

Russell G. Mawby

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Jeff Charnley,
interviewer

Charnley: Today is Thursday, the 17th of May, the year 2001. I'm Jeff Charnley, interviewing Dr. Russell G. Mawby, former member of the Michigan State University Board of Trustees.

We're at the Manor House of Kellogg Biological Station overlooking beautiful Gull Lake, in the former office of W.K. Kellogg. In addition to being a former MSU Board member, Dr. Mawby is Chairman Emeritus of the Kellogg Foundation.

This interview is part of the MSU Sesquicentennial Oral History Project commemorating the 150th anniversary of the university, coming up in the year 2005.

Dr. Mawby, you see we've got a tape recorder here today. Do you give us permission to record this interview?

Mawby: I certainly do. It's a privilege and honor to be included in this.

Charnley: We appreciate that. I'd like to start first with some personal and educational background. Where you were born and raised, and where did you go to high school?

Mawby: I was born on a fruit farm in Kent County, Michigan, just outside the city of Grand Rapids at that time. Now the old fruit farm is all houses in a subdivision development. But the Mawby family were fruit growers. My dad was the second generation of fruit growers. I grew up on a farm, went to a two-room country school called Orchard View School, because it was on the corner of our farm, and then went to high school at Crestin [phonetic] High School in Grand Rapids. This was in the days before consolidated schools and school buses, and so the outlying districts had the

opportunity of selecting how they arranged for high school for the students in their district. Most of us in Orchard View went to Crestin High School in the northeast corner of the city.

Charnley: How away from the farm was that?

Mawby: About seven miles. Talk about commitment, my mother and dad were of the generation that they went to a one-room country school and completed the eight grades of schooling and then went on with life, but very committed to their kids going to high school. So there were four of us, and we were four years apart. For sixteen years, my folks made the commitment of getting us to and from school every day of the year and collaborated with some neighbors so that we did some carpooling. But it was an obvious family commitment to education.

Charnley: What type of fruit did you have at the farm?

Mawby: Mostly apples, but some peaches, cherries, pears, plums. My dad was what sociologists would call an early adapter. He was very progressive. He was well respected as a fruit grower and was one of the first, for example, to develop a special fruit storage. He used to store apples in the basement of the barn. Then they developed fruit storage, first cooled with ice and then with refrigeration units. So he was a very progressive fruit grower in both production and in marketing. He was one of the first, for example, to make the transition from bulk sale of apples in bushel baskets to prepackaging in five-pound bags as grocery stores went to self-service, which happened in the late thirties, early forties.

Charnley: Were his markets in Michigan or just in Grand Rapids?

Mawby: No, they were far beyond Michigan. It's sort of a point of interest, I think, one of his first

customers for prepackaged apples was a fellow named Fred Meyer, that's Fred Meyer of Meyer Thrifty Acres. Fred's first store was on the north edge of the city of Greenville. So as a kid in high school, at that point if you lived on a farm, worked on a farm, you could have a driver's license at age fourteen. I used to deliver apples to Fred Meyer when he had one store at the north side of Greenville. Then he developed the second one in Ionia and then in Grand Rapids. When Fred and I see each other, we still reminisce about the good old days.

Charnley: I grew up in M_____ County in Lakeview, Michigan, so I know the area well.

Mawby: Okay, so you're familiar with it. That's great.

Charnley: My mother lives not far from in Greenville right now.

What were your duties on the farm?

Mawby: On the farm? Well, we were part of the family work crew. In the summertime, I spent a lot of time driving tractor. Those were the days in which you sprayed, and we had different chemicals than now, so that you were spraying about six days a week on the orchard. I drove a John Deere tractor, an AO, John Deere AO, for A Orchard. We had a 500-gallon tank, a man up on the tower above, and a man on the platform below, creeper gear, hour after hour with that John Deere.

The interesting thing is that it wore out, finally, and ended up in my brother's barn up at Traverse City, and I rescued it and I have it again. So the old John Deere still runs, putt-putt, like a John Deere should. [Laughter]

So did farm work, helped him with spraying, with tilling the orchards. During the fall, of course, busy with harvest. Come home from school, you'd have pickers in the orchard. You'd have to haul those apples all in at night, put them in storage, then go get the ice to cool them down. So felt very much a part of the family enterprise.

Charnley: And everyone in the family was involved.

Mawby: Yes, that's right. I had an older brother, eight years older than I, and a younger brother, four years younger, and a sister. All of us were involved in the family farm operation.

Charnley: Did you have any contact with Michigan State, growing up in high school?

Mawby: Yes, it was a very important contact, because my dad was very involved with what we then called the Agricultural Extension Service, now it's the Cooperative Extension Service, the outreach of the university. So he was very much engaged with the horticultural specialist from campus and with the county Extension staff.

I remember, in particular, K.K. Vining [phonetic], who was the county agricultural agent. He would stop in frequently, and he was the one who was always encouraging my parents to get their youngsters on to college. It was a continual reminder and contact with K.K. Vining.

My mother was very active in the home demonstration program. Eleanor Densmore [phonetic] was the home demonstration agent, and she was equally encouraging about kids should go to college.

In consequence, my dad had gone to a fruit-growing short course in 1913. My older brother Ed wasn't really interested in college, but he took a fruit-growing short course in about 1937. My sister went to two-year college in Grand Rapids. I was the first member of the family to go to Michigan State College for a baccalaureate degree.

My first visits to campus were first with my dad when I was in high school, a little before seventh and eighth grade. He was a member of the Michigan State Apple Commission, which met usually in East Lansing, sometimes on campus. He'd have me go along and just turn me loose to wander on the campus until their meeting was over.

He was also on a commission named the State Land Use Planning Commission, which always met in the Student Union Building. So I would ride down with him. He'd give me a couple of dollars, and I knew where the dairy store was to get ice cream cone and where to end up back at the Union for lunch. But I wandered the campus.

Everything south of the Red Cedar then was farm. So I'd go over to the dairy barn, and I'd go over to the Horticulture building and the beef and the horse and the sheep and the swine barns, and so became comfortable with the campus.

