead of the curve when it came down to breaking down this barrier. There’s still things I remember the last time I was in looking at the collection of things downstairs, downstairs [inaudible] way back. The craftwork that we—the Albert Paley—Albert Paley was going to be commissioned to do a sculpture for the reservoir because we were getting, sort of, planning the whole expansion here. There were discussions of having an Albert Paley—the Pre-Raphaelites—we made a very obvious connection to arts and crafts, Pre-Raphaelites, studio, craft, so we were—I mean, people in that field knew, you know, and Pre-Raphaelites caused it.

And so, people knew that so we were always trying to make that connection. Rowland was exceptional at it, and so we started collecting these pieces that [inaudible] Albert Paley that’s in the collection is a—there’s a silver chalice; it’s the first piece he ever did. He was here and we were walking—I said, have you ever seen your work here and he said, oh my God, I forgot. The first piece of sculpture he ever did. He was friends with Marion Johnson; he was accepted into the Craft Exhibition. Before that, he was doing jewelry. And he said, that’s the biggest piece I’ve made in my lifetime, but he said that it’s not supposed to be exhibited that way.

Take the hood off [inaudible], you know, security. I think Nancy Batty was there. He picked it up and he bent it because it had somehow been bent before and wasn’t the way he meant it to be. So he bent it and put it back in the thing, so it’s—Victor Spinski—
MARGARET: And I’m so disappointed that I didn’t get to speak with him. I wasn’t able to interview him.

STEPHEN: It is—and he—oh, Clayton—Victor Spinski was, again, a generation ahead, he was more Rowland’s generation but, boy, he was a pistol. He was one of those people who [inaudible] with a major reputation in New York and good representation in New York, and well-known all over the country for doing [inaudible] Lloyd ceramic and I’ll never forget for the Craft Show, the Delaware Craft Show that was every other year, Marion—people who achieved a certain level of recognition didn’t want to be juried into exhibitions, which is still the case today. They’re above it.

So, Marion Johnson said, well, we’ll do a number of invited artists because we want the show to have, you know, the quality needs to be—and it’s good for younger artists to be exhibited with these people, so it’s all a good idea. But, of course, it didn’t go through any process so he made—so Victor made a cardboard box and filled it with trash all made from clay, and this [inaudible] really cool. No, it wasn’t a box it was a silver trash can, metal trash can, lid sort of hanging off of it with garbage in it. You know, banana peels, coffee grinds, all ceramic, except for the top of it he had three used condoms made out of—and that was pure Victor Spinski.

Oh, I got an idea, I’m inviting you in, they can’t jury me out and I’m sure—it was in there and it had to go into the show. At the time, some people were appalled but not Marion Johnson. She was hip enough to get it.

MARGARET: I would love to know where that is. Oh, gosh.

STEPHEN: Is Victor Spinski’s wife still alive?

MARGARET: I don’t know. That I don’t know. I could—

STEPHEN: I don’t even know if Joe Moss is still alive.

MARGARET: Yes, he is.

STEPHEN: He’s one to talk to.

MARGARET: And it’s great. I’ve done audio and video interviews with him.

STEPHEN: Oh, good. At his farm?

MARGARET: At his farm, yes, which is good.

STEPHEN: Did he take you on a tour of his barn with all the sound sculpture?

MARGARET: He did, with all the sound sculpture. It’s incredible.

STEPHEN: It’s incredible.
MARGARET: That is incredible, so yeah.

STEPHEN: It’s [inaudible]. Joe—well, the piece that we have was one, but Joe did a lot of work with the museum for a while and I remember him taking me to MIT. He was a visiting scholar, whatever it was, with the Department of Visual Experimentation. I forget the actual name of it, but famous, and he took me up there because he was friends with all of the—I mean, the true geniuses in acoustic sound, but they were all artists and they all were living in this one building of studios and it was just like you think at MIT. Things were flying around wireless and doing all these sound sculptures. I was just so astonished. And we did a couple of exhibitions in New York.

We had space at the IBM building in New York. There was a gallery in the basement of the IBM building which is on the corner of Madison and 57th and—oh, I know what it was. These people from MIT had that space to do an exhibition. That was the only space in New York cause if the Whitney didn’t create a show you could never show at the Met or Museum of Modern Art. There was no place in the New York that if they didn’t come up with the idea that isn’t done in-house you can’t get in New York, but the IBM building went up and they built—the entire basement, a huge space, but because we were—the John Sloan exhibition was going to go there I remember.

