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Gregg Cross interview, Wright State University Alumnus

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WRIGHT STATE UNIVERSITY
Retiree Association Oral History Project

Interview date: 08/12/2010

Interviewer: Chris Wydman
University Archivist, WSU Special Collections and Archives

Interviewee: Gregg Cross, WSU alumnus

Chris Wydman: This is Chris Wydman, Archivist, at Wright State University special collections and archives. Today is August 12, 2010, and I am interviewing Greg Cross, a former Wright State University student athlete. We're doing this interview as part of the Wright State University retiree oral history project. Greg, thank you very much for joining us today, to begin with please tell us a little bit about yourself and your background before you came to wright state, where you grew up, what high school you attended, that kind of thing.

Greg Cross: Okay, I grew up in Xenia, Ohio, lived there virtually my whole life, well growing up, sure. And went to Xenia high school, ah, after Xenia high school, went to Central State University on a football scholarship. Lasted out there about a year, and a quarter. We had racial problems on the football team; it was primarily a black university out there. And of course, I was a white quarterback, and there was a movement, and remember that was back in the days when the blacks were fighting for the civil rights like crazy. So to have say, 13 to 18 white guys on a football team, we were accepted pretty readily, but then in the spring of my freshman year, MLK was assassinated, Robert Kennedy was assassinated, uh, blacks are burning the cities down and so forth so, things got a little worse out there, let's say. Still had a lot of good friends on the football team. and went back for my freshman, uh, for my sophomore football year, and when I went back for my sophomore football year, you could tell over the summer a lot of the guys had been indoctrinated in black power, and things were a lot rougher, a lot more racial comments. I didn't last there long, needed some place to transfer to, readily, and Wright State, pretty good university then, they took me in a heartbeat. I came out here and started my school year, my sophomore year, '68 and '69, basically at WRIGHT STATE University.

CW: Ok, ok, uh, no football program?

GC: No football program. No, ah, [laughs] could've gone to Wittenberg, my coach at Central State told me, said, "Hey, they want you to play up at Wittenberg," and I was just so disgusted with the events at the time, and I just said, "That's it." So I jumped at the opportunity just to get in school and came here to WRIGHT STATE, so yeah, no football program. [smiling]

CW: Ok, [laughs], Ok. When was the first time you remembered hearing about WRIGHT STATE, was there any general perception about it, out in the community, I mean were you ...

GC: Well, yeah, in the xenia community, it was just a new university started up. And I can't really remember what year it started up, but I do remember when we first heard about it and I guess what was that? '64, '65 something like that.

CW: '64 it became a branch campus, in '67 was its first year as WRIGHT STATE.

GC: Ok, well I heard about it and then '64 would've been what, i guess my freshman year, in school. And, you heard about it, but you didn't think much about it, because you knew about the branch campus status and it didn't have the prestige that the bigger universities had, so yeah, we heard about it, but there was no consideration on my part at all of attending WRIGHT STATEU

CW: ok, ok

GC: When I graduated from high school.

CW: Yeah, I've heard that it was sometimes referred to as Fairmont North.

GC: [laughs] Yeah, it may have been. And I can tell you this, I taught at Beaver creek for like 35 years, I just retired 9 weeks ago, and even the Beaver creek kids, now we have a lot of Beaver creek kids going out here, but the kids want to go away from home, so even though WRIGHT STATE is a great university, there's a lot of kids who will not go to WRIGHT STATE just because it's their neighborhood school.

CW: Sure. You want to get the full...

GC: And I think that, you know, I've talked to kids from Columbus who won't go to Ohio State and kids from Cincinnati who won't go to UC, so I just think that's just a natural thing, you want to just get out of it

CW: Get away from home and yeah.

GC: Yeah, but I've told all my seniors, I've taught all seniors over the years, and I told them, you know, you take WRIGHT STATE and you move it 50 miles up the road, and probably half you guys would be going up to WRIGHT STATE. It's probably what you'd be, but it's their neighborhood school, so. And, of course, we'd kinda, I think, felt that same way, and of course it was a new university back then, too. But it would've been too darn close to home back when I was in High School.

CW: Okay, So, you kind of covered this, what led you to enroll here? That was Primarily transitioning from Central State ...

GC: Yes, it was, it was primarily transitioning from Central State, I just needed someplace to go, and once I got here, it was fine. It wasn't like you were living away from home, but, still, it was okay. I had a good time, met alot of new people. Course, mostly area kids, kids from Fairborn, Beaver creek, and so forth, but we had a real good time. Um, I didn't think too much about it, uh, as far as not truly being

away from home. Even though I did, my next year, transfer the next year to Indiana University for a year, but that was so doggone expensive I came back for my Junior and Senior years then to WRIGHT STATE.

CW: Oh, did you?

GC: Yeah, so I transferred out one more time. and then, uh, like I said it was very very expensive at IU, so I just came back here and a bunch of us guys got a house over in Fairborn, and of course then it was like living away from home because we had our own home over there, and I think there were 4 sets of people, or 4 sets of guys in that home. We had a couple foreign exchange students from Taiwan, I remember, and we had a good time, over there in Fairborn. So you know, we left the house and came to school, just like, I guess living in off campus apartment at some university away some place, if you went to Miami or BG or ...

CW: Well, campus was kinda in the middle of nowhere a little bit, so...

GC: Yeah, it was at that time [laughs]. It was in the middle of the sticks, yeah. The kids in Beaver creek today cannot believe when i tell them stories about how, you go down big old Fairfield now where you have the Fairfield Commons and all those businesses, about how it was just nothing but farmer's field, a two-lane road, Trebein simple two-lane road, no apartment buildings or condos along that. New Germany-Trebein I'm talking about. So yeah, it was just an entirely different atmosphere back then and of course I said I grew up in Xenia, and Xenia was considered the big city and Beaver creek was the place out in the sticks back then.

CW: Uh huh.

GC: And uh, so uh, of course today i think it's, you know, Beaver creek's the big growing area with the nice homes and the well educated people, and now Xenia's kinda a little more out in the sticks. I think people view it that way, so...

CW: Yeah.

GC: Uh, yeah, the perception has totally changed at WRIGHT STATE, and the campus and what it's like and how I view it, of course, and how the community of Beaver creek has changed, even though I know it is located in Fairborn, address wise, still, you know, everybody still associates WRIGHT STATE also with Beaver creek, so ...

CW: Yeah, yeah. Okay, um, can you talk a little bit about your first visit to campus, what your first impressions of campus were?

GC: [laughs] Uh, not much. It was a rush job, is what it was. I came out here, I registered, and I was just so thankful I had a school to go to. Uh, and matter of fact I think school was going to begin in a week or two. So, my first impression was, you had four buildings, you had Allyn, Millett, Oelman, and Fawcett I think, you had those four, and that was about it. I was just happy I was in school someplace to continue

getting my college education. So, yeah, there wasn't much of an impression at all, I knew it wasn't like going away to school, it wasn't like a campus like Miami or BG or whatever.

CW: But, it was a college.

GC: It was a college, yeah, I had to get in someplace at that time, so...

CW: So, what did campus look like? There was the quad, like you said, with the four original buildings, was there anything else on campus?