Then as a 4-H Club member, which is the youth program of the Extension Service, I attended 4-H Club week, stayed in Abbott Hall, and began to think. This was when I was thirteen, when I was in high school. I began to think, "Gosh, you know, I think I could come to Michigan State College." So it was that, plus the encouragement of some scholarships through 4-H Club work, that result, and the real encouragement of my mom and dad, that I enrolled as a freshman in the fall of 1945, majoring in horticulture, with, of course, a specialty in pomology. You'd know that pomology is fruit growing, and that holeroculture [phonetic] is vegetable growing, and floriculture is flowers. So I was a pomology major, starting in the fall of 1945.

Charnley: Who were some of the professors you've had for your study?

Mawby: Well, I remember two, in particular, in the Department of Horticulture. One is a professor named Cy Russell. He taught freshman horticulture. In those days, all ag students took a basic course in each of the departments of the college, so that you took Horticulture 101, Soil Science 101, Crops 101, and so forth.

Professor Russell taught Horticulture 101 in the auditorium of what they now call the old Horticulture Building. I was so impressed because we had assigned seats alphabetically, and he obviously did quite a job of memorizing those names. So he could be standing anywhere in the room and call on a lot of us, even the first class session, by name. By the end of the term, he knew

everybody by name and would call you by name when he saw you on campus, which was to his great credit, I thought, because that was an art. So he was one that really impressed me.

The other was the department chair Harold [B.] Tukey. It was in toward the end of my sophomore year, and I was the first in the family to go to college and sort of intimidated and uncomfortable with it and everything, and I was stopped in the hall by Dr. Tukey. He said, "Mr. Mawby, would you mind stepping into my office."

My heart sank. I thought, "What's gone wrong now?" It was very interesting. He was an eminent horticultural scientist. He was an academician. He was a researcher. He was very interesting and very interested in life and in the world. So he was a specialist in horticulture, but he pitted it into the larger context. He said to me, simply, "I've been following you, and you've been doing very well as a student." He said, "I just have one suggestion for you to think about." He said, "If you're going to end up in a career as a horticulturalist, you'll need to get a master's degree and probably a doctorate, and we'll specialize you then. So my recommendation for the next two years, junior and senior year at this university, are to take as few courses as we'll let you get by with in the Department of Horticulture, take as few courses as we'll let you get by with in the College of Agriculture, and then sample this great university." He said, "I don't care what courses intrigue you, great religions of the world, physics, chemistry, language, journalism, whatever, anything that intrigues you, but sample this great university."

Well, that was surprising kind of counsel from the head of the department, and I followed his advice. It really made a tremendous difference so that I ended up, for example, with enough credits in journalism. We didn't have an ag communications specialty then, but enough credits in journalism, including Professor A.A. Applegate, who was the head of the journalism department at that point, another inspiration as a teacher and as a professor and as a mentor. But sampled the great university, and it really changed my perspective, changed my life, changed my career.

Charnley: That personal counsel also, that the professors gave at that time, one thing, with a mega

university, is sometimes that's hard to do, or it isn't done as much as some people would like it done.

Mawby: I used to, when I was on the Board of Trustees--this doesn't fit in your sequence, but when I was on the Board of Trustees, the time I saw more undergraduate students than any other was at commencement. I always went to the big commencement in Breslin [Student Events Center] and then to college commencements and tried to, each graduation, go to different colleges than I'd been to before. So I'd have a chance to talk with graduating seniors, and I would ask them, usually, three questions.

One, "Jeff, you're majoring in zoology or field crops or history or whatever. How many faculty members in your major department would call you by name if you met them on campus?" The discouraging thing was usually the answer was zero, even in departments where there were small numbers of graduates. Usually, zero, except James Madison College.

The next question I would ask is, "What members of the faculty could write you a personal letter of reference?" Again, it was disappointing, the number that felt there was some member of the faculty that knew them well enough to do something other than boilerplate, you know what I'm saying, really do anything personal.

The third thing I would ask, and you'll be amused, was, "How many performances have you seen in Wharton Hall while you've been here for four or five years?" That was also discouraging. So you could see some of my values coming through there.

Charnley: Not taking advantages of the resources that were available.

Mawby: That's right. Yes.

Charnley: That's interesting. I'll have to ask those of my daughter, who is there now. She's a junior.

Mawby: A junior in what?

Charnley: Elementary education.

Mawby: It would be interesting to see what she says.

Charnley: Three good questions.

Mawby: Kind of fun questions. So in the department, those were two. There were others, but those were the two I remember most vividly in horticulture. Others in the faculty, you know, as you think back over all of the years of elementary, secondary, and higher education on through to the Ph.D., a few people stand out. One certainly was in the Department of Dairy Science, Malcolm Trout. Dr. Trout was just an inspiration.

I was one of the founders of a little magazine that didn't survive very long. It was called the *MSU Homesteader*. It was a joint effort of the College of Agriculture and the College of Home Economics. Mac Trout was our faculty adviser of that publication, because he was a superb writer and enjoyed writing and communicating. So it was an inspiration to be associated with Mac Trout as an undergraduate.

Charnley: I only met him once late in life.

Mawby: Did you? I'm sure his health declined in later years, but when I last saw him he was in his eighties and still a fireball.

Charnley: Did you know Dr. [John A.] Hannah at that time?

Mawby: Yes. I was amazed. John Hannah grew up in Kent County, Grand Rapids, chicken farm. The Hannah family. He still maintained an interest in the poultry operation and, in fact, then during his presidential years had a farm on Haggdorn [phonetic]. You know where the Hannah complex is, where the MSU Foundation is, that's all Hannah. That was his farm. He had chickens and he had fruit trees and he had [unclear] cattle. That was his therapy. Instead of playing golf, he went over and talked to the chickens.

But he was in Grand Rapids and still involved, while he was president, back and forth with the family enterprise. He came a couple of times and met with my dad to talk about fruit growing and started an orchard on the south side of Grand Rapids.

So the president held a freshman reception in the Union Building, and we went by, I suppose, A through F, and G through something else. Anyway, so I went over and went through the reception line and shook hands with President Hannah, gave him my name, Russ Mawby, and he said, "You must be Wes Mawby's son." He remembered. I was dumbfounded.

