MINNIE HARGROW

20 September 1999

Mame Warren,
interviewer

Warren: This is Mame Warren. Today is the twentieth of September, 1999, and I’m in Baltimore at Evergreen House with Miss Minnie Hargrow.

I’ve been looking forward to getting together with you. You’re one of the first people I met when I came to work here.

Hargrow: Is that right?

Warren: That’s true. That’s true.

Hargrow: Oh, my goodness.

Warren: All right, now. I’m going to just reach right back to the beginning.

Hargrow: Okay.

Warren: Tell me about how you first came to work for Johns Hopkins and when and why.

Hargrow: I came, I moved to Baltimore in 1946, and I had a relative working at Garland Hall—I mean cafeteria, Levering Hall cafeteria. Then I went there to fill out application. That’s the first place I went to fill out application, and he asked me where was I from. I told him I was from North Carolina, and I had worked in D.C. in food service for a year. He asked me—told me to take the application, fill it out and bring it back the next day, which I did, and he hired me after he saw
the application. That was April of 1946, and I worked there in the cafeteria, which Hopkins was running then, until 1971–’81. ’71, the caterers took over. Hopkins leased it to the caterer. Then I worked there till ’81.

That’s when I went over to Garland Hall, started working with the president. The man that was working for the president retired, and a person came over to the cafeteria and asked me if I knew anyone that could get the meetings set up and take care of the personal belongings for the president, and I said, “Yes. Me.” I said, “I know I won’t get it, because they want a man.” They said, “No, we’ll go see and come back and let you know.” And in a half hour they were back and told me that I had the job. That was ’81, working for the president.

I worked in the cafeteria for thirty-four years, so then ’81, December, I started working for the president, but I always had worked for the trustees when they had a function here [Evergreen House] or anyplace. I always would leave the cafeteria when I did catering for Hopkins, and I ran it for Hopkins for one year on my own, with the help of the university. I did the catering, I did all the setting up, until they got outside caterers to come in, in ’71.

Then I started working—I worked for Dr. [Milton] Eisenhower, Steven Muller, Bill Richardson, Dr. Nathans, and now with Dr. Brody.

Warren: Now, slow down. You’re moving too fast for me. I want to hear some details along the way. Let’s go back to the beginning.

Hargrow: Okay.

Warren: All right. Describe what it was like when you first got to Levering Hall.

Hargrow: When I first came to Levering, there was, I think, about six buildings on campus. I
don’t remember—I know there was Gilman, I think Ames and Levering Hall, but about six buildings when I first came. We had to serve breakfast, lunch, and dinner. It was a mob of students, but they were dressed very, very nice. You wouldn’t see one without a shirt and tie. You didn’t see any student who looked like, you know, he was out of place. Even in tennis and all, they were well dressed. The dress code was real good and their manners. As the years went by, it started declining in dress. [Laughter] I guess as the years go by, which is everything.

**Warren:** What do you think happened there?

**Hargrow:** Well, I think it probably was the president and the deans, I guess they’re the ones—they had to make a decision, because I know for eighteen years they really—the dress code was really under par and it just wasn’t like it is now. I don’t know whether the generation just took over and they decided they would let the students, or whether the parents had anything to do with it or what, but the dress code has really changed tremendous since then, since the first hateful years I was here. [Laughter]

Then let me see.

**Warren:** Describe working in Levering Hall for me.

**Hargrow:** Working in Levering Hall, I would come in six o’clock in the morning and we would serve breakfast. We had the students. We took care of them very good. We had a nice group of people working. They were dependable, they were clean. And then I was made supervisor, I think [unclear]. I made supervisor in ’54, I think, and I was supervisor for twenty-five years of Levering. We would serve breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Sometimes I would stay through lunch and almost dinner. I did the schedule of the employees, I did ordering. When the catering come
over, I took care of that. But I had good help. I could designate one person to do it, and I wouldn’t have to go back and check it out, because they were just that good.

Let’s see. What else did I do? At dinnertime we had lines to the door. We served good food, good-quality food, and we had the Evening College would come in and eat dinner.

Warren: Oh, the students from the Evening College would come and eat?

Hargrow: Yes. See, people going to class, taking class at night, they depended on coming eating their dinner before they’d go to school, because they’d leave work and go right on there and eat dinner. Then they’d go to class. So that’s why we had such a mob. We had just about as many for dinner as we did for lunch.

Warren: I bet you did have a mob.

Hargrow: Then we had the students for breakfast. So we took care of a huge group of people coming in, and we was open six and a half days, five days a week and half a day on Saturdays.

Warren: Wow.

Hargrow: And then if we had something special, we’d come in on Sunday. Then every year at Homecoming we’d take care of Homecoming. When they had graduation coming, we took care of that, and in the gym, the Saturday before the game. Then they’d have banquets in each room. Each class would have their own banquet, and we had to set up five or six rooms for each group.

Warren: Where were those banquets held?

Hargrow: In Shriver Hall, Clifford Room, and then we would have Garrett Room and we would use the Great Hall. What other rooms did we have? A lot of them went to the club, because the
club had a room for them to have banquets there, too. So we would set that up at Homecoming and graduation. Then at graduation, we would use Gilman—what’s that building? Anyway, that’s where you would have all the cookies and punch for the students, for the parents—I mean the kids, but the guests would go over to the club.

Warren: Was that in the Hutzler Library?

Hargrow: Hutzler Library. That’s right.

Warren: Right. Because I’ve seen a lot of pictures of parties in there.

