Doris Meyer (1956 – 1990)
Professor, Physical Education
Coordinator, Women’s Athletics

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By Elmer Clawson

Transcription by Kelly Gerhold, University of the Pacific,
Department of Special Collections, Library

Subjects: Development of women’s athletics nationally; early faculty women on campus; teacher
credential program in adapted P.E.
Elmer Clawson: My name is Elmer Clawson, and I’m here today to interview Doris C. Meyer. Today is March 3rd, 2011, and we are in the William Knox Holt Memorial Library at the University of the Pacific. Doris, what years did you serve the university, and what were your official titles?

Doris Meyer: Good morning, Elmer. Thanks for cooperating to do this interview, I’ve looked forward to it. I came in the university in 1956, and I retired in 1990. Over those years, I had a variety of positions within a variety of units. Was there something else I was supposed to say there?

Elmer: No.

Doris: Ok.

Elmer: What circumstances brought you to Pacific in the first place?

Doris: Well, that’s interesting. There were two positions available at the fall semester of 1956. One was in the City College of San Francisco, and the other one was here at the University of the Pacific, and the interviews for those positions were one day apart. The first one was at San Francisco City College, and San Francisco is where I was born and raised, and so I knew a lot about that school, and so I visited there. It was a windy, cold day, and papers and people were flying all over the place, and the very next day I came over to Stockton. I didn’t know very much about the University of Pacific, although my association with the YMCA in San Francisco provided me with some, interest I guess, in the University of Pacific. So here I came the very next day, it was sunny and warm, and no papers on the campus, etc. And I was met by Walter Knox. Walter Knox, K-N-O-X, was the chairman of the combined departments of Physical Education, Recreation, Health, and also I’m sure he was the coordinator of Athletics at that time, or did have a lot to do with that. We met with Dean Berthoff, I remembered the name just this morning. He was the academic Vice President at that time, so, that was it, and I think that was probably the summer, then, preceding the fall semester of ’56.

Elmer: What position did you actually, were you hired for? Was it a (noise)?

Doris: I don’t know, I can’t remember I guess, what the title of the position was, but it was within this combined department that I mentioned, and there were several of us only in that department, excluding the coaches, the largest group of which were in football, and my position
was probably a professorial position, the, at the very earliest step in the tenure process, but I
don’t remember whether it was called Assistant Professor or what.

Elmer: Well, clearly you were impressed by the University of the Pacific. What was your
impression of Stockton in general?

Doris: Well, I didn’t know very much about Stockton. When I first came here, though, when,
and particularly that first day, weather was so warm and beautiful, and I needed a place to stay,
so I was able to find an apartment just within walking distance of the campus, and, down there
on Bristol. And between here and Bristol, I walked every day, it was beautiful, and there was
nothing about Stockton that I didn’t enjoy.

Elmer: Was there someone at Pacific who was especially helpful to you, during that orientation,
joining Pacific?

Doris: Yes, without a doubt, Walter Knox, K-N-O-X, I mentioned his name again before, was so
kind, just like a father figure to me. Also, the other members in our department were Carl
Voltmer, Chris Kjeldsen, and then Libby Matson. And all of them were really helpful. As time
went on, Libby and my relationship zig-zagged, and went up and down, but the men were just
really very, very kind. I think they were the most important people in my early years.

Elmer: Well, you had a long tenure at Pacific. Describe some changes that you observed in the
curriculum across those years.

Doris: Well, originally, the school did not in fact have a focus on the professional schools other
than the Conservatory, and then about the same time that I came, the Pharmacy School
developed into a strong professional school. Prior to that, the emphasis was on the, a basic
liberal arts curriculum. Our department, that I mentioned before, was a service department, and
students were expected to take a course or two in what we called “physical activity” program, I
think, at the time, and so I had that contact with all of the students. As I’ll mention later, one of
the things I enjoyed most is being involved in the advising of freshman students, and that, of
course, was part of the whole parcel, the whole picture, of caring for the student, and that attitude
was here at the university, even in those early years.