GC: Well, a little bit later, they did build ... and I don't even know what it was called up the road there, they had the Rathskeller in it, they had racquetball-

CW: Yeah, the old student center [University Center]

GC: The old student center, I guess the old student center, yeah. And so they built that and we thought we were big time then [laughs]. Once i came back from Indiana University and came back the second time, which would be I guess, I don't know, '70-'71, in through there, but once i got back that time, all of a sudden you kinda felt like you were more of a university. Because there was more of a place to hang out. Now kids did hang around the quad quite a bit. They had the Greek activities; they had various things like that going on. But, yeah, it wasn't a true campus life. let's put it that way, but still, you were seeing different kids, it wasn't your old High School buddies and all that , I mean, you had a few, but you still met kids from other schools, but just the area schools.

CW: Yeah, yeah. It still struggles with that, a little bit. There's still isn't enough, uh, there's a lot more campus housing, and a lot more people living right, right here, but there's still just not a whole lot going on.

GC: Yeah, yeah. And it still has a reputation of a commuter campus.

CW: Yeah.

GC: But you know, you hear kids, like we were over at Cadillac Jacks, the other day, eating, and there's a waitress that waited on us, and she was from Cincinnati, her name was, it was Cheryl, I think, and I said to her, I said, we found out she was a WRIGHT STATE student, and she was from Cincinnati and we said, "Why didn't you go to UC?" and she said, "I didn't want to go to the school in my same town, I wanted to go someplace different." So she's probably from there, coming up here, and she probably thinks this is great.

CW: Yeah. What did you study? What was your major?

GC: Well, originally in college, of course this was Central State, I started out in Math, a little bit of History, then I came over here, and I was planning on being a history major, but I got interested in Anthropology. So, I started out with anthropology courses and was really stimulated with that because there was nothing like that in High School was ever introduced to you, and that's one thing about college, you are exposed to a lot of different things. and I guess that's one thing you can say, I don't care

what university you go to, at WRIGHT STATE, even in its infancy back then, I was still exposed to a whole lot of stuff, just like other kids would be exposed to, academically, I'm speaking. And, uh, All of a sudden I'm seeing these anthropology courses, cultural anthropology, physical anthropology, archaeology. Loved Archaeology, always had an interest in that, so I started majoring in Anthropology, that's what I did. And, uh, went on with that, even when I transferred to Indiana University the next year, I stayed in Anthropology. And then, when I came back from IU to finish up Wright State, like my, I guess you'd say Junior/Senior years, um, I was involved with more of the Sociology department, I got interested in that. I think your horizons were a little broader in that, as far as job opportunities. Maybe a little broader than Anthropology, so I went on in to Sociology, and finally graduated with that in '72, with a degree in Sociology. Which I never followed up in but, yeah, those were my interests right there. Finally got in, as I told you before, into teaching, so ... I kind of bounced around, schools, majors, etc.

CW: Yeah, yeah, alright. Uh, where were your classes? There weren't many buildings.

GC: Oh wow, trying to think. Um, Millett, I had quite a few at Millett. I'm pretty sure that was Millett, the one. [laughs] I'm thinking.

CW: Yeah, that was, um, that's always kind of been the Liberal Arts, a lot of the Liberal Arts.

GC: Yeah, so it was Millett, of course my Science classes were over where they have the big lecture hall, auditorium and all that. I don't know if that was Fawcett, I can't remember which one that was. I don't know, but there were only four to choose from, so...

CW: Yeah, yeah.

GC: It was the administrative building; I think, was that Oelman or was that Fawcett? I don't know.

CW: That was Allyn.

GC: Allyn, okay, that was Allyn. See I've got four buildings and I can't keep them all straight.

GC: And Oelman has a lot of the Science and Fawcett has a big lecture hall, but I'm not sure at that time.

CW: Yeah. I know a lot of the faculty I've talked to that were in the Sciences were in Oelman.

GC: Yeah. But, no, I spent the great majority of my time in Millett.

CW: Do you, and this is gonna tax your brain a little bit, remember any of your professors?

GC: Yeah, oh, I remember, yeah, several of them that really made an impression, one wasn't even my major. And I think the first one I looked at was, what do you call them? The true lecturer and could hold your attention while lecturing was a guy named Dr. Jerry Hutchman. And of course he wouldn't know me; I wasn't even a Biology major. But, I had biology over there, and it was Dr. Hutchman and there was a real petite little lady he'd lecture with him. They'd be down on that stage, and they had their overhead projector, of course now you have all the nicer equipment -- everything's computerized,

but had the old-fashioned overhead projector and he'd be down there, drawing this and that on the overhead. But he had a great sense of humor, and teaching what he taught, Biology.

CW: And what did he teach? Oh, Biology?

GC: Well it was a Bio, it was an intro to Biology course is really what it was. And um, I just remember i was pretty much amazed. Sitting up there and thinking, "Is this guy talking off the top of his head?" He had this great sense of humor, he could keep your attention. It was a tough course, it was intro to Bio. I don't know if that was considered a "flunk-out" course back then. I had a tough time with it, got through it and all, but still, I really enjoyed him and I wish I could remember the name of the lady that taught with him. I don't, uh, it wasn't a student assistant, she was a full professor, I think, but I can't remember her name. i can picture her, a little dark haired lady, but, no.

CW: They kind of team taught it?

GC: Yeah, they team taught it, and I'm sure they just did a phenomenal job. I remember the tests were tough, and you those tests in that big old lecture hall, and uh, they had the tiered seats and all. Those were rough tests, but I loved that guy. And then, several of the others, Dr. Ellen Murray was my advisor, and I loved Dr.Murray. She had a real way of teaching also, as far as holding your interest in the classroom. And I can remember a History professor I had, Dr. Dailey. And I don't know if it was the Ken Dailey or not, but there was a Dr.Dailey out here. And, of course, this is the day when smoking was allowed. I can remember Dr. Dailey walking into the classroom and it wasn't that big of a Russian History class we had, there was probably about 20 of us in there, and he'd come walking in, a real old guy and he'd shuffle his feet along. He had a sport coat on. He'd take his sport coat off, throw it over the chair. Pull out a cigarette, light that cigarette up and just sit up there and smoke his cigarette. I mean, you don't see that stuff today, but he was another guy who could tell you all these little anecdotal stories about Russian History that really kept your interest. And that good little sense of humor. You try to model yourself, when i taught for 35 years, after some of these people -- know your stuff, be able to throw the anecdotes in there, so ... yeah, Dr. Dailey had a big influence on me, Dr. Hutchman had a big influence on me, because just the way they taught, the way they were able to hold your interest. But, you know, Dr.Dailey at that time, I swear I think he was probably in his 70s, back then, and that would've been...

CW: Really?

GC: Oh, yeah, that would've been in the early 70s, so ...

CW: That's pretty unusual, there were alot of young faculty.

GC: Yeah, I'd say ... yeah, he was an older guy, now of course, I was younger and maybe just seemed alot older to me [both laugh] but I look back and

CW: He might have been 40, huh? [laughs]

GC: [laughing] That's why the kids think I'm ancient now. But, um, yeah, he may have been in his 50s or 60s, but I think he looked a little bit older than that, yeah, he had a few years on him, I believe. But, I would like to know what happened to the guy. You know it's one of those things you regret, you wish you could've got contact with them later and say, "Hey, you had a big influence on my career, you really did." And I had him for a couple Russian History courses, so.

CW: Yeah, I hadn't really heard that name, so

GC: Yeah, Dr. Dailey, I should do some research on that and see ... we'll have to get in the Archives and check him out. [laughs]

CW: Yeah, I will.