Hargrow: Hutzler.

Warren: Like at inaugurations and Commemoration Day.

Hargrow: That’s right.

Warren: It looked like there were a lot of parties happening.

Hargrow: Oh, yes. That was the main one. We set up at Hutzler there for the inauguration. We’d have hundreds and hundreds of people coming through, to serve them. Then any other kind of function that they had, we would take care of them.

Warren: I eat in Levering Hall a lot when I’m down on campus, and it seems to me that the way it’s set up now is probably something that’s relatively new.

Hargrow: Yes, because it’s run by caterers.

Warren: So tell me how it was organized when you first got there. Was there a cafeteria?

Hargrow: Yes. When I first started working there, when Hopkins was running it, we served breakfast, lunch, and dinner, and we had good supervision, good supervisor, good manager, but
since 1971, when the KERA came in, and then God knows how many more caterers came in since then, they would change managers every two months because they would quit and didn’t like to set up. Working with Hopkins, I loved it and wouldn’t trade it for nothing, but you have to be on your P’s and Q’s to work with Johns Hopkins.

Warren: Tell me what you mean by that.

Hargrow: Because I mean they’re set in—you know you’ve heard of people set in their ways. Hopkins was set in their ways. Certain things, whatever you’re doing, you don’t do, because one of the caterers came in—I always took care of the trustees, and I set it up. I always would use a linen tablecloth and china for the trustees. So one of the managers said, “Why do you have to use that?” I said, “Because we always use linen tablecloth and china for the trustees.” She said, “Well—” She told me she had come there to straighten Hopkins out. I said, “Well, this will be about your last thing you will do, straighten it out.” [Laughter]

So when she went up there, Steve Muller was the president. Ross Jones was there—and so they came to me, and I said—he said, “I know you didn’t have nothing to do with it.” I said, “You know—” Had paper cups and paper tablecloth for the trustees. I said, “I didn’t have anything to do with it, but she was my boss.” I was working in the food cafeteria then, and she was in charge of Levering Hall, of the catering. So she said, “Well, who they think they are?” And so two weeks later, she was gone. The trustees wrote her a letter and she was off of campus. See, they want to run Levering Hall, but they don’t want the catering. Students just want the Levering Hall building, but it’s a package deal. If you get one, you get all. So they just not—most caterers that come there is really not capable of taking care. Hopkins is too big. They jump for it because of the name,
Johns Hopkins, but they’re not able.

The management is very poor, very poor. The system’s very poor. Because if one of them asked me why don’t I come—because I go over there now, right as of now, been fifty-three years ago, and I see something, I’ll tell them, “Wipe the counter off.” I’ll say, “You don’t wait till the customer starts coming till you start filling up. That’s why you come in early, to fill up. Fill your milk. Fill your ice machine. Set your counter up. Get set up. So when the line starts, you can be ready to serve.” And I said, “Have a backup person. When that line, the food line and the service line get heavy, you have somebody to put them out, because they only have a certain amount of time to eat.” But I say, “You all wait until the line get down, and then here come two people out there, ‘May I help you?’” I said, “That’s wrong.” I said, “You don’t have—it’s a poor system.”

So they said, “Would you like to come back over here?”

I said, “Then where you all going to be working? Because you all won’t have no job.”

[Laughter] Because the system is very poor. Supervision is very poor. You don’t wait until the people standing in line and start setting up. I say, “You don’t come in and take a break before you start setting up. You set up. Make sure everything is in line. Then if you know you’re going to need a certain amount of glasses, certain amount of cups out there, put the cups out there. You’re going to need lemon for your tea. You cut one lemon and it require four or five lemon, cut four or five.” But I call that poor supervision.

**Warren:** I’m glad to hear you say that, because, boy, I go in there sometimes, I want to say, “Who’s running this place?”

**Hargrow:** Lord, nobody. I fuss every day I go in there. Every day. They say, “Miss Minnie, you
know what? You don’t work over here now.”

I say, “This is where I first started.” I said, “This is where I started, right here. And I know when it’s not right.” I say, “You all sitting around here, won’t wipe your counter off. Your customer walk over there and you walk away, and you’re sitting out there taking a smoke break. Hmm.” See, that’s poor supervision.

Warren: It is.

Hargrow: And they don’t have enough help over there. Got one man trying to run the whole place. I say, “He can’t work from sunup to sundown. He can’t go get change. He can’t get [unclear] either.” I say, “Spend some money and get a good supervisor in here and let her work one thing and let him work another, work shifts. And you don’t run out of food and go back there and tell, ‘I done sold the last baked potato,’ then they got to put something in the stove to cook.”

Warren: They need to clone you. They need to make another Miss Minnie.

Hargrow: I fuss all the time about that.

Warren: You’re talking about supervision. The person I want to ask you about, and I don’t know whether you worked for him or not, but I know he was at Levering Hall at the time, Chester Wickwire.

Hargrow: Oh, Lord, yes.

Warren: Tell me about Dr. Wickwire.

Hargrow: Dr. Wickwire was my buddy.

Warren: Tell me about him.
Hargrow: We used to do a lot of catering for Dr. Wickwire. Used to make coffee and set it up for him when he had his program. I worked closely with Dr. Wickwire. He was a very peculiar person, but he was very, very good. As a matter of fact, I saw him not too long ago at the club, and he recognized me. He’s still doing some work.

But he was on the second floor of the Levering, and that’s where he had his classes, his rooms and [unclear]. All I can say about Dr. Wickwire, he was very, very good. He was strict, but he was good. And that’s what we need. I think if he’d come back there now, he’d beat some of them doing what they’re doing. [Laughter]

Warren: So was he involved with running the cafeteria?