Elmer: I came to the university in 1974, and you were a member of the School of Education
faculty as well as the faculty in COP. My contact with you was in teacher training, and, is there
any comment that you should share about that?

Doris: Yeah, that really came on a lot later. My duel responsibility in both the School of Ed and
the College of Pacific really didn’t occur until my colleague Libby Matson retired, and that, gee,
I don’t remember, Elmer, I even think that’s, I don’t think I was in the School of Ed that early.
But I do want to mention, before we move into that phase, about my role with the development
of the women’s athletic program. Are we out of, are we out of picture here?
Elmer: No. You’re right on task.

Doris: Ok. I feel like one of the important contributions that, not that I made but that we here at the university made, was in the development of the women’s athletic program. For a long time, women’s programs, women’s athletic programs you might call them although they weren’t that, were under the governance and the authority of the university professional programs, that is, the physical education program or whatever you would call at that time, had the complete control of the early athletic programs for women. And they, in fact, those women at that time did in fact feel like the only justification that they could see to competition for women, even though many of them were athletic as I was, the only justification that they could see was that competition provided an extension of the program for those women who were more highly skilled than the average. And so the national association of professional physical educators for years were the governing body for the women’s athletic programs, and the women at that time, and everyone wanted to hang onto that control, because they felt that the men’s programs had moved into the business world rather than the educational world, and that many male scholar-athletes, or student athletes were pawns in the case, and were not accepted as scholars but as athletes first, and so the women said, “No, we’re not going to let downtown run the women’s programs.” So, that transition there, which occurred in about 1979, in fact this morning I looked at a document, it was 1979, and it was still at that time an organization of women professionals running championships for women elite athletes. So the movement into the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) development, or governance of women’s championships and women’s athletic programs, occurred at about 1980. And I’m rattling on about this, but this transitional stage was really really important, and our university here played a very important role in that transition. Could I go on just a little bit further about this?

Elmer: Sure.

Doris: I mean, this, what happened is, if you think about it, the Civil Rights Movement in the late ‘60s and the women’s movement that was about the same time really preceded the development and the extension of the women’s athletic programs. So that whole thing about individual rights, Civil Rights, racial rights, opportunities, etc. etc., moved through that period. (You know,) everybody talks about Title IX. Title IX was a regulation that came about and was passed in 1972, but it wasn’t until about ’78, ’79 and ’80 where the shift of women’s athletics moved under the jurisdiction of the NCAA. One more thing about our connection: Ed Betz was Dean of Men here at the University of (the) Pacific, and he was also the athletic representative of our men’s athletic program to the NCAA. He was also one of the Vice Presidents of the NCAA, and that was the governing body, remember, that had control over athletic programs and universities and men’s programs up to that time. Well, Ed and a group of about 11 people, including 4 or 5 women, 4 or 5 men, met and talked about the possibility of the NCAA running some championship national programs for women as well. And so Ed, who was just one of our, first our professors and then our Dean of Men, was really a very important person in that time. And then, Cedric Dempsey, who became the Executive Director or the President, actually, of the
NCAA, was our athletic director here at this transitional time as well, and one last word on that. Cedric responded to an Oral History request, and so anyone that’s interested in that transitional time will read through Ced’s response to these same questions, will understand that transitional time, and it was important, and we here at the University decided to really provide an opportunity for our women. Not so much by legislation of Title IX at all, but the moral issues of rights, equal rights, issues regarding discrimination, and I guess that’s about enough on that. Sorry to have rattled on so much.

Elmer: No. And you were involved in each of these steps along the way, then?

Doris: Right. I was Cedric’s Coordinator of Women’s Athletics, that was the title that I had, Walter Knox and those early days when we were all one and one package. Then as time went on, the athletic program became stronger and stronger, and so, Athletic Directors came in and developed a program that was separate, spoke directly to the president, rather than through the educational hierarchy of Deans. So, yeah, jumping quickly through that, but that’s what happened.

