



Interviewee: Theodore (Ted) S. Stern

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Interviewer: Kitty Robinson

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BEGIN INTERVIEW

Kitty Robinson: Dr. Stern, I'm so glad to see you. We're so pleased that you could come. And what I'm going to ask you are just questions that let us know about your life and how you came to Charleston. And we'll just keep moving from there. And, obviously, your involvement with Historic Charleston, but I'm going to start with, could you tell us about your early life and how and when you came to Charleston?

Ted Stern: I was born in New York City, Manhattan, on December 25, 1912. And my mother used to say that I was a Christmas present that couldn't be exchanged or returned. And I spent the first 16 years of my life in New York. I attended Columbia Grammar Prep School there. I was active. I was captain of the swimming team, and I was quite active. And I was a pretty good C student.

And I traveled quite a bit. I went on the educational tour of France in 1924. And with my parents, I went to Europe in 1929. And it was an extensive trip, and I went with my father. My mother, my grandmother, and my sister left earlier, and my father and I came later in July. And we traveled all through Europe, met part of my father's family over in Paris. And it was a very important learning experience for me in being with my family. And my father passed away with a heart attack when we returned to the U.S. in October of 1929.

I was born at 111th Street and Broadway. I left 111th Street and Broadway, and we moved to 305 Riverside Drive, which was 103rd Street in New York. One of the great remembrances I had was George Gershwin, who lived in a beautiful, grey granite house very close to our apartment. And I was coming home from school, and I guess I was 15 years old. And he grabbed me and he told me, he says, "You've got to come in. My father died. And I need an extra man for a service," a religious service.

And I went in there, and that started my friendship with George Gershwin. And I could relay the wonderful story that George told me about his father. He said his father was driving a car, and a policeman stopped him on Riverside Drive for speeding. And the policeman said to

him, "You know you were speeding. I'm going to give you a ticket." And George Gershwin's father said, "Do you know who I am? I'm the father of Judge Gershwin." And the policeman said, "Well, if you're a father of a judge, I'll let you go." But that's one of my remembrances of a great story.

But my sister was at Wellesley College. I finished Columbia Grammar School, and I was admitted to Johns Hopkins as a freshman. My mother then moved to 15 East 69th Street, which was an apartment hotel, now prominently known as The Westbury. And, coincidentally, my mother was born in a brownstone house at 15 East 69th Street before The Westbury was built. And my grandmother was born in New York City in Manhattan, and she was born on 33rd Street. So, we go from 33rd Street to 69th Street to 111th Street, back to 103rd Street and Riverside Drive, and then back to 69th Street. And my mother moved there about six months after my father died. And she really brought up my sister and myself.

And I went to Johns Hopkins in 1930 and was quite active on the campus and participated in swimming. I was captain of the swimming team there and fortunate to be on the squad of the U.S. Olympics in 1932. That was the year that the Japanese clobbered us at the Olympics in swimming. But it was a great experience for me. And in 1934, when I graduated from Johns Hopkins - this sounds like a coincidence - I received the Alexander K. Barton Cup, which is awarded to the graduating senior who contributed most to the University.

And at that time, the retiring president, Dr. Joseph Sweetman Ames, was being replaced by Dr. Isaiah Bowman. And at the senior banquet, when the award was to be made, I was seated between the two presidents. And upon accepting the award, when I sat down, Dr. Bowman turned to me, and he said, "Ted, how would you like to work for me?" Remember, this was 1934 in the midst of the Depression. I said, "Well, if it's a job, I'd love it."

So, I was assistant to the president for six years and became secretary of the board of trustees at Hopkins and really had one of the greatest experiences of my life. And he often told me that, if you ever become president of an educational institution, don't stay less than five years, but don't stay more than ten. So, I've always remembered that, and I followed that ruling myself. And I've suggested to my successors that they stay no less than five but no more than ten. And I can say both Harry Lightsey and Alex Sanders followed that suggestion of mine.

But Dr. Bowman, in 1939, advised me. He said, "Ted, we're going to go to war. We're going to join this conflagration in Europe. I'll get you a commission." And I said, "Dr. Bowman, I don't want a commission. I want to get in and get out. So, I'll do something else." He said, "Well, why don't you join the Naval Reserve?"