Hargrow: No.

Warren: That was a separate operation?

Hargrow: Yes.

Warren: Same building.

Hargrow: Yes, just in the same building, upstairs. Levering is down in the cafeteria. He’s up there by the Great Hall. Yes, it was something separate, but he had a lot of things going, and I worked for him a lot, because I would do outside work for him and I’d do outside—I worked in the club. I’d go in the club and work over here. I worked at Hopkins Theater.

Warren: Let’s talk about each one of those. Tell me about the club.

Hargrow: Well, the club, 1977—let’s see. The caterers came in ’71. Yes, that’s where Hopkins turned it over to the caterers, which we didn’t know anything about, and they said they didn’t
know anything about, but I can’t see why they didn’t know when they had everybody checking pensions, ready to give them out, and they didn’t know anything about it. I told Don Bickert then, he was there with Mr. [Clifford “Cliff”] Culp, I said, “Well, that’s mighty funny you all didn’t know anything about it, but here you’re presenting our package to us.” But they did let five people stay there. They got them jobs, so if they didn’t want to work with the caterer, so I went to the club.

**Warren:** Who was it you talked to? Don who?

**Hargrow:** Don Bickert.

**Warren:** I don’t know him.

**Hargrow:** He’s retired now, and so is Mr. Culp. They were the old-timers there.

Then I went to the club. I worked on weekends. I worked with the caterers. I mean I worked with the outside caterers they had, but I worked with the club, too, had a job with the club.

**Warren:** Describe the club to me.

**Hargrow:** The club is a non—it’s a membership club. You go up there and you have to be a member to eat there, unless somebody else take you there. They serve the rich people, I guess. [Chuckles] They didn’t serve breakfast. Served lunch and dinner and all kind of fancy activities, and they have a lot of outside weddings, different kind of parties, birthday parties or whatever they had, Tap Room for one thing, Eisenhower Room for another. But I would go there. If a group of people were coming on Friday and Saturday night, bringing their family out to eat, I
worked in the Tap Room. So I did that for about five years.

And then I would go to the theater Friday, Saturday, Sunday, when they had a play, and served coffee Friday night, Saturday and Sunday evening at four o’clock. I did that ten years.

Warren: Oh, my goodness, you were busy.

Hargrow: Yes, I’ve been working all my life, from a farm up till now. I’ve been working. I’ve always had two and three jobs. And so, of course, I worked there and then I would leave there, and I went to school and took up traveling with a travel agent, and I worked there thirty years. I’m still working with them, thirty years, still working there at Hopkins, and I’ve always worked with the trustees and still do. Whenever they have something, I go, if they have something special.

Eisenhower, when he was there, the president lived in the home. I would go there when they had special parties and work with the caterers. I’d just be around. They just wanted to be around [unclear] caterer, I was just there.

Warren: Tell me about Dr. Eisenhower. What was he like?

Hargrow: Oh, he was just my sweetheart. [Chuckles] He was easygoing, but he was stern. He would have been 100 years old last week.

Warren: I saw that article.

Hargrow: Yes. I worked with him closely. Eisenhower, over there where Dr. Brody lives now, they call it Nichols House. Then I got a girl to work with him till he passed. Lola Brown, she worked with Dr. Eisenhower. He was easygoing as long as you done your job.

Warren: What happened if you didn’t do your job?
Hargrow: [Laughter] It was not too pleasant. But that was with all of them, because I can say I’ve got along with all the presidents I ever worked for. I haven’t had a run-in with not a one, not a one. So they wanted to know what was the secret of staying at Hopkins so long, I told them, “Turn right, go straight, and stay in the right lane.” [Laughter] That’s the only thing I know to do, if you stay in the right lane. If something you don’t understand, and then always every job I went on, I’d want to know who am I supposed to answer to. You can’t answer to two or three people.

So I had one over there, the caterers, she came in, the one that served the paper cup, her name was Brooks Tough, but she said they called her Tough Brooks. [Chuckles] So I asked her, so she gave me so many things to do, she said, “Open up. If the cookies not here, make sure the food is out. Make sure the line is covered. Make the food order. If the cashier’s not here, make sure the cashier—the register’s covered.” One person cannot do it all.

I would go by the mornings they would call me in to tell me they didn’t feel good, I would pick them up. I’ve been bringing them around to work for the last forty-five years. Still bringing them. Nobody never had to come pick me up. I always brought riders ever since I had a car.

Okay. I told her that I could do it all. “Everything you name, I could do, but I can’t do it all at one time, so which one is a priority?” You do the priority thing first. You’ve got to have the food cooked before you can put it on the line. If you don’t have no cook, somebody’s got to cook it. Then when you put it on the line, you’ve got to have somebody to serve it. And if you serve it, you’ve got to have a cashier to take the money. So which one is the priority? So she said, “Well, go and do what you want to do” after I told her that.
But I would bring the girls in. I said, "Come on in, because I need you bad." But I didn’t have no problem with the help. They were very, very good. That’s why I don’t understand now why some of them don’t half do, because I didn’t have no problem getting the work done. They were clean, they was on time, I give them a schedule, and I said, "If you’re going to be out, let me know a day ahead. I can get somebody." But I always had enough help to keep the line going, keep the steam table filled. Had a runner to keep the steam table filled. You take one pan out, you put something else in there. But don’t wait to go back and tell the cook and you don’t run out of food.