Elmer: You mentioned your concern about student athletes as opposed to athletes and then students. Do you feel that the women’s program achieved that initial goal that you had, or has that changed?

Doris: Gee, Elmer, that is just a great, great question. I think that the fact that there was so much concern about protecting the women, as it were, at that time, has been good, for there in fact has been that protection, but it’s been with small nuances, and it’s there. And so, hopefully, that concern did help at least some of the university’s concern for their male athletes as well. So I think what’s happened in that is that universities throughout the nation, and throughout the world, probably, differ on how they handle both their men and their women. So the difference is probably more by the difference in conferences, leagues and universities rather than the gender difference of men versus women. Now, that’s a great question.

Elmer: You mentioned being an administrator of women’s programs under Cedric Dempsey.

Doris: Right.

Elmer: Did you have other administrative responsibilities, or was that your primary administrative responsibility?

Doris: Yeah. In those early days, I guess going back, I was originally hired to be an adviser of what were called WRA programs, Women’s Recreation programs, and Women’s Athletic programs, WAA. These were programs in the early days, women students actually ran the programs for women athletes, and so in those early days from ’56 to about the late ’60s, my administrative title would have been Adviser to the student groups who in fact ran the early
athletic programs for women. And that whole thing is a different kind of story, but that belongs
in the chronology of the whole thing, of the development of programs.

Elmer: Those programs were for all students at the university, not just your students in sports, I
guess. Is that true?

Doris: They were for all students, they were for all students.

Elmer: Would you talk a little bit about your accessibility to the university community in those
programs?

Doris: Um, I was so young at that time that my relationship to the rest of the university
community was almost nil. There were so few women professors at that time that, you know, I
could name the number of women faculty at that time, and I think the whole issue of
discrimination to women made my role as a young woman a difficult step, there. I’m sure I was
not identified as anyone having much authority. And, your question there is an interesting one,
because that brings up that issue there. We were, as women professors, we were paid less than
the men at that time, we were placed not by the administration but by our colleagues, I think, as a
small, different kind of group. And speaking of people that helped me a lot at that time was Fay
Goleman and some of the other women who had been around here for a while and had
established some respect by seniority. I never felt that I was a women’s lib-er, I never felt that I
had to fight for anything, I was just happy with the environment. I put up with it; I loved my
relationship to the students. I remember Gwen Browne, when she first arrived on campus, and
she was a little “Young Turk” at that time, which might have been in the late ‘60s, where we as
women professors began to have a little more clout, I guess, but it never bothered me, I guess I
was naïve to the whole thing. Anyway, that’s, my effect on the community, or the university’s
community, practically nil. Zilch.

Elmer: Do you feel that the university was supportive of you, or that the university structure
helped your productivity, or did that grow over a period of time, or how do you feel about that?

Doris: Maybe I’m going to bypass the question a little bit, but related to that, I’d like to include
this issue of faculty meetings back in those old days, and my attitude toward the respect that I
gathered. I remember, in those early days, we had our faculty meetings up at Columbia. Fallon
House was part of the university Theater Arts program. Bob Burns had a cabin up there. The
small group of faculty either stayed in his cabin, the men slept out in tents or under the stars.
Some of the rest of us rented a motel, and as time went on I became one of the organizers of
those early faculty meetings. The camaraderie was fantastic, and I guess if I gathered any
respect as a young professor, it was probably my relationship to the development of those early
faculty meetings. So that’s sort of beating around the bush, but it does bring in an interesting
era.

Elmer: That’s true. You’ve mentioned individuals who were helpful to you—
Doris: Right.

Elmer: --personally when you first came. Across the campus, was there someone or some people who were just most memorable to you?