So, on October 16, 1940, I joined the Naval Reserve unit in Baltimore, Maryland. And on October 18th, Franklin D. Roosevelt, President of the United States, called one unit to active duty in the armed services. And it was my Reserve unit, and I was an apprentice seaman. That was on October 18th. As is Navy policy, I became automatically in two days an apprentice seaman to a seaman 2nd. On October 20th, we were shipped overseas.

Now, here's another strange thing that occurred, and they've occurred all my lifetime. But the first ship that I was assigned to - our Reserve unit was assigned to was none other than the USS Clemson. I had never heard of Clemson before. And I was on that ship for approximately six months. And one day, I was up on the bridge where the captain usually had the signalman strikers. And he turned to me and he said, "Ensign Stern." I said, "You've got a mistake here. I'm a seaman 1st class." He said, "Here's your commission." I was selected as a Reserve officer of DVS USNR as an athletic and recreation officer.

It so happened that the Navy Department had very few athletic and recreation officers. And the Navy was expanding, and they had what was called the Tunney Kessing Hamilton program. Gene Tunney was the former Marine and the heavyweight boxing champion, Kessing was the captain of a Navy football team, and Tom Hamilton was the football coach. And they were to review all the records of people in the Navy, and they found out I was a college graduate and I had been some sort of an athlete. So, I was named as one of the DVS USNR athletic and recreation officers.

I was ordered as the athletic and recreation officer of the 15th Naval District, which was in Panama, where the ship was stationed. And another sidebar to this is that the chief boatswain's mate, who was a regular tough sailor, was always giving the Reserves a hard time. And he used to call us the Baltimore Preserves. And as a matter of interest, the captain knew of his antagonism towards any Reserve person. He said that he would like to have Chief Boatswain's Mate Honeywell pipe me ashore.

And he gave his uniform, and I was piped to shore. I was met by the commandant's chauffeur, taken to the headquarters of 15th Naval District, and ushered in to the Admiral's office, ADM Sadler. When I met the commandant, he welcomed me aboard. I told him, or I said, "I did not join the Navy to be an athletic and recreation officer." He said, "Well, if you do a good job, the first decent job that comes along, I'll offer it to you, that I think you can handle."

Well, I dug my feet in the ground, and we had a real good, outstanding athletic and recreation program. In fact, three months later, when the Inspector General came, he informed the commandant that we received the highest award for the best athletic and recreation program in the Navy. Three months. He called me in and told me about this, and he said, "You know, I promised you that I would offer you a - if you did a good job." Now, remember, [chuckles] I have never gone to a Navy school. I didn't know Navy regs or anything.

And he offered me the position of personnel officer at the Naval Air Station Coco Solo, which was on the Atlantic side of the Panama Canal. I reported there. The commanding officer was CAPT [00:14:17 Wella], and his executive officer was CDR [00:14:22 Connelly]. And as personnel officer, I started to learn a little bit about the Navy. And that was in October of 1941. As is custom in the Navy, every officer has to stand duty, becomes Officer of the Day.

On December 7, 1941, when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor, I'm sure you know who was the Officer of the Day at Coco Solo. I was in that position. And the commandant called as soon as we got the message, which I have the original message - I still have it in my records -

signed by Franklin D. Roosevelt, saying that "the Japanese have attacked the United States at Hawaii, and this is not a drill." And everything was just panic.

The commandant called over, and he said, "I want to talk to the commanding officer." CAPT Wella was out playing golf with his chief of staff, CDR Connelly. I told him that. He said, "Well, I've got to have three lieutenant commanders right away to man our advance base units." I said, "ADM Sadler, we only have two lieutenant commanders, but we've got an eager ensign." He said, "All right." He says, "Well, I want to man three bases: one in La Union, Nicaragua; one at the Galapagos Islands; and one in Ecuador." And he said, "You let the two lieutenant commanders... I'm going to order them wherever their choice is, and you get the third choice."