GC: But he was a great guy, but I can remember, and I had some professors like any place. And I had them at IU, and I had them at Central State, too, and I had great professors there, too, at times. But, you all of a sudden have some professors, which I won't name their names here, this is being filmed, but I had some that, uh, weren't that good. You know I had one guy who taught this one type of History course, and I love this type of history today, I've been to this country a number of times, but the history course that he taught could've been done a lot better, more interesting, because he didn't throw any anecdotal information in and it was very bland and very dry. But I won't mention his name, I'll be kind, so ... [smiles] But I do know...

CW: I won't, I won't, I won't...

GC: You wouldn't do that anyways, I know. [laughs]

CW: I won't poke ya, I won't ... [laughs]

GC: No, no, yeah, and I don't even know, I think I know who it was, but I had a couple, and I think I maybe know who this guy was, might even be wrong if I said his name right now, so...

CW: Okay. So, we talked about it a little bit, what was campus life like? Uh, it's always had a reputation as a commuter school, um, but was anything happening between and after campuses?

GC: Well, yeah, the guys that you met out here, and the girls that you met out here, yeah, you hung out somewhat, but there wasn't any place on campus to hang out, other than, like I said, when I came back from Indiana University and they finally built the first student union center over there, more or less. But, yeah, you'd go hang out at all the local night clubs around the area. There were some Greek activities; I know I had a date with a girl to a Greek activity, though I wasn't in the Greek fraternity/sorority thing. But, um, you saw kids and you still went to parties, at their parties, and you still hung out together after and in between classes. You'd hang out at the Airway Inn, which burnt down a number of years later, but the Airway Inn was a real institution for Wright State students up the road there and there were a couple places in Fairborn. There was a pizza place and all, but yeah, a lot of these kids, we played, before the varsity basketball team came along, we played on the intermural basketball team out here and hung out with a lot of those guys on my intermural team. I had a couple

friends from Xenia were on our team, but also some kids from Fairborn, Beavercreek, and some of the other surrounding communities, a couple Colonel White guys I got to know. So, yeah, we just made a lot of buddies, but they were area buddies rather than traditionally you go to school, you might find people from out of state you make friends with, but you still hung out with the people here that you met at Wright State University. Even though there wasn't a lot to do on campus at the time.

CW: Right. So there wasn't really any campus hangout.

GC: No, not that first year.

CW: There was nowhere to go.

GC: No, there was no place to go. Not in that '68/'69 year, there was no place to go. Like I said, I think it must have been '70-'71 or '72, in through there, that's when we had the precursor to the big student union now up there and that's, yeah, there was finally a little place to hang out up there, eventually. And that, and that, like I said earlier, that kind of made it more, a little more, of a campus, even though it was just one building, it was still kind of a place to hang out -- racquetball, there was a small weight room.

CW: Well, and also, you know, I think that's so important.

GC: Yeah.

CW: Just having a place to go, and, you know, the student center got built, the library got built, you know, and these were places where students could go between classes, and

GC: Yeah, exactly.

CW: And made it more of a community.

GC: It was, it was more of a community, more of a place to hang out, more of a campus atmosphere is what it was. And, even though it wasn't a big time campus atmosphere, it still gave you that little bit of a feeling and I can't imagine what it's like today, if there's many places going on campus today, but there obviously is a much bigger student union building, and ...

CW: Yeah, yeah. Um, and there's also so much around campus now.

GC: Uh huh.

CW: You know, places to go.

GC: Sure.

CW: You know, after class and to hang out. There was the Airway Inn, you said,

GC: Yeah.

CW: Colonel Glenn, was there anything over there?

GC: Oh, it was, it was farmer's field. All that stuff you see across there today, that's wonderful for the kids today. You know, you've got restaurants, places to shop; you've got a little called the University Store, over there. You have all those places, and no, that was just a road, fields, as far as I remember.

CW: Yeah, you can drive up to Fairborn, or...

GC: Yeah, you had to drive clear into Fairborn or you had to drive up the road, and that's where the Airway Inn was, up the road here, and you go up a little bit further...

CW: Up towards Dayton?

GC: Yeah, up towards Dayton, and the closer you got to Woodman Dr., of course, then you got a little, you had the little shopping center with JC Penney's in there and all that. A few more restaurants up around that area, but there, right across the road there, there was very little over there. Very little. It was just mainly fields, that was it.

CW: Now, um, now we're gonna start going towards athletics a little bit. I know you played on the basketball team. When you got here, what was the sports scene like?

GC: Okay, well my first year here, which was that '68-'69 year, the sports scene was basically intermural basketball. We played all of our intermural games, uh, at, it would be like the elementary or middle schools, course you called them Junior Highs back then, over in Dayton. That's where everything was played over there, Intermurally speaking. So we played basketball, and we had a good time. And there were some good athletes out here, ex high school basketball players, were pretty decent.

CW: Sure.

GC: Now, I'm not saying they were big time basketball players, there were some decent ball players out here. And so we had a real good time doing that, but then when I came back to Wright State my second time after Indiana, uh, I had heard that they were going to start a Varsity Basketball team, a true varsity basketball team. Now, prior to that first Varsity basketball team, which I played on, there was like a Reserve basketball team, uh, the year I was gone out to Indiana. But, then when I came back, uh, they started a Varsity Basketball team for the first time, and they were giving scholarships, I didn't get, I was on a half scholarship. I don't know if too many players were on full scholarships back then or not, probably a couple were, but most of them were on half scholarships. So I remember hearing that they were going to have a varsity basketball team and I was an athlete and of course my football career was over with so I said, well, I'm a decent basketball player so I'll write John Ross and let him know and say I'm interested and I gave him my credentials- my background, what things I'd accomplished or whatever- and I sent it off to him and he offered me a half scholarship in basketball. So that was more or less the beginning of my basketball career out here and that was the very first varsity basketball team.

CW: And that was when you came back?

GC: That's when I came back, yeah, the second time when I came back.

CW: You were a Junior, so '71?

GC: Yeah, like Junior year, yeah, so it really would be like the '70-'71 year is what it'd be, yeah. '70-71, so that was it, that was the inception of Wright State basketball and who would have ever envisioned from what I started at to the Nutter Center, because we practiced at the Dayton coliseum, I think it was called the Fairgrounds Coliseum, which was a renowned area for basketball-

CW: Yeah, the old fairgrounds-

GC: Yeah, the old fairgrounds and that was an ancient looking place- I wish I had pictures, I'm sure I could get in the archives someplace and find those- but that's where we practiced over there. We played our games at Stebbins High School, and we had cheerleaders and all that, but we traveled to practice in vans, we traveled to games in vans, we didn't have buses. Of course you didn't fly. The furthest- there was a game out, where was it, in Missouri with some Air Force team, McKendrick Air Force Base or something, maybe that was in Illinois, I can't remember, and we played games down in Kentucky, and most of the teams were from Ohio, though. So that was the extent of our traveling.