Doris: Well, I guess we need to answer that question by moving forward into how my role changed. Libby Matson was the important person in our department, which at that time was called, as I mentioned, Physical Education, Recreation, Health, etc. etc. Libby helped me a lot; on the other hand she made life difficult for me, and she said to me, at one time, “Doris, you have an opportunity to go around the world. Marc Jantz is going to be leading a group. You need to do this, this is a one-in-a-lifetime kind of opportunity.” So, when I took Libby’s advice and had a sabbatical in ’67, my role at the university changed pretty much from an athletic emphasis to the emphasis within our professional program. And Libby in those years handled most of the major programs for both our men majors and our women majors. After I came back from my sabbatical, and within the next few years there, I became, and had a greater part, in the development of our majors program, particularly the section on pedagogy. And so when Libby retired, I moved into her role, and it was at about that time that my association with you, Elmer, and the School of Ed fell into place, because Libby had been the representative of our general secondary credential program, just as we had in music and as we had in art and some of the others. And so when Libby retired then I moved into that role, having much more to do with the development of our majors program. And I forget what the question was that you asked me, but it was something related to what I talked about.

Elmer: Oh, that’s fine, you’re right on task.

Doris: All right.

Elmer: But, I’ll just ask a question that’s on our sheet here, during the years at Pacific, how would you describe changes or these groups: students, faculty, administrators, staff, regents or alumni and university donors? So if you could just broadly discuss those I would appreciate it.

Doris: Right, yeah. You know, Elmer, I have to say, this is more difficult, playing the role of the interviewee than it is the interviewer! (laughter) But anyway, I had to laugh when I was thinking about this question, and I looked at an old Naranjado yearbook that I had from 1959, and you talk about how things have changed. In that 1959 yearbook, almost every face in every picture was all white. There were so few students or faculty of color that it was just unbelievable, and so if you were to compare that with our student population today, the issue of racial diversity is so clear! It’s unbelievable! Our staff at that time, way back when, was, our secretarial help, we all were together in the same gym, the football coaches, the male dance professor that we had at that time, we all were a part and parcel, even though we were two departments, athletics and the physical education part, we all worked in the same building, we loved each other, we had social opportunities together, and now we’re in, or the university is spread over a much larger campus. It’s not that things are better or worse, or were better and worse, they’re just different now. I
looked at a picture of the, in the Naranjado book, of the Regents, and they were all white older males. The only woman in the picture that showed the Regents in 1959 was Alice Saeker, and Alice Saeker was Bob Burns’s administrative assistant, and Bob was still president of the University at that time, and the Regents were all white, and many of them had really, probably, no inkling of what was going on here at that time. And so if you look at our group of Regents now you have a totally different picture. The women and the men that are part and parcel of that group are interested in the university, they know what’s coming up here, they know about the vision of the university, and things are totally different along on that line. I guess that’s a little bit about that type of thing.

Elmer: How would you describe the working relationship between the faculty and administrator over that, over your time at Pacific?

Doris: Yeah, that. If you will read some of the other oral history tapes or transcriptions, you will see that at periods of time there was so much dissatisfaction between administration and faculty. Back to those early days when we had our faculty meetings up at Columbia, things were much smaller, much more congenial, much more respectful, but there were periods of time when finances became a crucial issue in the university and would the university really hold its head above water, and at that time the administration and the faculty, or at least those that were outspoken faculty people were adversaries, they were angry at each other, they didn’t know how to handle it. And, at that point in time, faculty governance became a very large part of this university, and during those years and up to this time, faculty governance has moved from an adversary role to a role of working together. The congeniality, it appears to me, is much greater, the respect I’m sure is greater, and it is through each new president that we see how faculty governance fits into this. And along that same line, Elmer, is the issue of the amount of, the role of service. As universities change their picture and their vision, the role of research, the role of service to the university, and those criteria for tenure have changed. And to this day, I’m sure that that’s something that’s still being worked out. And, we were originally, when we were a small university, we were primarily a teaching institution and not a research-oriented institution, and so as the years have passed and the university has moved from a small liberal arts college to a university with professional schools of great respect, the issues of criteria for tenure, for respect, for quality, etc., goes with questions regarding committee work, service to the university, and perhaps thinking about that in relation to a scholar-professor who is research-oriented gives the university perhaps a more scholarly research-oriented feel. Sorry about that, but that was an important thing, I think.