So, I got in touch with the lieutenant commanders. One of them chose Nicaragua, the other one chose Galapagos, and I was left with Ecuador. The Navy had advance bases all packaged, ready to go, and they started to load the ships on the 8th of December. And on the 14th of December, I was aboard a freighter with 300 men, 3 officers. They automatically made me a lieutenant junior grade. And we sailed for Ecuador.

The interesting part and maybe of historic proportions was the fact that, when we arrived off the shore at Salinas, Ecuador, they didn't know we were coming. They thought they were being invaded. So, not speaking Spanish and very few of them speaking English, it was quite difficult. But I had the responsibility to build a seaplane advance base to service seaplanes. Cut it off for a minute.

Male Voice: Sure, if you like.

TS: But I made friends with the colonel of the Ecuadorean Army, who was in charge of that district in Ecuador. And, as is necessary, I had to buy cement, sand; I had to hire people; I had to get land out in the water so that I could build a ramp, a concrete ramp to service the planes. And I had a pretty good bank account. I had the U.S. Treasury checks. I had a disbursing officer.

And we hired people, we bought homes, we bought necessary supplies, and we started to build the ramp. We had a tent city on Salinas, Ecuador, and we were servicing planes within ten days. And I was still spending the government's money freely, without hesitation. And about two weeks after we serviced the planes, there was a mammoth earthquake in Ecuador. About 5,000 people were killed. And the colonel came to me, and he said, "I need your help." I said, "Certainly."

So, I closed the base, and we helped and took up the deceased. We had armbands, and we would just... My doctor and my dentist and the nurse were all working full time. And for three days, we went up to Guayaquil in Ecuador. We helped them, and it was just rubble. And came back. And I had made real good friends with the people in Ecuador. In fact, I received two decorations from the government of Ecuador and one from the County of Salinas for the work that we had done.

About two weeks later, I was either going to get a commendation or a court martial. And, believe it or not, I got a court martial. And within days of getting the notice of a court martial for

me to go to Panama because I had spent money that wasn't budgeted for me, a vice admiral, ADM Paul F. Foster, arrives. I didn't know - just was told that he was coming. And he asked me about the base, and I told him I was servicing planes.

He said, "Well, you got your place running in ten days and was servicing planes, and the other at Galapagos and Nicaragua, they haven't started servicing planes yet." And I told him of the problems. He said he knew I had the court martial, never committed himself at all. He left. Two days later, a message comes in dismissing the commandant, the commander who had ordered me court martialed, ordered me detached, and ordered me to Washington to be in charge of advance bases for the Navy. And my Navy career was in advance bases.

And it just was one thing after the other. And I established naval bases in Espiritu Santo in the New Hebrides. Then I went and established the base and went into the landing with MacArthur in the Admiralty Islands. And I had been spot-promotioned by that time up to commander. And remember, I'd only been in the Navy for three years - two years. And it was a very exciting time.

And in August of 1945... Oh, no. It was June of '45, I was ordered back to Washington to plan and be in charge of the invasion of Japan and the Ryukyus Island (sic). And, fortunately, Harry Truman had the bomb dropped, and we didn't have to invade it. And my commodore, who was going to be the commanding of the base - and I was his chief staff officer - asked me what I was going to do. I said, well, I was going to get out of the Navy.

He said, "Well, I've been ordered to the naval repair base, the destroy base in San Diego as commanding officer, and I'd like you to be my chief of staff." [laughs] So, I was chief of staff there, and it was a great experience. It became the Naval Station San Diego. And I loved it. I had an apartment at Coronado, California. And Mother came out to visit me and so forth.

And then, 1947, the commodore said to me, he said, "I'd like to recommend you for the Regular Navy." I said, "Well, I promised Dr. Bowman that, when I got out of the Navy, I'd come back to Hopkins, and he was going to make me chief financial officer at Johns Hopkins." I said, "I'll have to go and talk to him." And I remember going back to Hopkins and going to the Faculty Club with the president, Dr. Bowman. And he said to me, "Now, why would you consider going into the Regular Navy?" And I had all this rehearsed, and I knew. I said, "The first thing is I like it." He said, "Don't tell me any more. Do it." [chuckles]

So, I came back. I told the commodore that I would join. They sent my application to the Navy Department as a line officer, and I was rejected because of my age. The Navy had a rule that you couldn't have been 35 on the first of January in 1947, and my birthday was on Christmas Day. So, I couldn't go into the line officer, but they said, "Well, how about the Supply Corps?" So, I took a commission in the Supply Corps.