I’d do the ordering, and if I know something was going to be late the next day or day before, like the doughnut man is late coming in on certain days, I would double that order the day that I know he wasn’t coming, so we still wouldn’t run out.

Warren: You really did think ahead.

Hargrow: Yes, because those things—I guess I’m not a person to get excited and nerved, because if I did, I couldn’t do nothing. You can’t do anything when you get nervous and excited.

Warren: That’s the Sagittarius in you.

Hargrow: [Laughter] That’s right. You got to think and study, because sometimes, right now they’re coming in and say, "Miss Minnie, we got a question to ask you." They start in the middle. When they get through, I say, "You finished?" I say, "Okay. We have to start at the beginning." I never could answer a question in the middle. Start at the beginning and then go through. Then I can tell you my decision. But you’re going to get halfway and then tell me something, then they say, "Isn’t that right?" I don’t know because I don’t know the beginning.
Warren: You know what? You’re reminding me of a question I haven’t asked you. That was a great reminder. You told me about President Eisenhower, but you go all the way back to President Bronk, don’t you?

Hargrow: No, I didn’t work—it’s the other man. I didn’t work with him.

Warren: I know you didn’t work for him, but did you see him around?

Hargrow: Yes.

Warren: Very few people are left who knew him.

Hargrow: I know.

Warren: Tell me about him. Tell me what you knew about him.

Hargrow: I didn’t know too much about him. I didn’t get close to him, because Matthew [phonetic] was working closer with him. That’s the man that—no more than what I hear, Matthew would say about him.

Warren: Did he ever come to Levering Hall?

Hargrow: No. No. I think he stayed closer on the other side. You know, as a matter of fact, I don’t think any of the presidents come in Levering too much. I did get Dr. Richardson to go over there one day. I said, “Just walk through.” I said, “This is part of you. You’re the president of the university. Go through there. Let them know. People don’t even know the president.” I said, “Walk through and tell—”

So one day I did that to Sr. Brody one day, too, when he came. I said, “Let’s go out.” I said, “This is Dr. Brody. He’s the president on campus now.” I said, “Make yourself known.”
Because somebody would say, “Miss Minnie, who’s the president?” So I did, I got Dr. Richardson to go over there. I said, “Let’s go through the cafeteria sometime and look, and then people won’t have to write you letters and tell you. You can see for yourself. If you see for yourself, you know what’s happening. But sometimes you say, ‘That’s not true,’ or maybe it is true. See. Take out time enough. Put it in your schedule. Say, ‘I’m going to go one day, just walk through the cafeteria and walk around and see.’” I said, “And then when you don’t let nobody know what day you’re coming,” I said, “that’s the reason I say I don’t have no problem with my job. I do the same thing on a daily basis. You can come or don’t come,” I said, but some people, if they know you’re out, they say “I’m not going to do anything because the boss not going to be there.”

But I never have. I never got up in the morning, said, “I don’t feel like going to work. I’m going to stay home,” because I know they would throw me off. Somebody else would try to get that job. If I’m sick, I try to make a [unclear] to go when I’m off. That’s why I have so much time, sick day, [unclear] sick day. So one girl asked me, said, “I wish you’d give me your sick days.” I said, “I won’t give them to you, but if you get sick, you’re perfectly welcome to them, but you’ve got to be sick. Don’t pretend.” I’m not going to pretend I’m sick, because too many sick people.

Warren: That’s true. Boy, is that ever true.

Hargrow: So—

Warren: Let’s go ahead and talk about going to work for the president. Was it Steve Muller who first brought you over there?
Hargrow: Yes.

Warren: What’s it like in the president’s office?

Hargrow: Well, the president’s office is run good. I don’t have no problem, because I just found out what, when they gave my schedule, they expect me to do his mail, private mail. If he has a luncheon in the office, I take care of that. If he has a meeting, I set up his meeting. I gets his schedule the day before. I tell them all the problems they will have not giving me his schedule until the time he’s supposed to have it. Every day before I go home, I gets the schedule. It’s subject to changes sometime, but I say not all the time. “Give me an idea.” If he’s going to have a meeting at eight o’clock, with so many people, ten o’clock with so many people, better give me time to go in there and straighten up, put fresh coffee in there and straighten it up. Going to have one at two o’clock and they’re going out to lunch, going to have lunch in the office, I have to get all that. So I did that for Dr. Muller for eighteen years.

Warren: So were you there for his whole presidency?

Hargrow: No, but I had to go get his lunch, although I was over to the cafeteria. I don’t know, he just took on to me for some reason, and he had me to go get his sandwich, because he wouldn’t eat in the cafeteria. He wouldn’t get no sandwich in the cafeteria. I had to go out to Cross Keys and get his tuna fish.

Warren: You’re kidding.

Hargrow: When the chauffeur take me, the secretary would call, say, “Tell Miss Minnie I need a sandwich,” and they would go get me and the order, and I’d go get it and bring it back and set it
up.

**Warren:** So it had to come from Cross Keys?

**Hargrow:** Cross Keys, because he said he wanted white meat tuna and they didn’t use the kind of mayonnaise or something he wanted. That was high privileged, wasn’t he? [Laughter]

**Warren:** Well, he knew what he wanted, didn’t he?

**Hargrow:** Eighteen years. He was a heavy smoker. I got him off of smoking for, I think, a week. I said, “Chew chewing gum.” So one morning, he said, “Miss Minnie—” He first had me get a pack of cigarettes, then he said, “Will you get me a carton?” I said, “No, no, no, no.” He said, “Miss Minnie, this meeting calls for more than a pack of cigarettes.” He was having a big meeting. So the people would go in there and ask me how was he this morning, you know. I said, “As far as I’m concerned, we’re on good terms, but if you ain’t got your homework out, I feel sorry for you.” Going into the meeting with him. He was very strict. If he said to meet at eight o’clock, if you ain’t there, that door closed, unless you got a really good excuse.