So I didn't have a lot of contact with President Hannah as an undergraduate, except that a couple times when I hitchhiked home, he was heading to Grand Rapids and picked me up over on West Grand River. He was an inspiration, even as an undergraduate, more so then. I had the privilege of knowing him well during my faculty years, but particularly then through the W.K. Kellogg Foundation and the involvement with Michigan State and then in his post-presidential years when he was with USAID and the food and agriculture organization in Rome and so forth. So I kept in touch with him, had the privilege of going to their home south of Williamston, had breakfast with Sarah and John Hannah. Marvelous, marvelous individual, knew him fairly well.

Charnley: How would you characterize his presidential leadership when you were a student?

Mawby: He was very much respected, very highly regarded, held a convocation, I think, each year for the student body, at least freshmen and for students, welcomed the freshman class to the

university and then held luncheons for four-point students. I went to two or three of those. I was very active in student organizations, particularly in the College of Agriculture, but two or three campus-wide, so I had some continuing contact.

He was highly respected, interactive, easy to get to and to talk to, but always the visionary leader. See, it was during that time, World War II ended the summer of 1945, and I started there in September of 1945. It was the growth year he had anticipated, the end of the war, and prepared for dramatic growth. So the Quonset Village went up for housing and dormitories. Just a great time of expansion, and he was very much the visible leader in transforming what was sort of a small Midwestern agricultural college, essentially, had a College of Engineering and so forth, but transforming it from that into a major world-class university. We used to say the concrete never set on John Hannah's campus. He never got it done.

He was a master and very creative, very innovative leader, attracted good people. Many of his key people went on to be university presidents elsewhere, so he was always surrounded by very bright, able women and men. Very much a visionary in curriculum in the university and was a leader, of course, in international programs.

Charnley: Glen Taggart was involved in that.

Mawby: Glen Taggart was very much involved in that, another good friend who went on to be president of Utah State.

But President Truman announced the Marshall program of assistance in Europe and the Point-Four Program of assistance. John Hannah, I think, was president or chair of the Land Grant Association at that time and stepped up immediately with the land grant university's commitment to international assistance, and with his leadership Michigan State was very much the premiere institution in becoming international, really globally, and that was part of the vision of our President Hannah.

Charnley: Were you involved in any of those international efforts as an undergraduate at all?

Mawby: Not really as an undergraduate, no.

Charnley: You were on campus during when all the vets returned. Did you notice any difference?

Mawby: Oh, gosh, yes. Well, a lot of them were older, and the long-standing tradition of no smoking on campus sort of eroded at that time. [Laughter] They couldn't hold the line.

Charnley: The vets were hooked.

Mawby: Yes, yes, but, you know, just creative restructuring of curricula to accommodate the growing numbers of students. I think there were 4,500 students when I enrolled in the fall of 1945, and that more than doubled. It was up above 10,000, I think, when I graduated in 1949. So it was a great period of growth in every respect, curriculum, faculty, colleges, buildings everywhere, exciting time to be there. It's also the time that Michigan State came into the Big Ten.

Charnley: Athletics.

Mawby: That was athletics, but President Hannah saw that as, again, an important part of his strategy of becoming a great university, needed a strong athletic program and needed to be a part of a group like the Big Ten.

The University of Michigan was adamantly opposed to Michigan State becoming a member, and it took great political strategy on Hannah's part to accomplish that.

Charnley: I'd heard stories about how Notre Dame was involved in that.

Mawby: Yes, yes.

Charnley: I have interviewed Father [Theodore] Hesburgh.

Mawby: Have you interviewed him?

Charnley: I have, yes.

Mawby: And he told you about some of that?

Charnley: A little bit, a little bit. And he also talked about the work with the Civil Rights Commission.

Mawby: The Civil Rights Commission. John Hannah was chairman of the Civil Rights Commission, and I think then Hesburgh followed. Hesburgh was on the Commission with Hannah and then followed as chair.

So he was an impressive person always, businesslike but cordial and friendly. Not given to sort of idle chitchat, but an impressive guy.

Charnley: In your own career, what happened right after graduation? Did you continue directly on to graduate work?

Mawby: Yes, I did. I was sort of tired of being a student. I was graduated with honor, with high honor, or something, so I had a good academic record, but I was sort of tired of that routine.

During the summer of 1948, and thanks back to K.K. Vining and to A.G. Chutnan [phonetic], who was the state 4-H Club leader, I was a participant in an International Farm Youth Exchange program. That was the pioneer year. There were seventeen of us from seventeen different states who all went to Europe, and I spent the summer in the united Kingdom, another life-changing kind of experience.

So I came back, and in my senior year traveled around Southern Michigan, at least, giving talks about my international exchange experience. I was also very active in student organizations.

Because of my dual major, everybody was having concerns about jobs, and I ended up sort of in spring term with two options. One was to become a member of the staff of the *Michigan Farmer*, which was then located on Abbott Road, just two blocks north of the Union Building, and the other was to join the staff of *Better Homes and Gardens* because of my horticulture, journalism background.

So I was debating, when suddenly I got a telegram saying I had been awarded a scholarship by Alpha Zeta. Alpha Zeta is an agricultural honorary, and I'd been a member for three years. The advisor of our chapter, Professor Russell Kleiss [phonetic], had nominated me. I didn't even know I was a candidate, but I got a telegram saying I had been awarded the Alpha. There was only one, nationally, Alpha Zeta Fellowship for a master's program, \$4,000. So I said that would be foolish to decline that opportunity.

So I called *Better Homes and Gardens* and *Michigan Farmer* and withdrew and went for a master's degree at Purdue University and then, after completing that, came back to Michigan State to start on a doctor's degree, and completed my doctorate in agricultural economics in 1959. Was a faculty member in the Extension Service of the Department of Agricultural Economics while completing my degree, so I traveled the state of Michigan and did some of the early work in television.

The television studio was on the top floor of the Electrical Engineering Building, sort of up in the attic, and then we got promoted to what had been the cafeteria over in the Quonset Village.

But I was the host of--at that time we kinescoped. They made tapes and shipped around a thirteen-box series, you know, a quarter of a year. *Rural Roundup* and *Country Crossroads*, and I forget the rest, but, anyway, I was the master of ceremonies.

Charnley: You were in front of the camera?

Mawby: In front of the camera, yes. So that was great experience.

So I was on the faculty then, became assistant director of the Extension Service responsible for the 4-H Program, Mount Blessing, in 1956, and became a tenured professor until the end of November 1964, when I left the university to join the staff of the W.K. Kellogg Foundation.