I had a wonderful experience. I went to my first school, Navy Supply Corps School. I was ordered from Supply Corps School, the first time I'd been to a school in the Navy, to be the supply officer of the Western Pacific Fleet, the flagship, the USS Saint Paul. I stayed on the Saint

Paul, and we were the last ship to leave Shanghai and last U.S. ship... Oh, I forget, but it was quite an experience.

And from that experience, in 1949, came back. I had leave. And I had met my wife, Alva Durkee, in Baltimore in 1939. And in 1949, I proposed. And in 1950, we were married in Baltimore. And I guess the rest is history. But I had many, many outstanding and wonderful experiences in the Navy.

My first job after the Saint Paul was as officer in charge of a fuel depot. And the reason I got that job was that, when I was at college, I used to pump gas at the Lord Baltimore filling stations. And finally I became the Oil King of the Navy, and I briefed President Eisenhower on the world oil situation, military oil situation, world tanker situation when he was president every morning at 7:30 in the morning. And it was quite an exciting experience.

But, among other jobs I had, finally I was... Mendel Rivers, who I had met in testifying before Congress, told me that they had an opening down here. They were going to have a naval supply center, and he wondered if I'd be interested. And I was. I'd never been to Charleston, but I came down to Charleston with the commanding officer of the new Naval Supply Center. And it was quite an operation. And I was there from 1965 to '68.

And Mendel Rivers asked me if I'd be interested - I was too old to become an admiral - if I'd be interested in becoming president of the College of Charleston. And I said, "Well, I'll consider it." I had been offered a position as Deputy Comptroller General of the United States in Washington. And Mendel told me that had to be approved by Congress, and he'd prefer me to be the president of the College of Charleston. So, I was interviewed by the board of trustees. And just as a little aside, it was not a unanimous selection for me as for being president.

I tell the story of the college president who goes to the hospital. And he receives a card which said, "The board of trustees at its regular meeting voted seven to six to send you this get well card." [laughter] And that epitomized the closeness. And I've had - several of those original trustees told me that they were the deciding vote. [chuckles] And quite a few of our prominent Charlestonians - [00:30:06 B. Roll] Howard, "Cussie" Johnson, Sonny Hanckel - were very much supporters. And Paul Belknap was on the board. Rufus Barkley was on the board. So, I had several friends on there, but I also know there were other people who did not...

In fact, when I was interviewed, they asked me, "What would you do if a black applied to the College of Charleston?" And I said, [chuckles] "I wouldn't look on the - see what the color is of the person. If they're qualified, they get admitted." So, I admitted the first black to the College of Charleston. And I don't think that sat too well with some of the trustees. But I became president of the College of Charleston, and in July, I retired, and on August 31, 1968, became president of the College.

On 1 September '68, we had an enrollment of 342 and 28 in the faculty. The College was in dire financial straits. It had operated at a deficit of \$200,000. They had just fired the president who preceded me. They were in such straits that the President's House at 6 Glebe Street was rented out. And, actually, it was rented to Avram Kronsberg and Marlene.

And this was September. I was living when I retired from the Navy at a house we bought in the Isle of Palms. And I commuted to the College. And the College had a total of five buildings on the campus. And when I left the College ten years later, we had 92 buildings, 5200 students - oh, 5200 enrolled. I wouldn't say students. And it was my tenth year.

KS: Dr. Stern, during your time at the College, during your tenure there, is that when you would have first been made aware of Frances Edmunds and preservation? I know you were a trustee in later years, I think in the '80s.

TS: Right.

KS: But what was your involvement with Frances or the preservation community as the College grew?

TS: Very significant. When I started the construction, first of all, the College was in the process of being non-accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools because of its financial position, the lack of library books, lack of space for students. So, I had to appeal to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. They had recommended that we be non-accredited, and it was due to some very outstanding presidents of the universities, like David Mathews from the University of Alabama, Henry (sic) Longenecker from Tulane, several of the presidents who supported.