Elmer: I think you’re discussing here the faculty and administration in general, which, I experienced some of the same things that you’re just mentioning, so you’re right on target.

Doris: Right.
Elmer: How would you describe your working relationship during this period of time, in spite of the turmoil that was going on?

Doris: Yeah. Well, I was feeling more and more important (chuckle), I guess, in the scheme of things. Obviously, when I had a co-responsibility with the School of Ed, and with the College of (the) Pacific, I tried to become more and more aware of the whole state credentialing program, because if I was going to have something to do with that, Elmer, you well know that Bill Bacon and you were the two fellows in the School of Ed that helped me understand about the whole process of getting accredited, the whole process of the NCAT accreditation materials. I think you and I filled out, I don’t know how many forms to be sure that our physical education curriculum fit the secondary school credential requirement. Bill Bacon’s name comes right to the top of my head, and you and I have talked about how great Bill was in that whole role. So, to this day, I feel probably closer to the School of Ed than I do to the College of Pacific, but the College of the Pacific has a much more diverse group of professors, and I think, as a teacher, I felt closer to the School of Ed and to this day as well. Thank you for asking me about that.

Elmer: And you were involved with both the single subject or secondary physical education program, but you were also highly involved with the elementary school, with Movement Experience—

Doris: Yeah.

Elmer: --for students over generations. I will simply note here that you received the Faye and Alex Spanos Distinguished Teaching Award in 1985, so that has something to say about your relationship with peers and your recogni—and students, so I congratulate you on that.

Doris: Oh, thanks for those kind words.

Elmer: You’ve talked about programs that you were involved in in physical education, and you’ve also talked about the importance of the women’s programs. Across the university, are there other programs that you were involved with that you feel were particularly significant?

Doris: I think the question of, back to the credential—well, no, two things. Back to the credentialing program, again, when I became the credential program person within the Physical Education department or unit, Special Education was coming to the forefront in the whole School of Ed picture. The people that they hired there were outstanding in the department, excuse me, in the School of Education, and there was an opportunity for us in the Physical Education area to apply for an adapted Physical Education credential. I feel that the work that I did to try to get that credential established was really an important one, and for a number of summers we ran a workshop here in addition to a part of our major where we then were able to make it possible for people out there already in the field and those young people moving through our department to get a specialized credential in activities, physical activities for the disabled. And I was really disappointed, I know there’s a question in there about a disappointment in
programs, and I was really disappointed when I retired in 1990 to see that program not followed up. I think it gave our university a lot of visibility within the educational field in the state, and so for a variety of reasons that credential program was dropped, and I felt that that was a real shame. I think the other program that I really enjoyed doing, as I mentioned earlier in this interview, was advising. I remember working with the people in the Student Advising Program, Doug Smith, and that program today is probably one of the most outstanding programs in our university. If we’re talking about a caring institution, if we’re talking about a student-oriented university, then how we handle the advising of our young students and help them become less dependent upon us and how we handle them to become really wonderfully qualified seniors is a great program. I love doing it, and it was not just with our majors but with freshmen as they came in, and I felt real good about what I could do with that. In fact, I can remember the names of those freshmen just as if it were yesterday. I guess that’s about it on that.

Elmer: I share your feelings about that, because I worked with Doug on that program as well, it was a great, great program. Just as an aside, going back to teacher education. During the 1970s and 1980s it seemed like training high school single-subject P.E. teachers was a big, was quite a program of emphasis in sports sciences or sports education or how you want to describe it.

Doris: Yeah.

Elmer: But it seems today that those programs are dying off just as adaptive P.E. died off, so—

Doris: Right.

Elmer: --do you have a feeling about why that is true?