In the process of making that transition, I visited with President Hannah. He said, "That's a good organization. That would be a good opportunity for you. You could go down there for a couple years and then come back to the university," which never happened, but we were very much engaged with the university.

So the relationship with Michigan State University from childhood days has been very, very close for me and for the family.

Charnley: Did any of your children go to Michigan State?

Mawby: No, they did not. [Laughter]

Charnley: So much for fatherly influence.

Mawby: Yes, I tried. So much for fatherly influence. Ruth and I weren't blessed with any biological children. We adopted a daughter. She came home when she was a week old. Then when she was two years old, we adopted two natural brothers, who were four and five. So we've got a

host of grandchildren now and so forth, but their academic interests were different.

Charnley: Could we talk a little bit about some of the leading up to your experiences on the board? When you began work with the Kellogg Foundation, what were your contacts with Michigan State during your years when you were on the Kellogg Board?

Mawby: I joined the Kellogg Foundation December 1, 1964, as director of the Division of Agriculture. There were seven program divisions in the foundation: medicine and public health, dentistry, hospital administration, nursing, education, Latin American programs, and agriculture. So I was one of seven program directors.

The Foundation was reasonably small, engaged in programming in North America, Latin America, and Northern Europe. What we were doing in Northern Europe was essentially agriculture, so that was a part of my area of responsibility, which was fascinating because I got to go to Europe once a year to all the countries of Northern Europe.

It's a funny coincidence I chuckle about. When I was on the faculty, assistant director of Extension, the director of Extension who was then Paul Miller, who then became provost of MSU and then president of the University of West Virginia, Undersecretary of HEW for Education, and then president of Rochester Institute of Technology, longtime mentor, friend, still a friend, retired, lives down in Columbia, Missouri, now. Paul Miller was director--

[Begin Tape 1, Side B]

Mawby: --support for Extension, agriculture Extension work from the agricultural community from farmers and agribusiness people, and had been somewhat unsuccessful. So he asked three of us to work on some kind of a project to develop stronger farm leadership. So we drafted what we thought was a great proposal, farm leadership training program for young women and men committed to

farming, and that proposal was submitted to the W.K. Kellogg Foundation in the fall of 1964.

So when I got to the Kellogg Foundation as director of agriculture, one of the first proposals I had to review was the one in which I had some self-interest. So I just claimed that we talked about it in the Foundation.

Anyway, the first program grant that I was involved with was this grant to Michigan State University for an agricultural leadership program. Michigan State University and the W.K. Kellogg Foundation have been involved, and still are, closely, since the mid-1920s.

Maybe as a part of oral history, you'd like to do another program. Not prepared to do today to do that, but it began in the 1920s with the establishment of the bird sanctuary and the Kellogg Experimental Farm, which were created and gifted to the university in the late 1920s, 1928, '29. It's continued since then, both on campus and here at the Kellogg Biostation. So it's a fascinating story.

It was John Hannah's concern for the agricultural short courses which led to further conversations, which led to the creation of the Kellogg Center for Residential Continuing Education. So there's a lot of interconnections between the Kellogg Foundation. John Hannah, in about 1935 when he was secretary of Michigan State College, was given the responsibility by President [Robert S.] Shaw to be the official contact with W.K. Kellogg. So he told me, he reminisced about he made an appointment, came down here, had lunch in this house with W.K. Kellogg and they had a conversation. Then he'd come back the next year for an update and another conversation. So that might be an interesting story of the interrelationship of Kellogg Foundation and MSU.

Well, I was director of the Division of Agriculture. We had some involvement with MSU and with the Biostation in my role there. A couple of years later, to my surprise, the board named me vice president of the foundation, responsible first for just agriculture and education and then for all programming. In 1970, I became the chief executive officer, with the retirement of my predecessor Dr. Emory Morris. The foundation through the years has continued to have a lot of involvement with MSU.

I served as the CEO of the foundation for twenty-five years, from 1970 to 1995. During that

period, I had a lot of interactions with all of the presidents, Hannah, [Walter] Adams, and [Clifton R.] Wharton [Jr.] and [M. Cecil] Mackey and [John A.] DiBiaggio and [Gordon] Guyer and [M. Peter] McPherson. I guess that's the right sequence.

Charnley: That's right. You've got it down. Let's talk about some of the presidents you worked with while you were foundation chair. What were some of your dealings that you had? We can take them chronological if you like.

Mawby: We were involved with the expansion and improvements here at the Kellogg Biological Station, the expansion of landholdings to protect--this was concerned with the flight paths of waterfowl. As the area began to develop residentially, hunting became a real problem, and so acquired some additional property to give protection to the migrating waterfowl to also expand, obviously, the research capacity of the station.

Then a major commitment with facilities with the edition of the big administrative, classroom, laboratory building next door. With the change from the original dairy farm operation, which was created about 1930, the original dairy barn, to the new dairy setup, research setup, and I'd have to check the dates, but in probably the mid-seventies when all of that expansion took place, expansions at this bird sanctuary and so forth. So continuing involvement here, not in the operating budget per se, but in the enhancement of programs and facility.

On campus, major involvement with continuing education, with the Kellogg Center, and we assisted Michigan State and other universities. Every involvement had a different programmatic emphasis and a conceptual structure so that it wasn't a concern for the buildings, but for programmatic educational concepts that were being implemented. We were a major player in the creation of the College of Human Medicine, and we've been involved with the College of Nursing in a major way.

Been involved through the years with the College of Agriculture and some of its programs.

There was at one time a National Agricultural Communications Center, and involved with the College of Education. So there's been a variety of involvements through the years with the foundation. I, as the CEO, kept continually in touch with the CEO of Michigan State.

The foundation always had the philosophy of working with our major Michigan institutions, so we had equal relationships with the University of Michigan. I was very much involved with the presidents there, Harold Shapiro and [unclear] and so forth. But a very constructive engagement with Michigan State, and it went back really personally to the original commitments and interests of W.K. Kellogg.

Charnley: In terms of some of the actual programs that were going on on campus, though, went well beyond agriculture.

Mawby: Oh, yes, very much so, that's right.

Charnley: Were there ways that the presidents were involved in either soliciting, like President Wharton?