And I assured them that the first building I'd build would be a library. And I got Robert Small to really be the major donor to build the library, and that was actually started before we became a state institution. The interesting part was that, when we decided that the City could no longer support the College, I got an emergency grant from the County of \$300,000 to keep us operating. And I turned to the trustees, and I said, "We've got to go to the State."

The State at that time had the Moody Report and the Cresap, McCormick & Paget Report that recommended that there be a four-year general-purpose college in the Charleston area. So, we were either going to have to be that college or go with the State, offer the property to the State. And there was a great bit of consternation because the State wanted us to go to North Charleston or west of the Ashley.

And I was friendly with Tom Stevenson, Peter Manigo, Frances Edmunds, and we decided that we would stay down in the area. And I appealed to the trustees, and the trustees were not so certain that we could make it. But we offered it to the State. And I had made friends with Speaker Sol Blatt and the senate president, who was Edgar Brown, known at that time as the Barnwell Ring.

And I remember going down to Sol Blatt's house in Barnwell. And here I go into his office, and he has a game cock. He has a basketball signed by all the players and McGuire. And he says, "I don't want any college competing with the University of South Carolina." So, Mendel Rivers and Joe Riley, Sr., were with me. And they said, "Always bring a bottle of Black Crow." So, we went over to his house. He told Edith, he said, "Edith, I've got some guests for supper."

We imbibed with a few. And by the end of the evening, he was the greatest supporter of the College of Charleston that we ever had.

And it was only through him that we got over \$70 million worth of funds to not only keep us afloat but to make us a good institution. And I had at that time an advisory committee made up of prominent Charlestonians. And among them were Tom Stevenson, Peter Manigo, Frances Edmunds. I had all of the people interested in historic Charleston as my advisors, and they went into details. And I was accepting their advice and was very proud of my affiliation with them.

And I can tell a wonderful story about the bricks on the walkways. Big argument: what type of bricks. Frances thought that we should have the bricks put in a herringbone pattern and even the mortar, what border we should have and so forth. I agreed with her, and we voted on that. Then we got the funds to put in the brick. When we redid the Main Building, which is now Harrison Randolph Hall - and this is a related thing, because I give the credit for the beauty of the back of the building to Albert Simmons - one of the requirements for the use of government funds was we had to put an elevator in the building.

And we did not want to disturb Randolph Hall. It was called the Main Building then. And Albert Simmons designed that portico, which faces Calhoun Street, and putting the elevator outside but then building around it and putting the portico up there. And we got the elevator there. And the fountain and everything was Albert Simmons's design, and it was very impressive. But talking about the bricks, when we did the restoration of the building, there had been other buildings, and you had to walk, except they had to dig down. And when they got down to the original bricks, they were in a herringbone pattern from the original building.

And so, we were sort of complimented that we had chosen the right form. But everything insofar as the new buildings were concerned, while we had a master plan, Historic Charleston Foundation and their directors were always kept informed, and I used their advice not sparingly. And my relations, I believe, with the directors of the Historic Charleston Foundation was the basis of the growth and extensive renovation and acquisition of properties for the College.

KS: What are your best memories, perhaps, of Frances Edmunds?

TS: Well, she was a great friend, and I knew Gus Smythe quite well because we were in the Rotary Club together. And, naturally, I not only respected Frances, but she was a dynamo. And I can remember very vividly one of my first experiences with her was when the discussion on Charleston Place took place. And Frances and I stood with Joe Riley against every other person in wanting to develop Charleston Place in place of the Market Street "Garbage Dump," as I called it. It was a trashed place. It was horrible. Do you remember it at all? Yeah.

And I still have very cordial relations with The Taubman Company and its chairman, Bob Larson. In fact, I heard from him this past week. Dean Andrews, who was the first general manager, who is now the president for Oriental Express. But Frances and I... I remember so many prominent Charlestonians arguing against having Charleston Place. I was reminded of it last night when I heard the discussion of the Clemson Building. It just reminded me of the same organizations were bitterly opposed to it that were bitterly opposed to Charleston Place.

KS: What about your involvement with Spoleto? You and Frances were both part of the beginning of Spoleto. Is that...