Dr. Richardson, he wasn’t that strict. But Dr. Nathans was just sitting there, bless his heart. He didn’t have too many meetings. Dr. Brody not—Dr. Muller was the strictest one.

**Warren:** Dr. Muller was the strictest of all presidents you worked for?

**Hargrow:** Yes. Very strict and everything just pinpoint, you know. One morning he was going out to a meeting, he was going so fast, he went back and said to his secretary, “Hey, Jones, where in the hell am I supposed to be going anyway?” [Laughter] He didn’t know where his meeting was. But he didn’t tolerate a lot of play, you know, not in the office where he was. But I stayed
with him before I ever went—he’s the one, when they asked about me working for him, he said, “Ask her when can she start.” And I had to give them two weeks’ notice, and they liked to have a fit when I left the cafeteria.

But between ’71 and ’81, I was with the caterer. I was with Hopkins, but I weren’t on the payroll, you know. I was on the catering payroll. So then when I come back in ’81, then I got back in with Hopkins, started back. So I lost ten years’ pension stuff from Hopkins. But still, they couldn’t do anything with five of us, the caterer, unless they caught us doing something real bad. They couldn’t let us go, because I was with—I mean, being a supervisor, they wanted me to get in a union, but I didn’t want to get in a union, I told them, because I don’t see paying the union money when I don’t need one. Union is to help you keep your job if you’re lazy. But I said I do my job. I need that little change myself, instead of giving it to the union man. Some people depend on the union to keep a job. It’s sorry way they go to work. In the first place, they lay them off because of the union. So I didn’t have to join a union with that.

Warren: When Steven Muller was president, a lot was going on around here.

Hargrow: Oh, my Lord, you know. A lot of things going on. He stayed gone a lot. He traveled a lot. A lot of things was going.

Warren: When he would travel, what would you do then?

Hargrow: Well, I still would take care of his mail and I would take care—I also took care of the senior vice president, and I still do, make coffee for them and set up. If they’re having a luncheon, take care of that.

Warren: It occurs to me that the current vice president, you’ve known him a long time. Talk
about Jerry Schnydman.

**Hargrow:** Oh, yes, yes. Jerry used to be a student. Jerry Schnydman was a student. He used to come in the cafeteria. He’d always tell me, “Don’t tell people what I done, Miss Minnie.” And he would have his football team come in there. They’d pull the tables together. They’d mix the salt and pepper together. Every time I see him, I get so tickled that he was a devil. But now I told him, I said, “I can’t look at you straight because I think about what you were then.” I said, “You still got a little devil in you.” [Laughter]

**Warren:** Well, the devil has moved right on up the ladder, hasn’t he?

**Hargrow:** Yes. Yes, he’s doing great. But I been knowing Jerry, he was at alumni, oh God, for years. [unclear] came over there and he was in admissions and we’ve always been very close. So now I think he’s doing a good job. We have our little chat every morning. I asked him the other day was there anything I should know and then I could help him with. So he seems to be so far doing fine. Dr. Brody left and went on vacation, and when Dr. Brody came back, he said—when he left, he said, “I’m leaving you all in charge.” So when he come back, he asked me, “Miss Minnie, how did things go?” I said, “Well, from what I can see, mighty fine. Matter of fact, they thought you was still here.” [Laughter] Everything was so smooth. So he said, “Well, [unclear].” [Laughter] So Jerry was doing all right. He made a big move. I mean a big move.

**Warren:** So who else have you known for a long time like that? Who else stands out in your mind?

**Hargrow:** All of them gone. Like Sunshine’s gone.
Warren: Who’s Sunshine?

Hargrow: He was a senior vice president. He’s gone. John Lord [phonetic], he just left. He was there, I think, fifteen years.

Warren: Who’s that?

Hargrow: John Lord. He was in business affairs.

Warren: I don’t know that name. John--

Hargrow: John Lord. L-O-R-D. He was in business affairs. Let me see. Ross Jones, I worked with him closely for years, long as he’s been at Hopkins.

Warren: What’s he like?

Hargrow: Oh, he’s great. He’s secretary. He was secretary to the president. He worked with Ross. Yes, he’s great. Ross Jones was great. He was very conservative, very strict, but I loved him. I loved the way he carried his meetings and carried out things. He had a lot of respect. Ross Jones, he’s in [unclear], but I don’t see too much of him.

Rip Haley, he’s retired. He was in development.

Warren: I don’t know him. Who’s Rip Haley?

Hargrow: He was vice president of development, but Lindgren, Robert Lindgren, is there now. Don Bickert, he retired. He was in business affairs. He was there when I first started working at Hopkins. He’s retired ten years now. So is Mr. Culp.

Warren: So what’s it like when an administration changes? When Steve Muller left and Bill Richardson came in, what kind of changes happened?
Hargrow: Well, it changed, because I said to Dr. Muller, because each president, when they get ready to leave, they always would call me in and tell me that they was leaving the university, said, "I thought maybe I’d tell you personal so you would know." So I said to Dr. Muller, I said, "Oh, God, I don’t know how I’m going to make it, because I know I’ll be telling Dr. Richardson things that you did.” He said, “No, you never tell another president what the other president, because when each president come in, they got their own setup, their own way.” And he said, “Because I wouldn’t want nobody tell me what to do.”