CW: You talked about it a little bit, at the time sports recruiting started happening about the time you came back. So could you still pretty much walk-on to a team and play or at that point was it getting-

GC: No, my first year it was pretty much you would walk on. I mean, there were some scholarships, but I remember what you would call tryouts, and I was promised half a scholarship and so were some other people, but I still remember that there was this huge tryout session and it was over at Stebbins, and my gosh, I remember walking into that thing and it looked like there were 200 people there running and shooting layups and all that, John Ross and Jim Brown standing out there checking everybody out, and I thought, man, what a madhouse this is. But really it got a lot more intense after that. So once the team was there, okay that was our first year team, we didn't do real well, I think we won six or seven games that year probably max. But then the next year, of course they started recruiting regularly after that and the quality of athlete really started picking up like crazy. I mean I've often said, you know, people would say, "Oh, you played on Wright State's basketball team?", and I'd say, "Yeah", [laughs], "the first team", but you compare me to the athletes these guys are today and I'd be the trainer or I'd be the manager or something like that, because the recruiting has super picked up here at Wright State, and it started picking up here my second year, too. See I only played the one year because I was getting ready to graduate the next but I remember the teams just kept getting better and better and better as time went on.

CW: I think the third year, I think they were 17-4?

GC: Yeah, they may have been. They may have been. They picked up some nice ball players and the program started picking up, I mean, they started getting more serious about it, it became a good D-II [division 2] team eventually, I think that first year of mine we were D-III and played all D-III schools and all that, and I don't know if we were even classified as anything to be quite honest with you.

CW: So there wasn't a gymnasium on campus until '73 or something-

GC: Whenever they built that one up there, yeah.

CW: -and you practiced down at the fairgrounds.

GC: Yeah, the fairgrounds, the old fairgrounds or coliseum.

CW: So the fairgrounds, Stebbins, Xenia High School?

GC: No, never practiced there, as far as I can remember we never practiced at Xenia.

CW: You would remember that.

GC: Yeah, I would remember that, yes, I would remember that [laughs]. It was the fairgrounds, and the games were at Stebbins. And we had that first great big practice at Stebbins and maybe we did practice there a few other times but it was primarily at the fairgrounds is where it was at.

CW: So there wasn't even an outside hoop on campus?

GC: No, as far as I can remember there was no outside hoop. Nope, no outside hoops. We had intramural football, [but] intramural basketball- I can never remember shooting a basketball around here at Wright State's campus. We had to go to the outdoor gyms in Fairborn or back then they'd let you in the high schools a lot easier, I remember going over to Fairmont and shooting inside, and a little bit at Belmont shooting inside, but they're a lot tougher today about letting kids just going in on their own and shooting. So, yeah, you had to find a gym or an outdoor court wherever you could back then.

CW: So I'm assuming at that point you weren't in a league?

GC: Nope.

CW: Just kind of an independent. What were some of the teams you played against?

GC: Okay, if I remember correctly the first two games we played were Cumberland and Berea. We went on a trip down to Cumberland and Berea and we actually stayed overnight which was I think one of the few times we ever stayed overnight anyplace, but we played those two teams, we lost both games. The first game, I can't remember if it was Cumberland or Berea, but whichever one it was we played them a good game, pretty tight game, pretty tough game. Didn't play quite as well the second game. But I remember in opening up down there I can still envision the hotel we stayed in; of course I think there were four to a room, I still remember the hotel we stayed in. I think as a matter of fact I don't even know if we ate at a restaurant or anyplace, I think we had box lunches if I remember correctly. Because like I said, [laughs], we were in vans! I mean, let's face it, the budget was very small. Don Mohr was the athletic director back then, M-O-H-R. Of course John Ross was our head coach. You know, you say, "Well, we practiced at this gym and we played our games at a high school place in Stebbins"- it had to be pretty rough on those guys, too. The conditions we were under with a limited budget and all-

CW: And I think they pushed really hard to get what you guys did get.

GC: Oh yeah, they probably did. I'm sure they probably did, and they probably took as good a care of us as they could. We didn't really think too much of it. We went to practice, I think we were just happy to be teammates and if you've ever been involved in organized sports, you know, you get pretty close to your teammates and you laugh and you giggle a lot and you carry on, we were probably just like any other college basketball team, except we just weren't all just on the same campus. But I remember hanging out with some of the basketball players and going places with them and all, so you know, yeah, we were like a team.

CW: Did you- I know Don Mohr, he was the first athletic director- did you guys, were you around him much at all, did you get to know him at all?

GC: Oh yeah, he knew us all personally. Don was a great guy. He was the friendliest guy.

CW: He was something.

GC: Oh, he was; he was great. As a matter of fact I think- and I don't know this for sure- but even before I got on the basketball team, Don Mohr was still here on campus prior to basketball starting up and he was just always a nice, friendly, great guy. Don was phenomenal. A guy that, you know, I just wish could have been around longer with Wright State University. He had a personality, he had a lot of magnetism, a big guy, a burly guy, and he was a guy you would walk up to and shake his hand and it was like he knew you forever. So I was real impressed with Don Mohr, he was the right type of guy to get a program started out here, him and John Ross both.

CW: Yeah, because he came in and I think he was working in financial aid and student advising, but he came from that athletics background, I think from Cincinnati or somewhere.

GC: Did he? Yeah, I didn't really know his background.

CW: But I think he really is the one who got people to start listening: "Look, we need athletics here."

GC: Yeah, it gives you a source, it gives the university... athletics isn't everything. I coached for twenty years in a high school, I coached football and a little bit of basketball. Athletics is by far not everything; I'm still a big pusher of academics, number one obviously, but it still to a certain degree does give a little notoriety, gets the name out there a little bit more, and it gives the kids on campus something to look forward to a little bit, and I think it's a vital part. Can't be the only thing but it's a vital part of the campus so Don Mohr, we've got to give him credit for that.

CW: So you mentioned some of those early teams you played against. Did you get a sense of what did they think about playing against-

GC: Wright State?

CW: -Wright State. I'm assuming you had to have a bit of a thick skin.

GC: [Laughs] Yeah. But you know, I really don't know. I can't remember any wise cracks being made towards us, of course deep inside who knows what they really felt. But I remember once playing

Ashland, and Ashland was known for its defenses back then, and we went up and played Ashland and they would pack the house and I think their defense was like number one in the country; I think they were only giving up 38, 39 points a game. Of course some of that was the slowdown-type basketball they played but at the same time I wonder what they did think of Wright State. Now that you mention it- I really hadn't thought much about it- but yeah, maybe they did say, "Who is this team coming in?" Maybe they had the background on us, you know, first year basketball team and so forth. And we got beat bad sometimes but I don't know if it was ever to the point where you see these games, like 90-40, where you just felt totally, totally humiliated. I remember a player named Dave McGill we had for us who was a great player, he was so quick it was unbelievable, and he went up and put a pretty good show on against Ashland, stole the ball several times, so I think at least they walked away impressed with him. But he did a good job up there. So, yeah, we got beat bad a couple times but like I said it wasn't one of those fifty point shellackings or anything like that, the point where you walk off and say, "Oh my gosh, let's just get out of here." I don't think there was ever anything that bad.

CW: Did any rivalries develop in those early years?

GC: Not in one year I wouldn't say. I know we played Cedarville, and that probably could have become a rivalry but Wright State, let's face it, eventually just outgrew Cedarville like that. I'm sure if Wright State would have stayed at a lower level of basketball that probably could have become a rivalry. Central State probably could have become a rivalry if that would have taken off. But no, it was just way, way too early back then to develop any rivalries. And maybe deep inside like you mentioned earlier maybe those teams wouldn't look at us as a rivalry anyway because they probably thought-

CW: Yeah, you think of some of these other local colleges, maybe Wittenberg, and I just didn't know if maybe there was one or two teams.