Right before that show, Joe Moss and all of these—I’ll forget their names, Deter—mostly Germans did the sound exhibition. I don’t know where I’m going with this other than the fact Joe Moss was, again, a part of a period of—especially with sculptors, not just sound sculptors, but you know, the well-known people. But Joe had a chip on his shoulder and is very difficult to work with because he wanted nothing greater than to have a show of all the things that were in his barn. Some of them had begun to deteriorate but nothing to the point where it couldn’t be shown because they were so user friendly.

MARGARET: Oh, of course. I think the only thing that’s really started to deteriorate are pieces from the installation—the exhibition that he had at the Mezzanine Gallery, the controversial exhibition that was then subsequently closed at some point during the round early. There was oil on the floor and those pieces have started to deteriorate.

STEPHEN: All of that made Joe happy. If he could irritate somebody he was cool with it, even though when you played with him with his sculpture that was on his farm, I don’t know how much—it’s been years and years, but he had this blue piece that was like an arc that came up. It’s probably 12 feet high, but it sat at the end of—near his house, but he would say, “okay, Steve I want you—we’re going to go for a walk, turn around so the sculpture’s right behind me.” And he said, “now, we’re just going to talk and I’m going to walk right behind you but don’t turn around.” So, we kept talking and I just walked 100 yards and Joe’s still talking to me and he said okay, turn around.

He hasn’t moved from the sculpture and it sounds like he’s—just like our piece here, but I just thought why isn’t this in city? He always had these temporary public exhibition or installations and people loved them. One of the electrical things that were wired acoustics, you know, these sort of half spheres that you walk through and there’s this bizarre space but it was connected to some amplifiers. Those things were always a problem because things like that never work.
MARGARET: They never—yeah, so probably technology might—

STEPHEN: So Joe—that was a good person to talk to. There were—and he knew Victor really well.

MARGARET: And, of course, I mean, really, the department that Julio [daCunha] was responsible for shaping coming from Cranbrook and then how he really shaped that department at the University of Delaware—

STEPHEN: He was very proactive about raising the level.

MARGARET: Right, he was.

STEPHEN: I think it was sort of the foster child as far as the university was concerned.

MARGARET: Certainly, certainly, and he showed with Rob at Fifth Street Gallery as well.

STEPHEN: That’s right.

MARGARET: I think actually quite a few exhibitions he had at Fifth Street. So just—

STEPHEN: You tell me when to stop.

MARGARET: That’s why I’m trying to look at my notes and think about—okay, three questions that I want to get to before we stop talking. I do want to revisit the art Sales and Rental Gallery and what Alice was doing because I think her involvement in the activities and the support that she gave to the contemporary art community here in Wilmington is important.

STEPHEN: Big time.

MARGARET: So, talking about that, and then talking about any memories you have of the Newark art scene.

STEPHEN: Of the what?

MARGARET: Of the Newark art scene as well. So, let’s start with Sales and Rentals.

STEPHEN: That’s a good one because that 1975 I think it started—Pete Wyrick, you know, realized that we don’t own that much to present from collections, contemporary art, and it was sort of his idea and a woman by the name of Nancy Caroon who was on the board. We were still at that time still very much—if we were going to start something new it had to be volunteer supported, so Pete Wyrick with Nancy Caroon and then Alice [Hupfel] based on Pete Wyrick—he gave them connections in New York and I think he went on a couple of trips with them with the idea being, well, if we can’t have it in the collection—the Sales and Rental Gallery was modeled after the Philadelphia Museum’s Sales and Rental Gallery—so it would be a good way. So a tiny space in the old building was set up with racks and Alice and Nancy Caroon were the volunteers in charge of it at the time.
[Inaudible] gave it to me to oversee just like St. John, which I loved, but it was always let Steve eat it, which was great because the point being we could go to New York, we could get—our relationships with galleries became wonderful. The first one was Nancy Hoffman I think, and then between Alice and Nancy, myself, we just had these much better relationships with all the galleries in New York than the Museum had—the Museum in general—because we weren’t buying a lot of art in those days, especially contemporary art. So, they were very happy to let us have anything, you know, to bring down here was the Museum’s way of getting people, sort of, subconsciously exposed to contemporary art.