And that stuck with me. I said, “That is true.” If you go in and take over a job and you’re going to tell him what the other president done, you’re going to be in the same shape, predicament, good or bad, than the other one was in. So each president is supposed to stand on their own [unclear].

So when Dr. Richardson came in, he had a turnover because he saw things that he should change, you know, phase some jobs out and create some more jobs, and every president that’s been there has done the same thing. So each president, they see where—I guess I’ll be the same way if I go in, because if you’re not qualified for that job, I can’t see putting you on it because I know you. I mean, that’s my feeling. I said, “If you could do the job good, then that’s your job. If you don’t know computers, why am I going to put you in a computer position?” And so that’s what I think each one feel when they come. They feel like they’re placing the people where they think they do best.

And so Dr. Brody, he’s there and he’s making changes, switching things around, and they got more computer class now because if they don’t go to class, ain’t nobody going to have a job
with the computers coming up like they are now.

**Warren:** I've met Dr. Brody just once. What's he like? Tell me what he's like as a person.

**Hargrow:** Now, they tell me—to me he's just as nice a president. They say I'm the only one can get him to laugh when I go in there and set him up. I never have had a president, if they were having a meeting, that I couldn't go in there, you know. They say I'm the only one can make him laugh, but they say if you want to rough his feathers, if he asks for something they can't find, they say he's on the rough side of the mountain. [Laughter] But I tell them this, "If you know he's that way, you know there's something you have to have, why wait for him to come ask you? Get out your homework first." I say, "There something you're in doubt about, ask him. Don't let him get off [unclear] waiting for it and then you trying to find it. You can't find it then for nothing."

They say, "You don't know how he is."

I say, "No, I've never had that problem with him." Never had a problem with any of them, because something they want or he's having a meeting, if something come up, I don't care what I'm doing, I go set it up, that coffee and stuff in there, set it up. This could be something that he didn't have no idea they were going to have, but I know it in front. I'm always in front of them. I'd rather have it there when he don't need it, than he need it and I don't have it.

And I take care of all his personal mail, go to the post office and pick up all his mail every day. He's got two post office, one on Roland Avenue, one on—but I don't go to the one on Roland Avenue. I go to the one—they keeps his mail in the post office. I pick that up and give it to the secretary, and she goes through it, then give it to him.

**Warren:** I need to turn the tape over.
Warren: I can understand why you’re such a valuable person to these presidents. You stay one step ahead at least.

Hargrow: Oh, yes, I do.

Warren: We’ve kind of skipped right over Dr. Richardson and Dr. Nathans. I don’t know anything about either one of them. Tell me about them.

Hargrow: Dr. Nathans was—he came after Dr. Richardson. Dr. Richardson was—he and I, we got along real good. We would sit there. Some days he would call me in there and we’d sit down and talk and discuss about the school and the food. The only thing I would say to him, “If the students are paying good money, they need decent food,” and I said, “If you and the dean would check on their food, you know, because the parents are paying a lot of money. Whether the kids study or not, they’re still paying that money, and I think they should get decent food.” That’s the complaint that I had with Dr. Richardson. He did look into that, because he had the dean—he called the dean a meeting. Because you go in, you don’t give them the same thing over and over, just to get rid of it. I said, “Think about the money they’re spending and change the menu. It’s just like a revolving door, the same thing over and over. There isn’t no need to go in today, because I know what they’re going to have.” I said, “Keep me in suspense. Change the menu.” I said, “You can give it twice a week, but don’t have it for lunch and then have it for dinner.” I said, “Change it around.” So Dr. Richardson was good at that.

Now, Dr. Nathans, he was a quiet, low fire. You wouldn’t know he was in the office. I’d go in there some days and I’d say, “Dr. Nathans, what can I do for you? Can I get you a bowl of
soup or something?” And he liked the homemade vegetable soup, and very seldom they had it in the cafeteria. He didn’t like a creamed soup. So Holly was secretary then. She would go out and buy some of this soup and I’d heat it up, you know, and take it to him. He would eat it all. He would eat crackers in soup. I guess he’d go home and eat with his wife.

So one day I had cooked some—I was cooking food for some of the peoples on Meals on Wheels, and two of my people went in the Union Memorial Hospital and I asked the dietician if I could bring them a little beef vegetable soup. They didn’t have no appetite. They were dying of cancer anyway. And so they said yes. So I had made some beef vegetable soup, and one of my ladies, she had passed [unclear], so I had it in the fridge. Dr. Nathans wanted some soup. We didn’t have a can in there, and so I asked Holly, I said, “Well, I can heat this up and give it to him.” I said, “Now, if it’s bad, I won’t mind, but if it’s good, okay.” So I gave him the soup and crackers. When I went in there, I said, “How’s your soup?” He said, “Oh, that was the best soup.” And I told him that I made it, and he went home and told his wife. She wrote me a nice thank-you letter, Dr. Nathans had told her that Miss Minnie had made some vegetable soup and gave it to him. That really made me feel good. I say anytime I can help somebody. So every now and then I’ll make some vegetable soup and I’ll bring him, and he will eat that. Because he loved his soup, because he’d eat his biggest meal when he’d go home with his wife. But, you know, he’s been very sick.

Warren: That’s what I understand.