Doris: Yeah. Yeah, I was thinking about our university, but in the bigger society, in the bigger cultural situation, I think that the importance of health and fitness has jumped by leaps and bounds for career people, people like yourself, people who realize the importance of health and its relationship to every single thing we do. But, the Physical Education programs at the secondary level have been so varied in quality that I’m sure within the next few years, we’ll see the state of California and we’ll see many other states dropping their requirement, because middle school and especially senior high schools, those students are not ready to accept the importance of the physical over every other demand that they have where they think that they have, in relationships to peers. I remember one time, and I thought, “How could we ask a girl who just got her hair all fixed up to come to school to take a swimming class at first period of the day?” It just, there’s something in all the years, that we’ve missed the boat. Those of us in this particular profession, as we’ve seen athletic programs for women move ahead, we’ve seen the importance of health and fitness and its acceptance to diabetes, obesity, and everybody understands that, but required program at the secondary level I think is something that we’ll see going out the window. Now, on the other hand, the importance of activities for children, at the elementary level, is where I think the emphasis should move for our majors, because youngsters are malleable. They are, they love to play. The recess program may in fact even take over for
the required program. And so, those are changes that I’ve seen. I am disappointed to see that our profession over all these years has not hit the right button, and I’m disappointed about that. I guess that was something that you asked me to talk about.

Elmer: Oh, I will agree, and it seems like there’s current great interest in obesity in children, and diets, and those kinds of things, so maybe we’ll see some other marriages that we haven’t seen before, with diet and physical education.

Doris: And that’s an optimistic look, that’s an optimistic look, Elmer, on that.

Elmer: One of the series of topics, and you helped write these questions, Doris, so I’m…

Doris: Yeah. (laughter)

Elmer: …regards controversial issues. Were there any controversial issues that occurred during your period of service that was especially important to you, or you’d like to talk about, who the major players were in this controversy?

Doris: I think I really covered that question when I was talking about the issue with the administration versus the—one, one little thing about that. I think we’ve always been asked to be on committees, and I love the committee work, because they gave a chance to meet some of the people across the campus who were also faculty, people with whom I had no contact, but one of the committees that I would never volunteer for was Academic Council. And I just never enjoyed the issue regarding the bargaining process, the questions regarding what service should count to the university, although I felt these were all issues that were about as important as anything, I hated to get into the, that kind of controversial scenarios or situations, just not my personality. And it made me feel very uncomfortable when folks would bring up those kinds of things. On the other hand, I, like you Elmer, are now part of what we call our Emeriti Society, and I love that. The opportunity to meet with our faculty that I would never have had a million—once in a million I would not have had a chance to meet those folks, and to work jointly on kinds of activities that we think will be of value to the university in the long run has just given me great pleasure. So, over the years I think I’ve been president or chairman or whatever we call it of the Emeriti Society, and as much as I didn’t like Academic Council (chuckle), now that I’m retired I love the association with the university. And I don’t know if that answers that question or not, but anyway.

Elmer: Oh, we value your participation in that.

Doris: Thanks.

Elmer: Looking at the total university over a long span of time, we could look at new programs, facilities, buildings, libraries, is there anything that you would describe as the most, as most significant achievements during your tenure at Pacific?
Doris: Well, obviously, the athletic programs. I mean, those were significant cultural, societal kinds of changes that we see. The whole issue of the women’s movement, and moving into the respect for women athletes these days, and how our university was one of the forerunners in that whole movement, gives me great pleasure. I think a small institution like ours, as it became larger in curriculum changes and qualities of programs, I think our athletic program has moved right along with that. And, even in those early days, we felt like we owed it to our women majors to have a chance to be on a team if they were in fact going to be asked to coach a team when they went out there in the real world. And then morally it just seemed like it was appropriate for our elite athletes, of which we had some in those early days, to provide some opportunities for them. I remember our program, our athletic programs were so weak that we had at one time, one woman tennis player played on the men’s tennis team here, and we had one golfer who, for which we provided no opportunity, and she became a member of the men’s golf team, and so we tried as a sort of a moral issue to provide what we could for our early quality elite athletes. So, I think the athletic program is something where I see a significant achievement and the little role that I had to play in that. Ced Dempsey and I were not the only team of people to work on that, because other athletic administrators, Tom Stubbs, who filled in a number of times, had important roles in that whole athletic program, and the university administrators themselves felt that the athletic programs for women were important. I guess that’s it on that.