GC: No, I wouldn't say so but I would say if you would have kept the lower level basketball at Wright State you probably would have had the Cedarvilles, the Wilmingtons and so forth, because we did play Wilmington down there, and you probably would have had it with those schools.

CW: But that kind of brings up an interesting point that I hadn't really thought about, that in those early years Wright State was on a pretty high arch, and it developed beyond just a local college team pretty quickly.

GC: Oh yeah, right. It's like you said, maybe the third year you thought they were 17-4 or something like that, and I wasn't on the team and they may have been but I don't remember, but yeah, the ascendancy of Wright State basketball was pretty darn rapid when you consider where we started, and I think the next year they just got a little bit better, and then a little bit better, and I remember early on they went down and played UC and some teams and they really didn't do that badly. They really didn't. I was afraid listening to the games that they might go down and just get blown away but no, they were very representative of the university. The ascendancy of basketball, if there was a way you could probably look at universities and say who rose the quickest as far as going from where we started to getting eventually a big gymnasium, and in between winning a D-II championship within how many years did we do that, Wright State basketball took off quickly is what it did.

CW: Yeah, because that was '81 or '83? Yeah, it was either '81 or '83.

GC: That was quick when you think about it; when you say the first varsity team was the '70-'71 year, and then you take the early '80s, that was a rapid ascent.

CW: What was your first "big" win? Maybe with your limited time here that was- maybe you could think of "a" win?

GC: Oh, wow. I'm trying to even think who the first win was against. That was the first "big" win, the first win, getting over the hump. I wish I had the schedule with me. You know, I can't even remember who it was against, but I do remember there was the... I don't think that was our first win but we scored a hundred thirty-some points against McKendry Air Force Base or some Air Force base out like I said in Illinois or Missouri or someplace out there, and a hundred thirty-some points is a lot of points anytime for a college basketball team, so that's how bad that team was. But I wish I could remember really what the first win was, but getting that monkey off your back and I'm sure John Ross felt that way too. That first win would have been a big one. They were so few and far in between then, you would think you would remember it. But maybe that just has something to do with being a first year basketball team, and we had played decent basketball, it wasn't like we got blown out. But we got our first win and I don't know if anybody went sky high on that but at the same time, well okay, we can beat college teams that have been around for years actually, and here we are a first year team and we end up beat them. Maybe that shows what the talent was in the Dayton area at the time that you could take a team that's just started from scratch and you can go out and win six games. Of course the one against that Air Force team didn't count too much, but really the other teams we beat were teams that had basketball-

CW: There always has been a pretty deep pool in this area for athletics.

GC: Yeah, there has been.

CW: So, do you remember the first big school you went to play against, the first going into a big environment?

GC: A bigger atmosphere, wow. I think Ashland College. For small college basketball, and like I said, Ashland had a reputation for defense and they were just hard-nosed. I wish I could remember that coach's name because he went from there and he went on to a big time school. He was hard-nosed and that's probably why they played hard-nosed defense, too. But I remember going into that atmosphere, Ashland always had a big banner on the wall, I can remember that, the gymnasium packed- but of course it was like a Division III gym. But still I think that was probably the first game I remember where you'd go, "Whoa, look at this right here, this isn't too shabby."

CW: Yeah, that what I was thinking about. Walking in to someplace that's packed and-

GC: Yeah, they were good and they had a reputation so- yeah, I think that's the first one where I wouldn't say the atmosphere was intimidating but it was a little more raucous than usual and a little more packed and you knew you were playing a good basketball team. I'm going to have to do some

research on that coach or you might want to do that. That coach was hard-nosed and he did go on to become a big time basketball coach someplace that kind of skyrocketed him is what it did.

CW: And if I thought about it I could have gone over to the Archives and pulled out the schedule for that first year. So, you had some success as a program fairly quickly. What kind of fan support did you get? I've heard about "The Raider Rowdies", but you weren't even the Raiders yet, were you?

GC: No, what were we back then? [Laughs]

CW: Did you have a name?

GC: Man, I'm trying to think if we even had a nickname back then. We had cheerleaders, I know that. We had to have a nickname back then. I think they even voted on it, but you know what, this may sound really stupid but I don't even remember having a nickname back then.

CW: Because I haven't heard of-

GC: You know, I can't remember. Wright State... you know maybe did we even have a nickname? See, you'd think I'd remember that. But I can't even remember.

CW: See, I think you may not have. That might have been in the next year or two.

GC: So cheerleaders must have had to have modified their cheers so you didn't have a mascot or a nickname in there [laughs]

CW: "Let's Go... Team!"

GC: "Let's Go Team", yeah, "Let's Go Wright State" or something. But we had our cheerleaders, and fan support? Yeah, you know, probably like a bad high school game attendance, I would say, over there at Stebbins. Yeah, probably a bad high school game attendance. My parents came over and watched us and I'm sure a few parents of some of the other players, but no, the place wasn't packed; it wasn't an Ashland, let's put it that way, or even a Cedarville College. We played in front of a sparse turnout, but as an athlete you really don't notice the crowd. All the years I coached and everything, too, you don't look around into the crowd; you're focused on the game so I don't really ever remember looking around and seeing who is in the stands or anything. But I'm sure it was just crowds that were so-so.

CW: At what point did you start getting some notice, maybe, by the local media? And maybe this was after you were gone.

GC: I think more after I was gone. I remember little articles in the paper but it wasn't like major articles like Wright State's getting right now. So media coverage was sparse, of course they had a few little things in there and I might have a few little clippings at home, but it was very, very sparse coverage is what it was. Extremely sparse.

CW: Were any of the games on radio or-

GC: No, I don't think so. I don't remember any of my friends saying, "Hey, we listened to the game on the radio last night." No, I really don't think so, I'm pretty sure I'd remember that. It's kind of like the mascot thing and it's kind of funny I can't remember that. I'd be ninety-nine and nine-tenths percent sure that there was no media coverage on Wright State.

CW: Because I know when they had their first game once they had their own court here, I know that was televised because we have pictures and you can see the TV cameras.

GC: Oh, I'm sure it was. But we weren't very popular in the Dayton community back then. But I do remember articles in the paper talking about who was on the team and stuff like that, but that was probably being kind more than anything. [Laughs]

CW: So what would you say is the most memorable moment or accomplishment, both personally and as a team?