Hargrow: Very. I sent him a card. I talked to his wife. He’s very, very—trying to do. So is Dr. Muller, you know. I called him and had prayer with him before his wife died, Dr. Muller. He
didn’t want nobody to come, you know. He’d say, “Just pray. Pray for her.” They was a close-knit family. He didn’t want, you know, nobody. Didn’t even want the children around there.

So Dr. Nathans was great. He was just there a year. Dr. Richardson. Then Dr. Brody. I asked Dr. Brody, I said, “You stay here, I’ll stay here, because you’ll be my last president.” He said, “No, I’m going to leave you here.” [Laughter]

**Warren:** You’ve got my vote to be the next president. I think that would be a great idea. I think this place runs pretty well, but I think you would really get it going.

**Hargrow:** Well, I think I have helped each department, and I can say in my fifty-three years, I never had a run-in with any department on campus, not a one, I said because I don’t butt in. If I ask them to do something, they come to my rescue. I think that’s good. I haven’t had any problem with no department, from the club, the ground men or anything. And I’ve always treated, you know, right. If they come in and want a cup of coffee or cola, I get them a cup of coffee. I say, “I can treat you to a cup of coffee in the wintertime,” and if I ask for something, if I call them with a list to go somewhere or something, there’s security right there. Ron, the head of security, they are just as nice as they can be.

So I really feel good. I say at least if I did something bad, it would be in the paper, so I try to do good things. A lot of people call me and want to talk to me and ask my opinion. I say, well, that makes me feel good. Maybe I am doing some things right to set an example for the other people, because I’m not going to tell a person nothing wrong if I know it’s wrong. I’m going to tell you right. If you go wrong, that’s your choice. Whatever job you do, do it good.

Because my daughter started working over there, and they asked me how would I feel.
My daughter Brenda, she works—she was sent up there. My her working there in the president’s office, same office, I said I feel good because, in the first place, she got her job to do and I got mine. I don’t interfere with her and she don’t interfere. She knows that’s her job. And your job comes first. So she’s been there going on seven years now. I just say, “Do your job.” A lot of them say, “I wouldn’t want my mother working around me where I am.”

I say, “I can work around anybody. I’m going to tell you if you do your job.” I tell all of them, “Do your job. Ask them what is your job. Ask who you’re supposed to report to.” And I said, “Before you leave, let them know you’re going or anything you can do. Don’t walk out and just halfway do your job.” So many of them do that. I’ve gotten a lot of people a job from the bank, the credit union, the club. I have gotten jobs, the post office.

So one boy came out there about a month ago, I used to be his supervisor, he says, “Miss Minnie, I’m looking for a job. You know me.” I said, “Well, when I knew you, you had a cap bill in front. Now you’re wearing it in the back. I don’t know whether you’re going or coming.”

[Laughter] I said, “I can’t say that, because you’re not the same person when you worked with me.” I think he done been out on drugs, the way he looked last. “No, I can’t recommend you, and I’m not going to recommend you. You fill out an application for full time and work part time.” So he’s trying to get a job in the cafeteria. He tells people, he says, “Miss Minnie knows me. Ask Miss Minnie.” I say, “I know you, but I don’t know your work now. I don’t know your standards, how you work.”

**Warren:** Do you think working at Johns Hopkins has changed you at all?

**Hargrow:** Not really. Hopkins has changed, but I haven’t. [Laughter]
Warren: Tell me about how Hopkins has changed.

Hargrow: Well, the standard. I mean the rules and regulations, that’s what changed, because I often would say how can they come in there—the dress code has got, to me—they say I’m old-fashioned, so maybe I—I said, like the president’s office, one day they came in there. I said, “Now, this is the president’s office. You all have to set an example. You all are not coming in with no slacks and no baggy pants like that. This is the president’s office and if you set an example, if you’re going to do like this, the other people say, ‘If the president’s office looks like that.’ You all have got to do better than that.”

So one day they say, “Well, we’re going to do some cleaning tomorrow, Miss Minnie. Is it all right if we wear pants?”

I said, “The president is going to be here. If he’s going to have guests coming in, if he’s going to have guests coming in, you all change them when the guests leave. You don’t sit up there in the office and greet somebody or the president and y’all got on your baggy pants like you’re going to play ball.” So now they’re doing much better. They do respect me, because they say, “Ah-oh, Miss Minnie. Don’t want to hear Miss Minnie’s mouth.”

Warren: Who is this you’re talking to?

Hargrow: Carla, my daughter [Brenda], Diane, and Barbara, all of them in the office, every one of them.

Warren: And they all ask you?

Hargrow: That’s right. Diane is his special secretary, and she says, “Ah-oh, here come Mom
Minnie now.” I say, “That’s right.” That’s not right if the president comes in, he’s got guests coming in, and they’re looking like who would have thought it. I say, “When you go home, you put on slacks or whatever you want to.” In the summertime they’re wearing shorts. Shorts is all right in the proper place, but I don’t think for the administrative office, senior vice president and president’s office, I don’t think. I say, “Your dress code is very important.”

So that’s the reason I say I haven’t changed. I’m the same as I was when I started there. I go in, I be on time, I do my work, I try to help somebody if I can, and I guess if I die, I hope to be that way. [Laughter]

Warren: I expect you will, but don’t die yet. One thing that I know has happened in your time at Hopkins that I’d be interested in your perspective on, you’ve seen a lot of change in the student body, starting with integration, and a lot of foreign students coming in.

Hargrow: Oh, Lord, yes.

Warren: Tell me about what you’ve seen there.