TS: To be quite truthful, Spoleto USA would never have occurred without the College of Charleston. I was the... Well, actually, Hugh Lane was the fundraiser, and Nella Barkley was very much involved. And when Hugh Lane went over to Italy with Frances, Tom, and Jackie Stevenson, he came back quite disillusioned. And I respected it, and I think he's one of the great people of Charleston. And Hugh said that he was not going to expose the citizens of Charleston to the nudity that he observed at Spoleto in the dancing and so forth. So, he resigned. And Nella resigned with him, and I was left with this nebulous thing.

Frances had gone to school with Alicia Paolozzi in Baltimore, actually. And Alicia was the great supporter of Gian Carlo Menotti. She was a countess. She married a count in Italy, a very strong friend of Menotti's as well as Frances's. And I went up... Actually, the head of music at the National Endowment for the Arts was Walter Anderson. And Walter Anderson went to Menotti and said they wanted to have a festival in the Southeast United States.

Now, the first chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts was Nancy Hanks, who was from North Carolina. So, everybody figured it would be there. But Gian Carlo had applied for funds from the National Endowment for the Arts of sending the orchestra from the United States to Italy. And Menotti always told me that the Italians were great artists, but they never had a decent symphony. They didn't know how to play together. So, he wanted to expose the young American artists to the Italian culture.

And he applied for money from the National Endowment for the Arts, and he finally got \$35,000 to assist in sending the orchestra to Italy. And he established the Festival Foundation in New York, headquarters. I remember the people who were on there, and some of them were great supporters of his work: Fred Koch, Alice Tully, Virginia [00:46:46 Cress], Alicia, Billy Beadleston. But they were all on the Festival Foundation.

And the Festival Foundation was worried that, if they had the festival in Charleston, that Charleston wouldn't support the Italian festival. And Charleston people felt that all the money would be going to Italy. [chuckles] So, it was... But anyway, we had a grand meeting with representatives from the Festival Foundation at the President's House at the College. And "Pug" Ravenel was there. Joe was there. And it was at that time that Alice Tully was sitting in the chair. You thought she was asleep, but she was right alert. She knew what was going on. So did Virginia Cress. So did Alicia. And Fred Koch, Billy Beadleston, those five, were all in favor of having it here in Charleston. And we agreed that we'd have it so.

And Menotti had said that the reason he chose Charleston was, number one, I took him to the Fort Sumter House, and he looked out over the roofs. He said, "The place that we have a festival must be an art form in itself." And I remember he had been to Winston-Salem. He came to Charleston. He was going to Savannah, New Orleans, and Miami. And he said, "This is it." And I remember whose apartment it was, at the Irving Love [00:48:43 Carlton] apartment at the Fort Sumter House.

And he wanted it near an educational institution, and that's where the College of Charleston came in. We provided everything for the first two, three festivals. I was the chairman of the festival. My vice president for business was the business manager. My lawyer was the lawyer. [chuckles] But everything was handled through the College.

And Harry Lightsey says that Spoleto, when it started, needed the College of Charleston. And Harry said, "Now the College of Charleston needs Spoleto." And it's been a wonderful marriage. Now, I was chairman for the first, I guess, nine years of Spoleto. So, it's quite a baby that we brought to life. [chuckles]

KS: You've been so involved throughout the community with the College of Charleston, obviously, and Spoleto. And we're honored that you were a member of the board of trustees of the Historic Charleston Foundation. And I read that you were part of the Finance and Policy Committee. Do you remember part of that tenure and - this is mid '80s - what was going on at the Foundation at that time that was pertinent to preservation?

TS: Well, I think Historic Charleston Foundation at that time was really getting to its feet. And I think probably the biggest job that they had was Ansonborough. And I think the decision to buy the properties was really the adolescence of the organization. And I was very proud to be a part of it. I was particularly impressed with the complete agreement.

I don't remember any obstacles within the board itself, obstacles with the community in many respects, particularly with these various associations. And I've always felt that these associations represent the people in the district, but they don't represent the total citizens of Charleston. And that's a conflict that sometime has to be resolved.