GC: Okay, personally and as a team. Personally, I rode the bench a lot to be quite honest with you, and I busted my ankle up about six games into the season and I was out for the longest time, and let me show you how much we were in our infancy- I think they threw a couple of ice packs at me and that's what you did back then. As far as I remember, there was somebody who kind of wrapped ankles and did this and that but as far as having what you'd call a true, certified trainer, I don't think anybody had many of those back then. So as far as any great, personal moments or anything like that, I think sinking a few foul shots or it wasn't like I sank any winning buckets or anything like that, but personally I can't really say that there was anything that was huge playing, because I didn't play all that much. But I think just being part of that first team, getting the groundwork laid just a little bit, going through a lot of the stuff we had to go through like traveling in vans and eating box lunches and all that, I guess it all has to begin someplace. I might be proud, personally, that I'm one of the sacrificial lambs to getting the program started. But you made all of the friendships, which was great, but I can't say there was anything personal that I did but I made a lot of good friends on the team. As far as team accomplishments, it was kind of neat how you could take a bunch of players from all over the area- of course all college teams have to do this- you take a bunch of kids under I guess what you'd say is adverse circumstances, we all got along pretty doggone well and we all hung- I wouldn't say all of us- but we hung out with a few of the players, and as a team we just got through everything together and I didn't see any jealousies or any internal rivalries on the team. We all just supported each other and I made some good friends off that team, I still bump into Tim Walker periodically at Wright State games. He had the scoring record at Wright State for a long time until I think Bill Edwards broke it. Mark Donahue, he just wrote a baseball book, I think Mark's into selling real estate but he was a Fairmont guy, and Mark has been real successful at business and like I said he wrote a book about- it was a fictitious book and it deals with baseball, and I don't know where it's gone but they had a lot of publicity in the paper about that. I bumped into- I hadn't seen him since I played Wright State basketball- Jim Minch [sp?], he was from Carroll, we had a reunion, Fred Clark was there, he played from Dayton Roosevelt. The kid I mentioned earlier, Dave McGill, who was a phenomenal basketball player, I mean you looked at him, he just looked like a little- I mean Dave was only about 5 foot 10 or 11, he was one of the quickest kids and he was one of the most surprising kids. I remember John Ross saying at that time that he should have had a scholarship to a bigger, better

school, I'm not saying a Division I school, but he was quick and you just looked at him and the kid was quick and he could shoot well, too. But Dave died early and young, unfortunately, down in Florida, so I didn't see him much. I remember this guy named Mike Cornet, Ed Woosley, who was from Patterson. But all those guys who I played with when we had our reunion, not that many really came back, but we had a handful that came back and it was nice to see them again. But as far as team accomplishments go, I think winning six games with guys just thrown together who had never played together before, I think that's a tribute to John Ross and Jim Brown, the assistant coach, I think it's a tribute to them for just being able to sneak out six wins. Like I said, there were some other games that were, you know, close games but we just didn't pull it out. You know, I think for those type of questions, the personal thing is hard for me to answer because like I said I didn't play that much, but as far as the team thing goes when you throw a team together like that, it's not like you're shooting to get into the NCAA tournament or win your league- because we weren't in a league- so the team accomplishments I think just had to be the games we won and just being able to lay a little bit of groundwork right there, because like you said the ascendancy of Wright State basketball took off pretty quickly after that, so we were the guinea pigs, we were the ones they experimented on for how are we going to handle this and do that and so forth, and I'm sure John probably learned a few things from having the first year team there, the types of athletes he wants and so forth and so on.

CW: So while you were here, and this has been kind of an issue that's come and gone throughout the years, did you hear any talk about trying to develop a football team here?

GC: Oh yeah, I heard. I was actually on a committee- which we met I think twice and I'm trying to think of when this would've been, it was probably about the middle of my teaching career so you're probably talking seventeen, eighteen, nineteen, twenty years ago-

CW: Yeah, there was- I think around '91- there was a big-

GC: Yeah, and that may have been it. We had I guess you might say, I don't know if it was truly a focus group or not, but we sat and we talked and I remember they asked me since I was the head football coach at Beavercreek from the '88 seasons through the '91 seasons and I was an assistant coach for a bunch of years prior to that, from like about '78 up until I became a head coach in 1988. But yeah, I was on the committee out here and I had to like kind of give them some sort of a budget figure on what type of practice equipment you'd have to have, how much a helmet cost, how much the shoulder pads cost, and you kind of had to come up with a figure of just to get a program started what you would have to have. We're talking practice dummies, the blocking sleds and so forth, and I remember I threw out a number to them eventually when we met the second time. But I don't know if that meeting ever went more than about two meetings or not. I mean football is really, really expensive to start up. But I think once again it is one of those things for a campus and a school and a university where you get a lot more identity. Now does that help bring back alumni, bring in alumni funds or any of that, I can't say that but it does bring a certain identity to a university. But I know there's budget crunches out here now so I think to start Wright State football up is going to be a battle.

CW: It'd be even harder now.

GC: Oh, it'd be even harder now, it's a battle anyways. I think if anything you see teams dropping from a certain division to a lower division, less scholarships, or just dropping football altogether. Yeah, I think in this day and age to start up football is going to be a tough proposal to get through, especially to the taxpayers.

CW: And I'd heard- there have been numerous people saying that from the very beginning it was decided that there would never be football here, that they were going to put that money into programs and into academic programming. I haven't ever seen anything in the Archives to justify that, but I can imagine in the early Academic Council meetings and what not that they were really wanting this to become, you know, a real college with good program strength and good students and good faculty.

GC: It'd be cool, I'd love to see it but let's face it, it's finances is what it comes down to. It's a money issue. Everything comes down to money.

CW: So kind of piggy-backing on that, I know at least initially the university took a very conservative approach to developing athletics here and developing academic programs as the number one. Did you ever get that sense that perhaps you weren't supported, financially or otherwise, to the level you should have been?

GC: [Laughs] No, not at all. Like I said, I was on a half scholarship and I was just, let's face it, the average kid who wasn't like I had all this background on what college basketball should really be like or even what college football should really be like. I don't think anybody truly knows. I bet you take the kids at Ohio State, the football players that go up there or the basketball players that go up there, I mean when they go into that university I think they're pretty naïve themselves, too, until maybe they're around for a couple years and then they realize, wow, this is truly the big time and look at the money rolling in, the supporters and the alumni and all that. So no, I never felt that- first of all, I wouldn't probably know what it felt like to not get all the financial support you need, but secondly, probably as subconscious as anything we realized we were a team starting out and I think probably as long as we had basketballs and a place to practice- now obviously we realized, too, that this wasn't our own gym and we were playing on a high school basketball court- but I don't think our expectations were too high at all at that time because we did realize we were starting out. Now you take Wright State basketball today with the Mills-Morgan Center and the Nutter Center and all that and you put all that together, and the way some of these players are recruited at all these universities and they see all the big time stuff, and Wright State they don't take a back seat to anybody with the facilities they have now. I think kids realize today, and they're more savvy today, let's face it, the kids are, especially if they've been introduced to this and introduced to that. But they see that physical stuff but I don't think they even realize everything that goes on behind the scenes, trying to raise money and selling advertising and all that.

CW: Did you ever notice a change in attitude- and again, this may have happened a year or so after you left- from the administration, faculty, or the campus in general to athletics in your time here?

GC: Oh yeah. Well, the basketball team just kept getting better and it's like anything; everyone loves a winner. And as the teams get better, you get more fans coming to the game, you started recruiting better athletes. And I don't know when Ricky Martin was recruited from Middletown, that was before

he took up the Muslim religion, but I remember thinking at that time- of course I wasn't playing any longer but you keep up on those things in the paper- I remember when Ricky was recruited from Middletown, I thought this guy had a pretty good area reputation for being a pretty good basketball player, and we've got Ricky coming to Wright State from Middletown and he had a nice career out here, and I started thinking, you know what, that's the first basketball player that kind of had, you know, a little bit bigger name than your average area basketball player. A guy named Lyle Faulkner, I remember when he came in, I forget what school he was from, I think he came from up north someplace, but Lyle Faulkner came in and I remember reading his name in the paper a lot, so Wright State started to pick up a few better players here and started winning a few more ballgames, and of course eventually all the Grote boys came along. But you start picking up kids a little further away and you realize the name of basketball is starting to spread just a little bit better for Wright State basketball, because I think the furthest guy- we had the Patterson guy, we had the Roosevelt guy, the Fairmont guy, I'm the Xenia guy, the Belmont guy- oh, we had a Piqua guy, Bill Fogt, he was a hard worker, he was on our team- Jim Minch was from Carroll, but you know they were all just pretty much this area-

CW: Jim who?