Mawby: Yes, some issues, they really took the initiative. Other times the interest would come through a college or faculty with program directors at the foundation. But in the review process at Michigan State and at other universities, we would always solicit the input of the president so that we were trying to be helpful to priorities which were important to the institution, so that we always engaged with the presidents of the institutions with which we're involved. That was certainly true at Michigan State.

Charnley: Were you involved in the international programs of the various of the universities?

Mawby: Yes, it's interesting, just a bit of information about relationships. The Kellogg Foundation became involved in programming in Latin America at the beginning of World War II. We had been a small foundation here, working just in seven counties in South Central Michigan, really an operating foundation with what we called the Michigan Community Health Program.

The war came along and things changed dramatically. The Secretary of State invited major foundations to Washington. This was before I was here. This is history. You're interested in history. And said, in effect, to the foundations, "We don't know just how things are going to go in either the European or the Pacific theaters of war, but we're persuaded that whatever happens there, the Western Hemisphere, North and South America have a common interest for the future. So we'd encourage foundations to think about ways in which they might become engaged with Latin America."

The Kellogg Foundation started, then, a program of fellowships in medicine, public health, nursing, health service administration, and dentistry in Latin America, working with universities there to identify promising young faculty, bring them to the U.S. for study in their appropriate discipline, and then go back to their home institutions. So to avoid the brain drain, they were very thoughtful. They didn't award the scholarship to the individual; they awarded it to the university to send this young faculty member, let's say in nursing, to go to the University of Michigan. They didn't have a pediatric nursing program in their hospital in their university in Bogotá or Rio or Mexico City. They would come to the University of Michigan to engage in a master's degree in nursing to become a pediatric specialist to go back and start that.

So the home institution, the recipient of the scholarship, the study center here, all knew the purpose. Very often then, the faculty here would actually go back with their graduate, do their research there, help them get the department started. So it was an innovative program that began about 1942 and spread throughout Latin America. Very successful, but limited to health.

President Hannah was very much interested in agriculture because of his background, and because if you look at the human condition, nutrition--and that's food systems--are vital. So

Michigan State University had become engaged with Colombia, South America, and their three faculties of agriculture in Bogotá, Calle [phonetic], and Medine [phonetic]. President Hannah was interested in getting the Kellogg Foundation to be helpful to that venture, and so he invited Dr. Morris, my predecessor, and they traveled together to India for a United Nations conference.

In that, Dr. Morris reminisced afterwards. He said, "Well, two things happened in that. One, John Hannah persuaded me to become involved in Latin America, and I gave him an Arabian horse." [Laughter] So Hannah ended up with Arabian horses. Henry Morris had given him the foundation [unclear].

So, in the 1950s, the Kellogg Foundation became engaged with Michigan State and then much more broadly in Latin America in agriculture.

We were involved in another way with the creation of the Kellogg International Leadership Program that was operated by Michigan State for about three or four years. So there's been various international involvements, but the most extensive would have been the involvement with Colombia in that period of time.

Charnley: Let's maybe talk a little bit about some of the priorities that MSU had at the time. Do you feel that there was a good fit between the land-grant philosophy and with that of a private foundation?

Mawby: Yes, I think very much so. The Kellogg Foundation as a guiding principle goes back to our founder, W.K. Kellogg's concept of helping people help themselves accomplish things important to them in ways appropriate for them. Rather than sort of imposing or prescribing what communities or institutions ought to do, we try to help communities and institutions do what they regard as important.

One of the persistent concerns of the foundation through the years has been putting knowledge to use, because, simplistically, in most areas of human concern, we know a whole of a lot

better than we're doing. One of the challenges is always to utilize most effectively and most comprehensively that which is already known. That's extension, that's outreach, that's continuing education, that's land grant.

So here in Michigan, of course, we've had particular involvements with Michigan State University in a whole range of experimentation in encouraging developments of various kinds. One, for example, was an experimental program called the Township Extension Agent, with county agents. This was to look to see if the more intensive resource of an Extension worker from the university at a township level would be productive. So that was an experiment.

So the philosophy of a land-grant institution, we worked as a foundation with a lot of institutions other than land grants, but historically the land-grant philosophy of serving people through education, nontraditional forms of education, continuing education outreach has found a commonality of purpose in the Kellogg Foundation and higher education.

Charnley: Were there any other points of contact that you remember with Dr. Wharton when he was president of the university?

Mawby: Yes. Dr. Wharton was a very thoughtful leader of the institution, had an international perspective, and so some of our interactions with him related to that. But he was particularly concerned also with continuing education and keeping the university committed to that part of its total mission. So I think that would have been the area of particular concentration with Dr. Wharton.

The College of Human Medicine was established prior to that time, I think, while President Hannah was still there. But some of those themes would have continued, of course, during the Wharton years.

Charnley: How about Dr. Mackey?

Mawby: Well, again I think each of the presidents would have had some commonality. I don't think there was a major initiative that we became engaged with during the Mackey years, but it would have been a continuum.

Charnley: How was it that you became a member of the Board of Trustees? Had you ever considered running for the board?

Mawby: No, I'd never been politically active. Of course, the Boards of Trustees of the three major universities, Michigan, Wayne State, Michigan State, are elected, nominated through the political party conventions, and run as a part of the state ticket. I'd never been politically active, so I assumed I would never have the privilege of being a trustee of my alma mater.

I had been very much engaged as an alumnus. I was active in the Alumni Association of the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, was its chairman at one time in its early days of Autumn Fest. Have you been to Autumn Fest, our big tailgate party out in the livestock pavilion?

Charnley: I haven't been to that one.

Mawby: You'd better come. It's a great activity, great alumni activity. So I was active in the ANR, and then became a member of the board of the Michigan State University Alumni Association and was its chairman. I think it was President Mackey who encouraged me to become involved.

So I was active in a variety of ways associated with the university, lots of friends there and continuing contact. But it was a surprise to receive a call from Governor [John] Engler asking me to consider appointment to the board that a member of the Board of Trustees, [Thomas] Tom Reed, whom I had know for a long time, another Aggie, head of the Michigan Livestock Exchange, I'd known Tom, and simply because of my interest in the university and higher education and the relationships of the foundation with the university, kept in touch informally with trustees through the

years. Tom Reed, for personal reasons, was resigning from the board, and the governor had the responsibility of appointing his successor.

