

Date of Interview: December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2020

Interviewee: Gary Barnett, '63

Interviewer: Vincent Sauchelli

Transcriber/Summarizer: Vincent Sauchelli, Monmouth University Student

0:00 - 0:58     Lead

1:01            Gary graduated Asbury Park High School in 1952  
                  Attended Monmouth Jr. College at Long Branch High School 1953

1:33            Served in Navy from 1954-1968

1:40            Discharged from Navy, enrolled at Monmouth College in physics program

2:00            No intention of becoming a physicist

2:10            Three curriculums from engineering standpoint: physics, chemistry, electronics

2:27            Took physics because it required least amount of credits

2:45            In a rush to get out of school because was offered a job in industrial safety

3:37            Monmouth was different climate in 1958, mixture of students: high school grads,  
                  adults, and veterans

4:10            Night school was where most older students/vets attended, he was in a rush to  
                  finish school, eager to accept job, launched career in industrial safety, fire  
                  protection, industrial hygiene

5:00            Worked in insurance industry, chemical industry, food industry

5:15            Got education in industrial safety and fire protection when working for DuPont  
                  corporate safety/fire protection division, DuPont was recognized worldwide as  
                  leader in industrial safety, this education allowed him to pursue other careers

5:45            19 years head of safety for Nabisco

5:50            17 years for major insurance broker, 3 years heading safety for ITT Continental  
                  Baking Company

6:09            Went to work as vice president of loss control for major insurance broker for  
                  many years

6:18            Currently retired but does industrial safety consulting, fortunate enough that he  
                  loves his career, important that you follow your passion

7:10            Learned through work that learning had to continue on the job, training/individual  
                  study

7:25            Monmouth College had a different atmosphere then than today. Most striking is  
                  grounds, in 50s-60s grounds were not maintained/shabby - today they're a  
                  showplace, today many people recognize the University, due to athletic program,  
                  from his vantage point Monmouth is well known, everyone who has been on  
                  campus remarks how beautiful it looks

8:57            Had Dr. Walter McAfee for advanced physics; his calculations enabled  
                  government to bounce radio waves off the moon

9:30 Many professors came from Fort Monmouth and Bell Labs, were out in their fields; knew subjects and what was applicable, able to get it across to students - in all curriculums

10:24 Alumni Board - has seen it grow, currently it is very active

11:00 When he graduated career was on his mind, not coming back to Monmouth - not until a friend convinced him to get on Alumni Board; D1 basketball and sports also got him interested

11:58 1 of 6 original members of Blue/White Club, club has grown - varsity club - component of the club, both groups support athletics, varsity is an additional level

13:45 Hall of Fame Committee

14:00 Had written to University about highlighting certain people, having these articles adds to prestige of University, doesn't know how much students are aware of history of University: top businessmen, political leaders, entertainers, professors

15:00 Tommy Tucker - famous band leader; Odd Albert, had him for drafting class - responsible for designing bridges on Ohio or Indiana Turnpikes

15:38 Felix Mulzer - music department, affiliated with Vienna Boys Choir.  
Number of professors, having articles about them would add to prestige of University and be interesting

16:17 *Annie* filmed at Monmouth, met Aileen (Quinn) at 25th anniversary of filming

16:40 Interesting to him was swimming pool in basement of Great Hall - he swam in it - thinks it's a shame that it's covered with offices now

17:00 Started fraternity Sigma Phi Omega, recognized March 21st, 1960; hard to believe 60 years have gone by, frat was active for number of years, when engineering curriculums were done away with frat disbanded, thanks to Rubin Cobin they still meet on Wednesdays on Zoom, before COVID on Wednesdays they would meet for lunch

18:50 Exciting to see how Monmouth has grown

19:00 History of Monmouth University excites him, in 50s he knew gentleman that worked for the Parson family, it was hard to work for Mrs. Parson, when building was finished Parson threw a party, invited Guggenheims and Pullmans but no one showed up

20:14 North of the building, old well toward Cedar Ave., two burial monuments for their dogs, Fluffy and Lady

20:56 Lives east of Freehold, this past year led residents on a tour of Monmouth

21:25 Interesting time, proud of school, seen it grow, enjoys grounds and sports

22:15 Along with Dr. McAfee other professors were people who it would be nice to have something written about them

23:10 (Myself): Thanks for info, interesting and good prelude, I agree on somethings, such as beauty and basketball team, they got national fame for the bench

23:46 Best bench in basketball, interesting to see how many athletes achieved so much, nice thing in his opinion is the athletic department, coaches, are a nice close friendly community - encourages people to join Blue/White/Varsity Club

25:18 (Myself) Ask about the Navy, thank him for service - what can you tell me?

25:40 At Monmouth Jr. College mind wasn't set on sitting in class, enlisted in the Navy, anti-sub warfare, spent 1 year on a destroyer, shore duty, in a secret program - Oceanographic Research - what was funny, got out of Navy as 2nd Class Petty Officer, Monmouth University was looking for new president, at the time he was on executive committee of Alumni Board, attended candidate meet and great and was involved in the hiring process of 3 Star Admiral Paul Gaffney

28:08 Took courses Navy offered, saw he needed to get an education, lived in Elberon, NJ, at the time he was enrolled at Monmouth

29:00 Enjoyed dance band that he had, frats and sororities hired his band to play at their functions - guesses he holds record for most performances at the school - Monmouth had orchestra, he participated under Felix Mulzer, but he was anxious to graduate, had gotten married as well and had to get on with life

30:09 (Myself) You were in band/orchestra/musical performances, what did you play and do you still play?