KS: Is that something that today... And here we are in the Year 2005. What do you see is the future of preservation in Charleston moving forward?

TS: Well, I think that the Historic Charleston Foundation, the citizens of Charleston, have to recognize that this is the 21st Century. And we have to also recognize that, yes, Charleston's restoration of antebellum structures is very significant, but it also has to accept that we're in the 21st Century and that we cannot have conflicts, but they should be in concert. But I think we should be recognized maybe by the 22nd Century that Charleston was the leader in 21st Century architecture. And a good example of that is the new college library.

People were hard to accept that, but it's probably the most important building and is the social center of the campus. It's really very rewarding to see the thousands of students. We have more students using that library in a week than we had using the old library in a year. And it's state of the art. In fact, the president of Clemson told me he wanted to see the library because he understood it was the finest library in the country.

KS: Are there any other parts of your experience with Historic Charleston Foundation or in the community that you think it would be important to put in our oral history documents? Are there things that - just comments you might like to offer to us?

TS: Well, I'm very proud of the accomplishments of the College. I'm equally proud of the institutions that I've been fortunate to be a part of, including the Historic Charleston Foundation. And I remember, when we started the Community Foundation, as president of the Rotary Club, we gave \$9,000 to start the Community Foundation, and now it's worth over \$100 million. I mean this is 30 years.

But there are many things which I'm extremely proud. I had the good fortune this past summer, August 2005, to be asked to participate in the renovation and rehabilitation of the theater of Stern Student Center. And one of my comments was that the buildings that we participated in building all had to be renovated. But so far, mine, I have not been renovated or rehabilitated. [chuckles]

KS: This'll probably be the last question, but you're such a model of a community leader, and you're so well-spoken. To what do you attribute your good health? And I'd love for you to talk about your exercise program, your personal exercise program.

TS: Well, I've been exercising since I was in the Navy. I always try to keep in good physical shape, and I have a regime of exercises I do every morning before I take my shower and before breakfast. But it includes doing sit-ups, push-ups. And people say, "Well, how come... How can you do 100 push-ups?" I said, "It's easy. I've been doing it for 50 years." Every morning, I get up. And when I start the exercises, I wonder whether I'll be able to finish, but I've been able to up to this point. Now, I can't guarantee how long it'll stay that way. [chuckles]

KS: Thank you. Carol and Dr. Conner, are there other questions that...

Male Voice: I could probably ask him questions all day.

[laughter]

KS: I know. I was just sitting here, mesmerizing.

TS: [chuckles] No. No, it's been very interesting. I tell you, my whole experience has been one coincidence after the other. And I think it's more than coincidence.

KS: I do too.

TS: Because my coming to the College was strange. I had a wonderful opportunity, you know, to go to the General Accounting Office, and considered it. And one of the members of the board at the College was Joe Mergen, who is on the private College of Charleston trustees. And he wanted me to be his executive vice president at Avco. But when Mendel talked to me and then I had the interview, I felt it was a real challenge.

And I'm very proud of the fact that I started the first Equal Opportunity program in the Navy at the naval base. And still among my friends - in fact, I'm having lunch with him tomorrow - is Bishop Grady, who was minister of Morris Brown AME Church when I was here.

But I have been very interested in race relations, and I was a very close friend of Ruby Cornwell. And they wanted diversity at Bishop Gadsden, and I started the Community Leaders in Residence Fund and got Ruby out to Bishop Gadsden. She was out there two years, and she died out there.

But I think the improvement of race relations is essential for the future of the Charleston community. And I find I'm playing a very important role in leadership positions. I don't mind people objecting to... That's their privilege. But I don't like to see them impeding progress. Maybe I'm wrong, but I think, in the long run, to move ahead, to make progress, you have to have a community that works together. And even though machine runs well on friction, it can also stall. And that's what you don't want.

KS: Wonderful.

Male Voice: Very nice.

Female Voice: That was -

Male Voice: All the way to the end of the tape.

KS: Thank you. Did we make it to the end of the tape?

Male Voice: Yeah.

KS: Oh.

Female Voice: Good.

Male Voice: Sure did.

KS: Oh. I wish we could have you for hours.

END OF RECORDING