Take it home with you. If you got a problem with contemporary art, the nice thing about this is you can take it home and live with it, and that worked 99 percent of the time. The things that went through that gallery, things that Alice got, Larry River’s pieces from the late ‘50s that were eight hundred dollars. Eight hundred dollars to me in those days might have been $80,000.00, but it became a place that—and Alice did a wonderful job of making it available to artists in the area. It wasn’t all New York. It was New York, Washington, Baltimore, Philadelphia were the galleries that we went to get inventory, but Alice developed a really good reputation with the area artists and it was a way—never did we represent any artist in a sense.

Poor Alice had to go though, “Will you look at my portfolio? I’d like to have a show here.” That wasn’t done, but “Why don’t you leave a couple pieces here and make it part of the program?” Alice made it very successful because she was at it, you know, constantly with individuals, but this was at a time when the—I guess it was Governor DuPont, [Pierre Samuel] Pete DuPont helped through the State Legislature to change the laws, the credit laws in Delaware which said if your credit card business is in Delaware you can charge whatever you want.

Delaware was the center that was screwing the rest of the country, but it was a good thing for Delaware because every bank, major bank in New York, Citibank, Chase Manhattan, Chemical Bank all moved their credit card businesses to Wilmington, and they were all in New York so it was a very sophisticated, much more sophisticated group of people. They all had art programs and money, so the Sales and Rental Gallery became a bit of a cash cow and it tied us in with these new corporations. It was my job to raise money from them so it was a wonderful sort of—the ability to network with the corporations through putting art on their walls that provided money to the museum, education to the employees, and a relationship that helped us out with raising money for big exhibitions and programs.

They were all big sponsors of the art museum and the Sales and Rental Gallery had a—it was a wonderful tool to have with that. It was always a wonderful service, but then there was a—I remember a meeting we had to hold because the other gallery, Somerville–Manning and—it was unfair competition. We were a tax exempt organization and therefore artists would rather show their work here because we took less of a commission if it sold. All of these things, and they said it’s unfair competition and it should be illegal for us to do it. Wasn’t true because they said it wasn’t part of your mission.

It was very easy to make the case, well, yes it is, you know, and if there’s—it’s like a membership, you know, if the museum makes enough money to pay for the program and all of
that. But there was a time it was making real good money. I remember having to have a meeting in the auditorium—this was after I was Director. It was, like, in ’88 or ’89, but they all—the audience was full in the auditorium of artists, gallery owners, and dealers, primarily to respond to any questions they had because they were pissed off.

The gallery, Vicki Manning, in particular. But by the end of the meeting the artists were so supportive of the museum and, I mean, this group that we had been talking was so supportive, well, the museum and the Sales and Rental Gallery, “if it weren’t for them nobody would see our work and so who are you to sit here and complain? Don’t we get a voice?” To the galleries say, “they’re exposing more work and creating more clients than you are, but you’re benefiting by it because the museum is getting people to consider contemporary art for their homes and businesses.” I remember it was a testy kind of situation but in the end everybody was real friends because we could sort of show—not just us but the artists, you know, “How many of my works have you sold? None.”

“Alice has had my work all around and she’s sold this many pieces and why shouldn’t the museum be supporting artists that way?” As long we’re not a gallery representing artists—that would have been a line to cross. There was often a curatorial—here at the museum—a curatorial discomfort with the fact that our [inaudible] was in the building, it wasn’t curatorially vetted, and I can sort of understand, but the quality of the work was really there. In fact, the museum bought some things out of it for the collections, and also we received people who bought things from the Sales and Rental Gallery.

A lot of it was high-end, especially in the beginning. It was Space Gallery, Nancy Hoffman, and so you were dealing in really good stuff that’s still relatively inexpensive, prints primarily. There are a lot of things in the collection that the people who bought them gave them to the museum up to a certain point, and that was part of it as well. The more you got people involved the greater the chances down the road that you would end up with them. There’s some significant pieces that were part of that. So, the Sales and Rental Gallery did play that kind of role. It was much more an outreach kind of situation.

MARGARET: Okay—

STEPHEN: And some people that worked for Alice, business was good enough that she had at least one fulltime assistant, but it became very labor intensive and space intensive and it was becoming—that’s why space was not designed into this expansion, you know, the cost of outfitting it and the business that was going on, there were too many other places people could go for that, so it sort of died its own death, but not because it wasn’t a wonderful program. We couldn’t afford—before we could afford it because we paid [inaudible], so to build space at an expense per square foot, only half the café would be there, half the store.