So I went up and met with the governor, and we had a good visit. I was completely naive politically, so I asked what obligations I would incur in the appointment, etc. He said, "None at all. My philosophy is, appoint good people, and I'll not interfere, not to be involved at all." And he was true to his word. So I talked with my Board of Trustees, and they agreed that this--by then the foundation had grown to be much larger, so we had vice presidents and program directors involved, and so any requests from the university could be handled by the university, by the foundation and its board without conflict of interest. So I accepted the appointment by the governor. I would have to go look at something to tell me what year that was, but you probably know.

Charnley: 1991, late '91, and you took office in '92. Is that right?

Mawby: Yes, that's right.

Charnley: So Tom had a lot of years, quite a few years left in his term?

Mawby: He had five years left.

Charnley: So it wasn't just like filling in for an eight-year appointment. So it was the bulk of it, seven.

Mawby: It was five of the eight years of his term.

Charnley: So you knew it was a substantial commitment.

Mawby: Oh, yes, that's right, a commitment, a substantial commitment of time. And my board knew that.

Charnley: When you first went to the board, how would you describe what was going on then? That was right in the transition period wasn't it, between DiBiaggio and President McPherson? Was Gordon Guyer the interim yet or was President DiBiaggio still there?

Mawby: DiBiaggio was still there. I think he was there for a year and almost a half before he left to go to Tufts.

We named Gordon Guyer very quickly as the president, not the interim president, but the president, and then began the search process. So John DiBiaggio was the president and had gone through the situation with Coach [George] Perles of wanting to be both the head coach and athletic director. The president had not felt that was a good arrangement, but the board did not accept his recommendation. So there were strained relationships.

I, as a new member of the board, knew all of the trustees well enough to shake hands at a first-name basis, but made a point of going to each of them in their home, their hometown, not their house necessarily, but of meeting with them to get acquainted with them, to know something of their attitude and position and interests and so forth. I found that very informative and very useful. Good people. Some variation in interest, as you'd expect, and some difference in philosophy as to the role of the Board of Trustees and the operation of a university.

My perspective is that the Board of Trustees has broad governing responsibilities and responsibilities for policy; that our major personnel decision is our president and CEO; and that appropriately the board can be involved then in the naming of some of the other senior officers, but it would be a process in which the president took the leadership. We, then, were involved in, again, general discussions about qualifications, characteristics you were seeking in vice president positions and so forth, rather than detail, and that we just don't become involved in the details of personnel

management, but look at broader policy issues, and that we, appropriately, can't get involved in managerial details of the institution.

Some of the members of board had a different philosophy, saying, in effect, "I was elected by the people of Michigan to run this university, and that's what I'm going to do. And whatever I think is appropriate to do is appropriate, because that's what the people elected me to do." So you've got some difference of opinion, and very often that leads to difficulty.

I was politically naive, hadn't been active in party politics, and never really became engaged in party politics, and was often distressed with the ways in which some of those policies became a part of board deliberations and also the decision-making. But it's a great university, a lot of great people. By and large, the trustees are good people with good intentions, so it was a privilege, a real privilege, to be a part of the university.

Some major developments, I think, while I was a member of the Board, and one that I had not anticipated. This was Trustee [Bob] Traxler, with whom you'll be visiting, took the leadership in proposing that the Board of Trustees, rather than electing its chairman each year or two years, would establish a procedure in which the chairmanship would rotate and that the two trustees who were in their final two years of their eight-year term would each serve as chair during one of the two years, and that that would be done alphabetically so that in the final two years, the two would serve. I was the beneficiary of that. Otherwise I would never have been chairman of the Board of Trustees.

Charnley: So you were chair for two years.

Mawby: I was chair for one year. So that was a privilege that I hadn't anticipated, and a privilege only in the sense that you then have the privilege of representing the university in some ceremonial ways at convention, state of the union, and other occasions that otherwise you wouldn't have the privilege of doing. But the whole process of trusteeship, the responsibility is exciting, stimulating, engaging with the president and the other leadership of the university, and engaging with the trustees

in a range of issues.

The first major personnel issue was the surprising announcement by President DiBiaggio-- we didn't have much lead time--in his decision to accept the presidency of Tufts. So I was asked by the board to chair a committee to look at what we do. Out of that process, we decided to recruit Gordon Guyer. Gordon was a graduate, longtime faculty member, Department of Entomology, chair of the department, then head of the Extension Service, and you know his involvement with the university and then with the Department of Natural Resources, Department of Agriculture, and so forth.

For a brief time, after Jack Breslin's retirement and death, Gordon Guyer was vice president for legislative affairs. So he knew the university so well, and we had such regard for him in the university, the alumni, the legislature, the faculty respected Gordon. So we named him president.

The media always referred to him as "interim president," and we deliberately did not name him acting or interim president. He was president. Was it the seventeen or sixteenth or eighteenth? Anyway, he was president. So one day I asked the bright young reporter from the *State Journal* who always insisted on referring to him as interim president, I said to him, "Why do you insist on calling him interim president? Because he's named president. That's his official title."

He said, "Well, he's just president until the next president is named."

I said, "Well, I have been interim president, then, of the Kellogg Foundation for twenty-three years, and you'll understand if I refer to you as the interim reporter from the *State Journal* because you're just here until the next guy comes." Everybody was temporary in that context.

Gordon did a good job in that period, and then, of course, the process, the difficult process of recruiting his successor Peter McPherson.

Charnley: Were you on the committee that made the decision? Obviously it was done by the board.

Mawby: I was not on the presidential search committee. I was asked by Joel Ferguson to plan the

presidential search, set up a committee, and we outlined a plan of procedure. Then a part of that was to name the presidential search committee. Joel assumed the chairmanship of that, and three other trustees. I was not one. Four members of the board were on the presidential search committee. I was not one.

[Begin Tape 2, Side 1]

Charnley: This is tape two of the Russell Mawby interview.

When the first tape ended, we were talking about the selection of President McPherson, and you were indicating that you were not on the presidential search.

Mawby: Yes, I was not on the presidential search committee. It was frustrating, because under the program, I could not talk with any members of the committee. I couldn't ask them how things were coming. I couldn't say, "Are any of these individuals on your list?" I couldn't suggest names to go on the list. That would be all in violation since I was a board member. I could have been much more involved in the search process as an interested alumnus than I could be as a member of the Board of Trustees. I found that frustrating, but conformed to the law so was not involved in the process really at all until it became the recommendations from the committee to the Board of Trustees and then the full board have the responsibility.