GC: Jim Minch; M-I-N-C-H, from Carroll. And Jim ended up having a decent little career here at Wright State for four years, he didn't do too badly. You start getting these players and now you're going to Middletown and now you're going up north a little bit further and you're going to the Grote boys down to Cincinnati, and you start expanding a little bit. And then of course over the years we've seen they start going out of state. Of course, Ralph [Underhill] recruited people from overseas, so [laughs] Ralph had a knack for finding people in places overseas.

CW: Yeah, Ralph's in Russia.

GC: Yeah, where's Ralph this week? He's in Russia! He's in Cambodia next week [laughs]. But anyways, that's kind of how you saw the program grow. Little by little, it just started to expand out and more people started attending games and we started winning more and getting coverage in the paper. Of course the big boost is when we finally beat UD that second time we played them over at the arena. I can't remember what year that was but that was just, you know, beyond probably Wright State's expectations, when you consider they had their first team in '70 and then they turn around and beat UD in whatever year that was. That had to be in what was that, the '80's was it, or early '90's?

CW: When they had the Gem City Jam.

GC: Yeah, the second one they had.

CW: Yeah, I don't remember, I think it was in the '90's.

GC: Yeah, like early '90's I think. I mean you take that, that's just twenty years. Down the road, UD's had basketball since God knows when.

CW: Yeah, since St. Mary's.

GC: Yeah, you're making me reflect a lot more now here than I usually would on this, but you go from the area to even way beyond the suburbs to other cities and then it's kind of neat how you've seen it just grow and expand.

CW: Was there ever any sense that athletics was helping to put Wright State on the map? And I think at some point I'm sure they realized the marketing potential, but I think they were very resistant at the beginning and then all of a sudden it was like, "Wait a minute here"-

GC: Yeah, well I think it's got to help somewhat. Let's face it, you're in a D-II national tournament and that's televised on ESPN2 if anything, but it was televised, and people have to say, "Wright State". I mean it doesn't have a name associated with it like Dayton, you know, or Illinois State or something like that; it's just Wright State. So the more you get that name out there, yeah, it's going to help. People are going to start asking, "Oh, Wright State", and I'm sure the announcers say "near Dayton, Ohio" or "near Fairborn, Ohio" or whatever, and yeah, it's got to help. That's why- I guess what I can't understand, I can see where you've got to push academics first without a doubt; this is a university and it's based on academics. But it can be a partnership between athletics and academics, and I've always felt that way. It's the same way at the high school. All those kids I've taught over those years, I want them to be, number one, academics, and my football players knew it, too. But at the same time there can be a partnership between academics and athletics; it's just part of what you call "the program" is what it is. I taught advanced placement students probably for the last twelve years, just about all advanced placement students, and those kids are involved in everything. People say, "Oh, you have to concentrate on academics". Well, shoot, not only were those kids the best and the brightest overall but, my gosh, they were class presidents and student council presidents and they were in this organization and they volunteered for this and volunteered for that. So they don't have to be exclusive of each another; you can have your athletes and the university can operate together, and I think it's vital for helping spread the name out there of Wright State University.

CW: Aside from athletics, what do you remember the most of your time here?

GC: Of my time here at Wright State? You know, it might sound corny again but I'd say when I was at Wright State the friendships that you make, and academically I'd compare it to Indiana University, Central State University, here's Indiana U- Big Ten and all that kind of stuff- and I look at the courses I had and I had some great courses at IU but I had some great courses here, and I had some bad courses at IU and I had some bad courses here, too. So for people to say that, "Well, wasn't IU superior to Wright State?", I couldn't say that. I was only out there a year but I ended up taking, I don't know, ten or twelve courses, whatever, and I'm trying to be fair about this, I'm not just saying this because I graduated from Wright State. But I guess every university has its strengths and weaknesses and good profs and bad profs. Wright State gave me my degree, gave me my start, I made a bunch of friendships through Wright State University. So you see from the academic standpoint I'll forever be grateful to it, from the social standpoint the biggest thing probably is that I lived in that house in Fairborn with a bunch of guys so that was just like going away to college, we'd come here to campus and do whatever, go to the Rathskeller, play racquetball, and did some things on campus. But I can't compare it to like truly going away to a state university someplace else but Wright State, and watching the way it grows

and has grown, I was a part of that and I had a darn good time. And I think it's really what you make of it yourself. I think anybody can come here and you mentioned earlier about you go up Fairfield right there and there is so much around here now for people to do, with all the theatres and the mall and there's the clubs the kids like to go out to, and other than having a huge community here on campus, where everybody's living on campus like most state universities would have, that's the only thing probably that Wright State is lacking right now is more kids living on campus. I don't know if there's room to grow to promote that or not or even if the university in their long range plans even want that, but if you want to make Wright State I think a university that's more like other universities out there, and I'm not saying you have to be but if you want to have it more of a campus lifestyle I think they'd have to push it in that direction. So as far as- I kind of got off the subject there a little bit- but as far as the things that I do remember the most and all that, it is the friendships. And I think if you take any kid, and my wife went to Miami University for four years and she was part of the Greek fraternity organization or sorority, and she talks about her friendships and the parties they had, and you know what, at Wright State we had friendships, we had parties, and everything else. We just weren't living in dorms on campus.

CW: Was there anything looking back that you say made Wright State unique or distinctive from other schools? I mean it might be easier looking back now than at the time.

GC: That made it distinctive from other schools- the only distinctive thing I think of, and I'm not saying this as a positive or a negative is just that it's a commuter school. I can't, like I already mentioned, academically- and I've been to three different universities- all of them have had their strengths and weaknesses. The only thing really different is that it was primarily a commuter school and there just wasn't much of a campus life. And to say anything really positive about distinctiveness, I can't really say that. But I can't say anything negative about it either, other than the fact that there wasn't a campus life out here.

CW: I mean did you notice more- older students?

GC: Well, yeah, okay now you're kind of getting me to think a little bit more here. Yeah, there were more older students out here, and of course the handicapped students. Now you're making me think in a different vein. There were, sure, a lot more physically challenged students out here, you had the tunnels, and so that made Wright State unique and still makes it pretty unique today from what I understand. Because we have facilities out here that are probably unlike what some other universities have. So yeah, from that standpoint it was unique. But you never heard anyone else talk about it or anything. And when some of my other friends came back from some of the universities they were going to they never said anything positively or negatively about Wright State. It was just viewed as a school like everybody else.

CW: Well, we're about at the end here of the questions I have, is there anything else you would like to talk about? Any topics I didn't mention or any anecdotes or stories that you remember that you would like to share with us?

GC: Well, I don't want to mention any specific names on this one, but talking anecdotally, back to basketball again- to show you how you have to grow as coaches, you have to grow... your program has

to grow- you know, like the players today, they take buses or fly to places. Well, when we took those vans down on that first Berea-Cumberland trip, I don't even want to talk about who was driving the vans, Don Mohr and Coach Ross and probably Jim Brown are in one van and a bunch of us guys are in the other van. And we're coming back from Kentucky, and the one kid driving- and we had a kid driving our van; now with liability today the way it is you would not have that at all- but he was one of our players and-

CW: One of the players was driving?