30:20 Played drums, played professionally in area - mainly Monmouth County - stopped playing a number of years ago

30:40 (Myself) You were a physics major, what was most difficult?

31:00 All of it, the nice thing/saving grace was that classes he attended weren't large as far as number of students, professors were accessible, a number of them worked at Fort Monmouth and Bell Labs, they knew what was relevant in regard to subject matter, how to get it across - in other words what was practical, rather than just learning from the textbooks - very helpful but very challenging, his goal, heart and feelings were anxious to get out and go to work in industry safety, he might say physics degree was a means to an end

32:30 (Myself) Jobs you worked, what could you tell me about time working and roles you had?

32:51 After graduation, worked 2 years as travelers insurance company's safety representative, fortunate enough to be hired by DuPont in corporate safety/fire protection division, traveled country and abroad - 5 years for them was like getting a PhD. in safety, never read so much in his life to learn different codes and requirements

33:38 From there went to work for ITT Continental Baking Company, Wonderbread and Hostess Cakes, for a brief time he left to work for American Cyanamid for about a year, then Nabisco hired him as corporate safety manager, then went to work for major insurance broker, seen everything from manufacturing of Twinkies to explosions - interesting and wonderful field to be in, encourage students to get

into this field, lots of opportunities, opportunity to grow, every day is different, very rewarding

35:00 (Myself) You chose physics due to credits, besides credits was anything else a reason why you chose this?

35:21 Not really, it was a means to an end, realized he wanted to stay in this profession he would need a lot more study and additional degrees, field of industrial safety was opening up, it has been a very enjoyable ride

36:03 (Myself) Your field of work was different from what you learned about, how did learning physics prepare you for safety management?

36:17 Some of the basics of physics, learn how to look at issues/problems, didn't realize at the time he would be doing more studying and reading, looking back should've enrolled in chemistry program because ended up working for two major chemical companies - a lot of learning really took place on the job - extensive reading about code, processes, equipment, still doing it today – every day is a new learning experience

37:48 (Myself) What else about retirement, personal life, interest, hobbies, grandchildren?

38:07 Very much into music, played professionally, high school marching band, Navy marching band and drum corps, when out of service joined musicians' union, played extensively throughout Monmouth County, loved music, musical shows, into all phases of music, especially big band era  
Likes to travel, traveled extensively - Europe - due to companies he has been to 45/50 states, hopes to get to remaining 5, traveled abroad often, throughout the Caribbean  
Grandchildren, some live local, others in California, sees them (up until COVID) over the holidays, New Year, during the summer  
Loves to read, describes himself as someone who years ago if you saw him with a book in his hand you were amazed, some insight: when he went to work learning experience grew, one suitcase had his clothes, one suitcase had textbooks - at night in hotels he would read about what he had seen during the day, back in the office read a lot about fire protection, safety code and regulations he had to know - used to think he wasn't the brightest, thought when you graduate learning was over - did more studying and reading after graduation than during school - it was necessary and he found it interesting

41:37 (Myself) Just for the record, what are those 5 states you have not been to yet?

41:41 Wyoming, Montana, North and South Dakota - can't remember the 5th

42:17 (Myself) You are very passionate about Dr. McAfee - what can you tell me about why he would be a good candidate for recognition and what about his legacy should we remember?

- 42:30 Because what he achieved as a physicist - Black man, so he had to deal with racial issues at times - he thinks he was truly dedicated to his profession/physics, basically about what he achieved as a person and with his career
- 43:22 (Myself) That just about does it for the time we have today - I'd like to hand the mic to you now to add or bring up new comments
- 43:42 First of all, thanks for reaching out, he thinks the program I am representing is interesting, asks what is the intention of gathering info, what will be done with interview information?
- 44:17 (Myself) Basically interview will live in archive, for people who want to research about Monmouth or find things about Monmouth itself or people who have been here, acts as resource center to allow thorough, different (diverse) history to live on and allows people to find it
- 45:00 Appreciates school reaching out, there are many people before him that achieved a lot more than him, done great things for university, community and country, he is humbled that we've contacted him but there are a lot of other people that he admires; he thinks they deserve recognition, thinks if school is putting together this kind of archive with people - means this sincerely - the number of people he reads about in Monmouth publications, that have achieved wonderful things, he would have put them way ahead of his presentation, hopes they will be included if not already
- 46:35 (Myself) Not to take away from how great you were, we could do some research and find more people, I wrote down some of the names he mentioned...
- 46:56 (Myself) Thank you on my behalf, behalf of my class, oral history project and everyone else at Monmouth
- 47:17 Mentions this project should get an A double plus, we exchange thank yous, holiday wishes, he advocates one last time to mention joining the Blue/White club to people