Elmer: In our discussion so far, you’ve talked about your contact with students and being a teacher. You’ve talked about your contact with students being an adviser to various different, to students from across campus as well as athletics. Is there any other thing that you could, like to add with regard to your contacts with students?

Doris: No, I think we’ve about covered that, the advising of freshmen, the advising to these early WRA programs that women students developed for women athletes; that was before the athletic programs. I feel honored that when I return to some of the alumni events here on the campus that old students of mine, most of whom were majors, will come up and be pleased to see me. And in fact, just the other day, I heard from a friend that a man from Nigeria, who came to our university to complete his AB and his Masters, asked if I were still around, and I have now his e-mail address in Nigeria, and I can hardly wait to send him a little note, maybe. He said, “Is Miss Meyer still around?” and he remembered some things from back in those days, gosh, I don’t remember the exact date, but I feel like I had a personality that didn’t scare our students away, and it showed that I was interested in their development.

Elmer: In our earlier discussion, you talked about 1959 and looking at the student yearbook, and how physically students changed over the period of time as well as faculty. What are some experiences that you felt you made in adapting to these changes, any comment about that?

Doris: Restate that one, restate that question while I get my thoughts together.
Elmer: All right. You talked about, in 1959, the student population was basically all white, Caucasian.

Doris: Right, ok.

Elmer: By the time you left in 1990, it was becoming more diverse.

Doris: Right.

Elmer: How did you, was this a personal adaption that you had to make to this, or…?

Doris: No, I, probably for two reasons. I think, for one thing, my contact with athletes, both men and women, provided me with a huge opportunity to know men and women of varying shades of color who were great athletes, and they were in my classes; I knew them as individuals, and I don’t think the color issue—in fact, I was so proud the other day, when I heard that Huey Jackson became the new Raider coach and was acknowledged last night, or tonight, here at the basketball game, because I remember Huey sitting right up front in one of my classes, and I thought, I followed his career and hoped that one day he’d be able to be successful, because at that time I thought he was an… I don’t know what he’s like now, he might not be … But anyway, the other issue is that, since 1990 Elmer, I think as our professional schools have become such an important part of our university, the racial complexion of our university has changed remarkably. The Pharmacy School, for instance, attracts an Asian population for which we had so few back in those days, and as I mentioned, the athletic program provides opportunities for a lot of African American, and the group that I remember most is the Hispanic group, back in the days of the Teacher Corps Program. So many of those young men and women who came from this community stayed on in this community and became great educators, and I can see their names, I can see their faces, I still read about them in the Stockton Record now that they are doing whatever they’re doing. So, I think I slid right along with the whole change in the complexion of our campus population.

Elmer: Some of these questions seem to go back over things we’ve already talked about.

Doris: Right.

Elmer: The next question, and you helped write these, were—what issues were involved, that stood out in your mind, as important to the growth and development of Pacific?

Doris: The growth of what?

Elmer: The growth and development of Pacific.

Doris: Oh. Well, it’s the whole change of moving from a smaller, liberal arts emphasis and moving through the Cluster College era. And that was a great, great time, that. And then, seeing those kinds of programs come and go back there, and then of course moving into the professional schools that we are in today. I think the combination of the General Ed programs, having to do
with the development of leader-citizens, those programs that are part of the General Ed program today, and asking those students that come in as freshmen to not only think of themselves as pharmacists or physical therapists or businesspeople, but also to be citizen-leaders in their community is a great combination that we have between a liberal arts emphasis, a student-oriented emphasis, and a professional program emphasis. It’s amazing what our school has done. I remember using the word “silos” a while back, we were moving forward into Pacific Rising, a vision program that de Rosa started, and even though I’d been retired at that time I remember clearly that people were talking about the units as being separate and distinct silos. And I think now, as we move forward, and with the administration and the new Provost, and the new President, and all these people that we have, that “silos” will move into a smaller, non-silo-ed picture with the citizen-leader kind of program that’s the part of the General Ed program and also moving forward into the professional programs.