GC: Oh yeah, and he was one of the crazier guys on the team. Now I'm not saying he was reckless, but he was going a little fast and he was going up the road just going like crazy, I think we even passed the other van. If I remember, too, it was a little damp out, it had been raining and misting, and boy I'll tell you what, the coaches caught up with us down the road and pulled us off the side of the highway and boy did they rip us a new backside. And I think there was actually some grabbing going on and a little bit of shaking going on, because I think those coaches and Don Mohr saw "accident/Wright State basketball team" headlines, somebody's in a ditch, somebody gets hurt bad, and I just remember sitting there watching that show and going, "Oh my God". So after that I think we were going about fifty miles per hour all the way home. But that was one of those growing pains you had there, where you just wouldn't have players driving buses or driving vans today. Shoot, they even have, I know in high school now- we used to be able to take kids in vans in my early years of coaching and teaching; you'd stick them in the school van and take them someplace and they wouldn't care. I think even today you can't even do that as a high school teacher today. Now you can imagine back then, a college basketball player driving a bunch of college guys on a damp road probably going up that road at- and that may have been when speed limits were up around 70, too. So we may have been hitting about 80 on a damp road flying up- [laughs]. Man, I'm not going to talk about the language that was used or who got grabbed or who was driving. That was a show and a half, though. I do remember that, that was one of those moments that gets indelibly etched into your mind and you go, "I'll never forget that".

CW: Yeah. "What were we doing?"

GC: And I remember, too, it was either Berea or Cumberland, I think it was Cumberland, that gym we played in down there was probably something back to- do you remember seeing Hoosiers? Of course that was filmed in Hinkle [Field House] I think, but that gymnasium down there, I remember to get up to our locker room it was like a maze going through that thing. That thing was probably built back during the depression with WPA funds or something like that, but that thing it was a maze. I remember going up these steps then down these steps and you had twists and winds going up to this locker room. I knew we weren't in big time college basketball then, but the locker room was this dinky little locker room with shabby little lockers and that was a show and a half, too. I think their corridors were about this wide [holds hands about 2 feet apart]. I didn't know where we were going to. It looked like we were going into a dungeon to be quite honest with you. But that was one of those little old Kentucky schools. And also when we played I think it was the next night in Berea, to show you that- it was an old gym again, the backboards were mounted up against the balcony. There was like a student balcony that went around, it was one of these real dinky little gyms, I don't know if you've ever seen a gym like this or not. Where I

went to school at Xenia Central Junior High, which used to be Xenia High School, we had our gym was that way. You had the backboard mounted against this balcony and the kids were sitting right on the balcony; I mean, here's the backboard right here and kids were sitting there and they could just look right down onto the rim and everything. That was a show and a half, kids sitting with their legs hanging over the edge, not on the backboard but all around the side. That was, yeah, this was like stepping back in time; we could have made a movie on that. Yeah, it was great. So, those things all related to basketball, as far as other things out here at Wright State I can't remember much. Just the Quad, sometimes kids would go wading in the Quad out there where they had the water, I don't know if they still have the water there-

CW: The moat.

GC: Yeah, the moat, they called it the moat.

CW: Nobody gets... you see all the old pictures where the freshmen get thrown in the moat. You don't see that so much anymore.

GC: Yeah, you had that.

CW: That's the one thing you don't... at least in those old pictures you saw people just... there's so much around now on campus but people were out doing more and there was less there.

GC: You mean outside?

CW: Yeah. People are hanging out on the Quad, laying out on the grass, throwing each other in the moat-

GC: There was no place to go to so in between classes, if you didn't go get something to eat someplace, you hung around the quad and got to know people that way. So I guess maybe that was an advantage of just having four buildings back then is that you were forced to sit out there and talk and meet people and all that. So, yeah, and they had the, what was it, was it a Greek thing they have every year, I think they still have it, A Greek Week or something like that on the Quad. I don't know if they still have it or not.

CW: Yeah, I think they still do. And I don't know if they do all the same things they used to. We have all these pictures of chariot races and stuff like that.

GC: Yeah, yeah, years ago they had chariot races. Did they sell beer back then?

CW: Yeah, at events they had beer here until like the early '90s. I remember because they had a thing called Fall Fest out here every year and they'd bring the Budweiser trucks out here, but then I think some high school kids started coming and they shut it down pretty quick.

GC: Yeah, that's what I'm thinking of. I kind of recall that now. Good idea, because I know our Beaver Creek High School kids for years we always knew when it was, whatever that day was called at

Wright State, because we'd have a lot of kids missing or right after school they'd buzz out there or they'd skip class around noon or get early dismissals.

CW: Yeah, I think one of the campus presidents made a big stand. It was like, "You know what? We're not going to get known for that."

GC: You probably had to, because once again all liability issues came back on you. But that was one time Beaver Creek kids did love to come out to Wright State because they were out here I think tipping a few with the college kids.

CW: No, maybe we don't want to be known for that. [Laughs]

GC: [Laughs] No, but to sum it up, I have a lot of fond memories and I told my wife, you know, I had a football scholarship I could have taken to Morehead [State] but I go to Central State instead, which that's a whole another story. But my wife and I talked and she said I wonder if you'd taken that scholarship to Morehead or went and played a Division III school someplace like a Wittenberg or a Muskingum or whatever, further away, we talked about how we would have probably never met each other, my wife and I, because I probably would have drifted off someplace else, I wouldn't have been around this area, but I'm no- let's put it this way- even though Wright State didn't have that campus which was a typical college campus, I'm no worse for it. I made it through it fine, my life's turned out great, my wife and I have a good life together, we travel around a lot, I've been successful in my career, she's taught out at Beaver Creek for 35 years, she's been successful in her career. So she goes to Miami with the traditional stuff, I go to Wright State with a lot of the non-traditional stuff, but everything's worked out fine for us and I know plenty of successful WSU graduates who didn't have that maybe traditional college career but yet everyone's turned out fine. So in the long run what difference does it make?

CW: They loved their time here just the same.

GC: Yeah, oh I think so. I went to IU, I could have stayed out there, but I think it was like four thousand a year back then with room, board, and all that kind of stuff and that was a lot of money back in the late '60s, early '70s, so when I came back to Wright State I think- I want to say and I could be wrong on this- but I want to say it was like 160 bucks a quarter, maybe, or something like that. I don't know if you could probably look that up, too. I just for some reason, that number of 160 stands out and that may even be high. I don't know, for a quarter, of course that didn't even count room and board; that was tuition, and that could have been right for back then but I don't know, it's hard to say.

CW: Well, Greg, thanks so much for talking with us today and sharing some of your memories. We appreciate you coming out and helping us with the project, and if at anytime if you can think of anything else or you have some more memories, we'd be happy to sit down again with you.

GC: I might bring some of those old programs out to you because they're just going to lay at home, so I don't know if you have any of those or not, those old basketball programs.

CW: We do, and that's another thing you might like to come out sometime and see some of the Athletics archives we have out here, we have a lot of old pictures and programs and stuff, and we'd certainly be interested in anything you might want to bring in.

GC: Yeah, if I've got anything I'll haul it out here to you, because eventually it's just going to go to dust, down the road probably. So I'll bring it to you and if you guys will have it, that's fine, if not, just pitch it, whatever.

CW: Very good, Greg, thanks.

GC: Thank you.