It could have been a nice service still where Alice could have—out of an office, so to speak, almost, you know, on the internet, what are you looking for, we’ll do that for you, we’ll arrange to get things like that for you, but I—and in Alice’s case if you’re not touching the art it sort of loses its flavor. Along the lines of the sales/rental gallery, the other thing—I don’t know if I’ve ever mentioned it to people here since I’ve retired, but this time—just about the only piece of
modern architecture in Wilmington is the Hercules building. It’s a postmodern building done by Kone Pedersen Fox, which is a major, major architectural firm.

But at the time, the CEO of Hercules when they were going to build that building, he had decided—he wasn’t a collector of contemporary art but he said if we’re going to have a building that is modern like this then I think the art ought to reflect that, so—and I knew the CEO. In fact, she used to coach me in little league baseball, so [inaudible] called me up and explained that this is what we want to do and would the museum help with doing it, and of course we would. And there was a budget they set up, a committee at Hercules, but it was being done with the Sales and Rental Gallery, and there were 300 works of art purchased for the Hercules building and craft, including glass pieces by some of the best glass people, best ceramic people.

Joe Moss, his work is in there. He did a series of things called Hummers, which were—they’re wall pieces and you can actually talk into these pipes that come out of it. So, it was a wonderful chance to show some of the best artists from the region, but a certain percentage had to be of people from the region, but then a lot of it came and it was a very impressive collection. Hercules Corporation already owned, over years, paintings by N.C. Wyeth and [inaudible]. They had a big collection and once Hercules was failing they sold them all off at Christie’s like in the dead of night because we had been canvassing—

MARGARET: They sold the Wyeth and—

STEPHEN: They sold all—the executive office area had the Wyeths, Dean Cornwell, all American Illustration pieces but very high end. They sold those off but I could never find out what was happening to the other 300 works of art that—

MARGARET: The rest of the collection.

STEPHEN: Many of which would be—I think the museum would want.

MARGARET: Right, and you don’t know what the state of—

STEPHEN: I don’t know what happened. I think the last time that—because Hercules literally just—the CEO just left town with pockets full. Hercules shut down. But I don’t know what happened to them because I would have seen them if there were any auction pieces or things like that. I would have seen if they were selling them, and I would ask people what was happening that were renting out parts of the building to people. It would be worth—

MARGARET: It would be—yeah, I would love to know where that collection has gone. Would that have been the case with Bank of America as well because they had a corporate collection?

STEPHEN: Except they weren’t here at the time. It was MBNA.

MARGARET: I mean, right, no, I mean MBNA, yeah, before—

STEPHEN: MBNA had their own collection.
MARGARET: So then what happened with their own collection that they had brought here not of—

STEPHEN: Charlie Collie. He bought just about every piece they had personally.

MARGARET: From local artists in some cases?

STEPHEN: Some, some, but artists in Maine. He was the type of guy who’d walk into a gallery and bought the whole thing out many times, sort of like a Joe [inaudible]. Less taste.

MARGARET: I don’t think I want to know what that is.

STEPHEN: And he was buying major things. They sold a major portion—some were owned by Mr. [Charles] Collie, some were owned by the bank when the Bank of America came they sold a good portion of that off. It was sort of like stockholder value kind of stuff, so I don’t know where that went, but as far as Hercules things are concerned Alice would know if there are archives for the Sales and Rental Gallery, an inventory of all the pieces that were bought. Not that every one of them would be a museum collection piece, but in terms of a print collection, Alfred Jensen’s, Bridget Riley’s.

MARGARET: Are there any other corporate collections like that in Wilmington that the museum was involved with helping to shape that may have some sort of—

STEPHEN: The banks all changed so much. Chemical Bank, which I don’t even know who owns Chemical Bank now, Chemical Bank, they were one of our big customers. Their CEO, their CEO here, was on the board and he was very—they bought quite a few things, but once Chemical Bank sort of left town or were bought out by somebody, those things I think all went back to New York where they used them in the buildings up there.