Charnley: Had you known President McPherson before?

Mawby: I grew up in Kent County. Peter McPherson grew up in Kent County. The McPhersons were a well-respected farm family over by Lowell, and, as you know, Peter's grandfather had been a member of the Board of Agriculture when John Hannah was named president back in the early forties. His mother and father had both graduated from Michigan State.

I was a summer 4-H Club agent in Kent County in the summer of 1949. Peter McPherson and his brothers and sisters were all showing, milking shorthorn cattle at the county 4-H fair. I knew the McPherson, knew Peter, knew him and his sisters more than his brothers, the sisters as students at Michigan State, all of them went to Michigan State, and then had followed, in a very limited way, Peter's work, again because of the Kellogg Foundation, our international involvement and his directorship of the U.S. Agency for International Development for seven years. Didn't have a lot of contact, but sort of kept in touch with Peter McPherson. Had been aware that he had left Washington for the job with the Bank of America in San Francisco. So I'd known Peter McPherson, to some extent, for a long period of time, had not been really an intimate friend or contact during his adult years.

Charnley: But you knew that he was a Spartan through and through.

Mawby: I knew that he was a Spartan, and very early in the process when the announcement was made, it's always been made through the Chronicle of Higher Education and so forth that started the search process, Peter called me. I advised him of where the process was and how he should make contact. That was the last contact I really had until the finals of the selection process.

Charnley: Would you say the board made a good choice at that time?

Mawby: Superb. In my judgment, I mean respect for all of the presidents I've known, and I've known them all fairly well since John Hannah, Peter McPherson, in many ways, is more like John Hannah in his vision, his creative approach to issues, problems, opportunities, and his skill at mobilizing people and resources to make things happen.

I think the McPherson years are going to be very bright years in the history of Michigan State University, and his selection as president was a wise one by the Board of Trustees.

Charnley: What would you say were some of the key issues that you faced as the board while you were on the board? Obviously, you've talked a little bit about the selection and the role of athletics and that sort of thing.

Mawby: Well, there were some difficulties with athletics, but the university was continuing to grow, continuing to deal with the organizational problems of growth and of budget, state and other budget sources, struggling with the problems of tuition continuing to increase far beyond the Consumers Price Index, with inflation. Those were issues that the board was engaged with. We had great confidence in David Scott and his associate, Lou Anna [K.] Simon, in the intellectual leadership, the academic leadership of the institution, so that I think there were concerns, but in general things were pretty stable, things were going well, enrollments were solid, but you have all of the problems that any large-scale enterprise has.

The big issue came when President DiBiaggio departed and we had Gordon Guyer, and he was willing to assume this only for a limited period of time. So the reporter was right. He was interim, but so am I. Then the challenge of recruiting a good successor to provide really creative leadership. So that was really, I think, the biggest accomplishment. You can think of the issues of the Cyclotron and the Animal Agricultural Initiative, which was marvelous, those were all things which happened during those years. So, in general, the university was progressing in significant ways.

The big changes, I think, under McPherson have been recognition of the importance of technology in really restructuring many aspects of the university to accommodate that, recognition that we needed to accomplish the long-term objective of a College of Law, and the creative arrangement for the direct College of Law at Michigan State University materializing with his leadership. The emphasis on strengthening the university generally, academically, but with creative leadership of some of the deans and other influences, really moving forward. For example, the Eli

Broad College of Business just moved up scales among its peers in recognition as a College of Business, and interestingly now, I think, increasingly being recognized as a business college whose graduates are imbued with the concept of teamwork, which is different than most colleges of business.

So that Peter's been very creative, I think, in dealing with many issues. The commitment to contain tuition, control tuition so that it moves with inflation, the cost of living, rather than an accelerated rate, so long as the legislature continues to increase support for the university to offset the effective inflation. That was a revolutionary idea. Now I think many institutions nationally are doing something of that sort, recognizing the increasing burden to students of sharing an increasing part of education costs. So that I think the McPherson years have been good years.

I was there only a short while after Peter came, made the difficult decision. The governor asked me to consider being a candidate. That would have been, what, in '96? My wife of then forty-six years had real health problems, had become an invalid, was in a wheelchair, and I simply decided that I couldn't, in fairness to her, undertake the campaign and the continuing commitment of the Board of Trustees. So I retired from the MSU Board in about June of 1996 so that the governor could appoint a successor who could run as an incumbent. So rather than sorting out the last rather about six months of my term, I resigned and the governor appointed David Portius [phonetic] of Reed City, who served for six months and lost.

Charnley: You had seen the writing on the wall.

Mawby: In that year, I likely would have lost because that was a strong [Bill] Clinton year in Michigan. So David then came back two years later and is now a member of the board.

Charnley: Yes, he is. He was persistent.

Mawby: He was persistent, thank goodness, yes.

Charnley: Would you talk a little bit about your role in the endowment, or how that created, the fact that there was a lack of endowment compared to other major universities, development fund, and that sort of thing? Obviously, you would have dealt with this as a CEO of a major foundation. Did it surprise you that MSU did not have any external endowment?

Mawby: Well, because I'd been around so long, I pretty well knew that. One of the hard realities is that most foundations like Kellogg don't contribute to endowment funds. Kellogg Foundation is an endowment, and to take our income and, again, I'll say, defer the benefit to charitable purpose or educational purpose of those revenues is contrary to our board's general policy. We make some exceptions, occasionally. So I was concerned with endowment.

The MSU Foundation was a fledgling organization, fairly small, when I was on the board, and trustees of the board serve for two years on the MSU Foundation Board while they're Board of Trustees. So that's an interlock, which is very appropriate and helpful. So I attended the Foundation Board meeting for a couple years. Now, I have the privilege of serving on the Board of the MSU Foundation. And whereas we were a modest organization at one time, we're now a major resource for the university, and that's important and appropriate and needs to be a continuing objective of the university to continue to grow those endowment resources.

So as a trustee of the university, I was supportive, not really very helpful in a major way, but involved in discussions and counsel and so forth with directors of development.

Charnley: At least from your long experience with the Kellogg Foundation, obviously, they would be looking to you at the MSU Foundation for some words of advice. Was there any strategy that you could provide or that you did provide to the MSU Foundation that was helpful, useful in development?