Elmer: You identified a number of different significant programs at the university that had developed during your time here at Pacific, and a question that you asked when you helped provide these questions was, where did the energy come from to make these changes, do you think? To move to Cluster Colleges, away from Cluster Colleges, to new General Education programs, to such?

Doris: Well, the early leadership came from Robert Burns, there’s no two ways about it. Tully Knoles, who was the president at the time that the university moved from San Jose to this campus here in Stockton, Tully Knoles was the founding father, and moving forward into Bob Burns’ era, there was also, and I remember Fay Goleman telling me just so clearly, that there were a group of professor-clergymen. The names Colliver, the names of the buildings around here, those old guys, many of them were clergymen as well as professors, and they worked at their two jobs in order to make a living, but there was something in their vision to move the place they had, from a small little university on a very small campus to what it has become. And I think over the years our presidents, they’ve come and they’ve gone, and they’ve left legacies that differ. As people look back on those various presidents, they have varying opinions, but we’ve had relatively few presidents over the years, certainly Don DeRosa made a great impact on the present picture of the campus, with the professionalism and the professional schools. I think President Eibeck and our new Provost, Provost Maria, have stepped into a situation that is moving up, and it’s not in a hole, it’s not financially in the hole, the university has been able to keep its head above water, and I think the university right now, the energy that it has is remarkable. There’s one group that I hardly know, and that’s the young faculty that have come on board since I retired in 1990, but I have nothing but good feelings about that group, and I think of them primarily as the research-oriented group. And the maintenance of faculty governance, and its impact on the energy that we’re talking about, will be interesting to see, whether the energy will come from faculty people, whether it will come from administrators, whether it will come from Regents, but I feel right now that we’re really in a great position and a great era in our world.
Elmer: Doris, you mentioned that you’d interviewed for two jobs, one in San Francisco and one in Stockton at the University of the Pacific, College of the Pacific at that time.

Doris: Right.

Elmer: So you made a bet to come and join us.

Doris: Right.

Elmer: The question is, has Pacific met your expectations?

Doris: Yeah, my whole life has changed. I mean, as born and raised in San Francisco and visiting there that day with the papers flying all over the place, and it was cold and miserable, and then coming to Stockton, you know, 103 degrees is nothing great, but I feel really like my life has been a really worthwhile one, and I can’t help but bring our interview to a close without talking about, again, my relationship to the university through the Emeriti Society, and one other connection that I had after I retired, which was the people in the Admissions Office really gave me opportunities that were unusual. And so even though I was retired, I went on a number of admission trips, and could spell out my pleasure of being a faculty person at the university, and then as working with our retired faculty group, the Emeriti Society, I’ve really felt like a full cycle. Back when a young, naïve person coming on board now to being older, hopefully wiser, and this interview that we’re doing here right now, Elmer, just brings up my closing statement I think, and I think what we’ve done with the oral history project over the years is something that I hope will be one of our lasting and most valuable contributions to the university. And if those oral history interviews will recall some of the ups and downs, the things that the university has overcome over those years, those voices, as Mike Wurtz, our archivist says, the history interviews give emotion to a whole picture of history that is not just black and white, but of feelings that are very personal. So, I’m about ready to close, I don’t know about you.

Elmer: I would just agree. The oral history project, you were instrumental in getting this started, so the university, I’m sure, honors you for that, and I honor you for that. The only comment I will make is that, as of March, this month, 2011, our oral history transcripts will go online so people around the world will be able to read those by simply connecting with the University of Pacific. So, great job. Doris, I’d like to thank you for the time that you’ve taken to share your thoughts with us, and I appreciate having you as a colleague over those years, so again, thank you very much.