MARGARET: Okay. It’s just interesting thinking about—and this could be, like, someone’s dissertation project, but thinking about corporate collections and what happens to works of art when ownership changes hands. One of my—and this is totally not related to our interview, but one of my professors in college basically found the early Richard Prince works in a corporate collection, and this is what happens to these collections when they shift hands, so if you think of any other collection or contacts that I can maybe—because it seems like, like you were saying, at this moment these corporate collections are really being filled and if the museum was involved in shaping those collections it would be very interesting to know what happened to them and where these works of art are.

STEPHEN: Absolutely. Yeah, well, JP Morgan, they bought things as well and they’re still here.

MARGARET: Yeah, that’s true.

STEPHEN: I remember Chase came, but Chase had their own corporate collection with a curator. In fact, most of them did and the New York person sort of turned it over to Alice and to the museum. You’re getting great stuff, you know, they’d just as soon stay in New York, so
they—somewhere, Alice would have the records and Alice is not well, but I know she’s a good hoarder and if there are Sales/Rental Gallery files, things like that—

MARGARET: And we do have those files in the institutional archives, which is good. I just haven’t spent the time working with those yet. So, just one other quick question while we’re getting interrupted by hammering. Okay, and we can kind of end this way since I kept you talking for over two hours now. The Newark art scene, so obviously—

STEPHEN: Do you mean the university or—

MARGARET: Well, that’s the thing. So there’s the University of Delaware and obviously there were connections between faculty there and the Museum, but then some other interesting spaces showing interesting work and I’m just wondering if you were aware of these, if you remember any of them. There was Flounder Graphics and the Deluxe Luncheonette, which was this, apparently from what I’ve read and what I’ve seen, this greasy spoon diner in Newark that would show work in their space. I’ve seen some images of the diner. I can’t even figure out where they showed the work, but I haven’t seen any good installations. You see the countertops and the milkshake machine.

I’m not really imagining where this work was shown, so I’m wondering if you remember any of those and if you have any recollections of that scene in Newark and then how it did or did not interact with the Wilmington scene.

STEPHEN: My connection with Newark was only the university, so I didn’t know that there was—I wouldn’t have known that there was much of an art scene there. I just know that Wilmington and Newark might as well have been in East Texas.

MARGARET: Miles—I know, but the divide—

STEPHEN: Always a sad thing.

MARGARET: Yeah, the divide between that, I don’t—

STEPHEN: In every way you can think except that I think we developed a very good relationship with the major painters at the university. They were very involved in Newark. I remember that. They did things for the community outside of the university, but I don’t remember any galleries or any—even Klondike Kate’s had art work hanging in it, different people whenever you might go in there, but I don’t recall so much an art scene outside of what the university was doing. But, I mean, if you think about it, my God, we had—the museum not only collected Joe Moss but showed his work for so long. Larry Holmes had a one-person show here.

MARGARET: All of them. Steve Tanis.
STEPHEN: Steve Tanis had a major show here, his first major show. Victor Spinski was shown here fairly often. I could go right down the line. I think every one of them—Julio had a show here. They all did. I mean, the relationship was very close.

MARGARET: And the sculpture students as well. Joe’s told me about the sculpture exhibition that sounds like it was on the Parkway and on the Museum campus as well, so it’s not just for the faculty but for the students, which is wonderful.

STEPHEN: And it was that and also the art history department had—if there’s any way I could get a copy of the exhibition list, just—

MARGARET: Oh, of course. You can have this one.

STEPHEN: Great, because—

MARGARET: But that’s just two decades.

STEPHEN: There were times—real cutting edge things were being done when I came here that Clayton—oh, I’ll remember his last name, but he and Victor Spinski were good buddies, both at the university, and were always pulling everybody’s leg. This guy Clayton—and he was a well-known [inaudible]. He built a complete skeleton of a—I think it was a brontosaurus and only at night we worked—I just started working at the museum and out by what used to be the Education Wing there’s lots of property. He buried them. This brontosaurus was, you know, just the spine, head [inaudible] and he buried them out there, but let certain bones come up out of the ground.

I forget how they went about it, but the town people were here and, I mean, it was one big hoax. I think that [inaudible] of dinosaur remains found at the Delaware Museum.

MARGARET: That’s great.

STEPHEN: After that, he actually went out west and he was doing that as sort of his art form. He would go out in Arizona and out of ceramics make things and put them out and then wait, you know, for people to get suckered in. So, just like Victor. Fun days.

MARGARET: Right, right. Oh, well this is wonderful. I’m going to—

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Duration: 130 minutes