Mawby: The biggest revenue generator for the MSU Foundation, of course, has been the produce of research of which they are the beneficiaries.

Charnley: Like S_____.

Mawby: Like S_____. So my advice is, "Find another one." [Laughter]

Charnley: Encourage the faculty to do research.

Mawby: That, realistically, is very appropriate. Another source of endowment funds very often come from successful alumni, affluent alumni, who have a particular interest in one or another aspect of the university, like the College of Business or entrepreneurial education or agriculture or health, medicine, whatever. We've been around long enough, and we've got alumni who have been very successful and generally been very generous. So that, I'm sure, will be a continuing part of the university's plan. There's no simple answer to that, particularly.

It's easier to raise funds, as you know, for a specific program or even for a specific building, something specific, tangible, than it is for a general endowment fund. That takes a person of vision and sort of a long-term perspective, who's willing to commit resources in confidence that they'll be well utilized over time. So the university has a growing reputation for good stewardship, and that will be a continuing part of the future, I'm sure.

Charnley: Since leaving the board, how have you been involved with the university? You mentioned you're on the foundation now.

Mawby: Yes, I'm on the board, now, of the MSU Foundation. I'm a delinquent member of the

Board of Visitors of the College of Nursing. Delinquent in that my calendar, even in retirement, is so complicated, and I usually get a notice about a month ahead of time of a meeting of that Visitors' group, and I have a conflict. I've pretty much, through my career, observed prior commitments as having priority, so there I am. Once in a while I can shift.

So that my engagement has been I was involved with the College of Veterinary Science and that new Equine Performance Building, helping to raise funds for that.

Charnley: I just drove by that the other day. It looks like a beautiful facility of a building.

Mawby: Ruth and I gave a stall in that, because we like horses.

I've now been invited by the president to a meeting in June, beginning to think about future capital campaigns of the university. So I'll be one of fifty people or something involved in that.

Well, then, I'm a season ticket holder for football and basketball.

We had the fiftieth reunion of the class of 1949 two years ago of the College of Agriculture, so I continue to be just engaged with a lot of friends and personal interests, but appreciate the sort of more official relationship with the MSU Foundation because that sort of keeps me in touch with the life of the university. And then the provost and the vice president for research and the president usually meet with our board, and we kind of keep in touch with what's happening.

Charnley: In looking back on your work as a trustee, and also as an undergraduate student and a doctoral student, faculty member, just about everything except maybe president, you've done, in thinking back about the role of Michigan State in your life, is there anything that maybe a couple items comes to mind as most important?

Mawby: Oh, you know, I can't overstate the benefit of MSU in my life and the life of the Mawby family. Just overwhelmed by the opportunities the university has afforded through the years. The

first was the opening of doors of opportunity I'd never realized were possible when I was a farm kid in 4-H Club work, going to campus, and participating in aspects of the life of the university, and then it becoming a part of my life as an undergraduate.

I'd mentioned Dr. Tukey and other faculty members, and I could mention Glen Johnson, whom I had lunch with the other day, now a longtime retiree of the Department of Agriculture and Economics, another professor, friend, mentor, who changed my life. Then, the opportunities the university has afforded me through the involvement with alumni activities, various relationships in being helpful. The president will call, and this has been true of many of the presidents, call and ask for my counsel, my assistance.

Currently, I'm one of four members of an independent panel looking at--that was a phone call from President McPherson one Sunday to talk about this problem of the undercover officer in a student organization, the question of surveillance and relationship, and how you balance the rights of individuals, you and me for freedom of speech and action and doing all sorts of things as long as they're legal, how you balance that with the responsibility for public safety. That's the dilemma, I think, that if I were head of the Department of Police and Public Safety at Michigan State, how you balance those concerns.

So now I'm involved in that. I said, "Mr. President, I have no background or experience."

He said, "Well, maybe you have common sense."

I said, "Well, I'm not sure." But, anyway, I appreciate the kind of opportunities, so I'm learning some new things again, hopefully, that can be helpful and constructive to a great institution. I think of the so many fun opportunities.

A recent issue of the alumni magazine featured Dr. Charles McKee on the cover, "An Odyssey to Oxford," Oxford University, in England, and Chuck McKee has orchestrated that program for, what, over seventeen or eighteen years. I was involved in some conversations early on, because the Kellogg Foundation and I was a prime mover. We became involved with Oxford and its continuing education activities in the mid-sixties and helped them create Ruly [phonetic] House,

which is Kellogg Center for Continuing Education, a conversion of a set of buildings on Wellington Square downtown Oxford into a continuing education center. It has progressed from that now to being Kellogg College, the thirty-sixth college of Oxford. In 800 years, they've created thirty-six colleges. I was a part of number thirty-six.

Charnley: Kellogg College is one of them. Kellogg College is one of those thirty-six.

Mawby: One of those thirty-six. It's the newest of the thirty-six. Maybe there's one since then.

But early on, when I was active in the Alumni Association and talking about these alumni educational experiences and the idea of the Odyssey to Oxford, spend two weeks at Oxford, living in the Kellogg Center for Continuing Education, they have senior members of the faculty engaged in morning sessions. So you may be interested in parliamentary law or great homes of Britain or English gardens or Shakespeare.

Charnley: Or family place names.

Mawby: Yes, that's right. So I think they have usually five or six different options. So in the morning you have that, and then in the afternoon you go to London or you go to Stratford-on-Avon. You do a variety of things.

Chuck McKee developed that, and so he and I talked a little about it, and I was able to put him in touch with Dick Smithhurst [phonetic], who was then the head of Ruly House at Kellogg.

It's those kinds of opportunities that are kind of enriching along the way. So, someday I still hope to go on an Odyssey to Oxford, haven't done that yet. I've been to Oxford frequently, and I'm going again this fall, but I won't be there when MSU is there.

So all of those things, the interaction, personally, as well as professionally, with John Hannah and Sarah Hannah. She was a marvelous lady, daughter of President Shaw, just a marvelous

woman. Those have been rich experiences. So Michigan State gives me undue credit for being helpful. I've always seemed to be the beneficiary of this relationship.

Charnley: I want to thank you on behalf of the project, and I appreciate your insight. Thank you.

Mawby: Thank you.

[End of interview]

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