Hargrow: Well, I’ve seen now–because when I first started working there, I didn’t see no integration. I didn’t see no blacks there working or coming there. But now look like one trying to outnumber the other, because in admission, you’ll see a student coming in. Because I think at first the black couldn’t afford it, they just couldn’t afford it, but now where they’re getting money from one way or the other, the parents are sending them there. And immigration, a lot of them coming there, too, now. So they’ve had quite a few sit-ins about this immigration, about the racial, the coloreds and all that then. So now it’s an equal opportunity, so I guess that’s why–I think they don’t screen them enough.
Warren: What do you mean?

Hargrow: I mean because some come there, if you have a code of rules and regulations, some things, you just couldn’t get in there. You’ve got to look at some of the history, go in the background. You don’t just call the people and get the money and get them there, then you can go there. They check some of the background. That might help some, but, see, since they got so much drugs and stuff out now, it’s hard. It’s hard.

See, a lot of kids go to school so they can do what they want to do. Right now more of them want—they do not like to stay in dormitories anymore; they want their own private place. That’s a problem they’re having now. They wants to get their own apartment, regroup, and that way they can do what they want to. If they stay in a dormitory, you’ve got certain hours, certain things, certain rules they have to go by. And I think they limit it now. The freshmen have to stay in the dormitory. One girl told me, I think, that juniors had to stay there. Then the sophomores and the seniors, they can get their own place.

But I talked with a couple of girls, asked them where were they from. One was from Virginia, one from Philadelphia. They said they’re trying to get their own place. I said, “What’s wrong with the dormitory?”

“Oh, no! I don’t like the dormitory. Too close in.” See, they can get loose when they get their own place.

And before, when I first started working, they didn’t have that. You were required to stay in the dormitory. There wasn’t to ifs and ands about it. But now they give you your privilege, whatever you want to do. I say maybe people are getting tired. They don’t want to be worried
and aggravated. They could care less. That’s the way it seems. Seems like it’s “I’m not going to be worried and aggravated.” Well, see, the parents are not as strict as they used to be either, of the kids. The kids tell the parents what to do and what they’re not going to do.

**Warren:** Seems that way, doesn’t it.

**Hargrow:** Yes, Lord. Yes, yes.

**Warren:** There’s one group we haven’t talked about at all, and I bet some of them stand out in your mind, too. How about the faculty? Are there any faculty members who made an impression on you over the years?

**Hargrow:** Well, some of the older ones, but these younger ones—

**Warren:** Well, tell me about the older ones. This is a history, you know. This goes all the way back.

**Hargrow:** The history was the same. They was strict and had class on time, the dress code was nice. I’d go and give them some time. They’d have a classroom here. Next was [unclear], next was over there another building, and students sitting there waiting to have class if they done changed [unclear]. So if the faculty are going to do that, what are kids going to do? I don’t know whether they be going to a meeting or where, drinking coffee or what. If they don’t be interested in the kids, then the kids could care less.

**Warren:** Who do you think are the really good faculty members? Who has impressed you over the years?

**Hargrow:** I can’t even think of the names that used to be there, the faculty. I really can’t
remember. I’d know them by their face, but right now I can’t think of some of the faculty that was there. But I know since they been gone, I’ve been trying to get my mind on these young ones coming in.

Warren: There are a lot of them here, aren’t there.

Hargrow: Yes. Golly!

Warren: Keeping everybody straight isn’t easy.

Hargrow: I said, “I can’t remember—” They see me, they say, “Hi, Miss Minnie. You still there?”

“Hi, Miss Minnie. You still there?” Honest to God, I can’t remember their names, but I know their faces, and they all know me.

Warren: They all know you.

Hargrow: And [unclear], I wonder how they all know me. And they be all over campus, and some of them come back when they had a retirement party for Miss Vaughan from the credit union, I saw so many people that had retired and come back, and they would come to me. I said, “It might be her retirement party, but it was a treat for me to meet all the retirees.” They said, “When are we coming to your retirement?” I said, “I don’t have the slightest idea. It’s not on my calendar.” [Laughter]

Warren: That’s great. So who were the people behind the scenes? There’s Miss Minnie Hargrow, but who else is there? Who else has made a big difference in this place, keeps this place going, that people don’t know about or people take for granted? Who are the special people here?
Hargrow: I know Sidney Green, he’s been around here a long time. He works for the trustee. Now, the trustee, when they have something, they call him. He’s been here about forty years. He works in housekeeping.

Warren: Who’s he?

Hargrow: Sidney Green. He works under Martin and he take care of all of the trustee. They call him for like setting up, because they call on him if they want a table set up here. If they want it tomorrow, they’ll call him to do it rather than call the people there working. His name is Sidney Green, and he works under Joseph Martin at greenhouse. His name, he’s around. I mean, they call on him for everything. He done fell out a couple of times because he has sugar, and I told him, “You’ve got to take it easy.” But whenever the trustee having something, he’s scheduled to work. They call on him to take care of things.

Sidney and I, we’ve been working together ever since I been here. We work close together, you know, because we used to have oldie-but-goodie dances for the United Way. We had it for seven years in the Glass Pavilion. We started that, and so now they want to have it. They started back this October. But, see, when they were having it, I would go to start in the president’s office. I said, “I want each one of you offices to buy a table, $120, $130, whatever it is,” I said, “because I was taught leaders must be in front. If you’re a leader, you’ve got to be up front.” And not a one would turn me down. The president and vice president, I go to each one and I said, “Buy a table for your office.”

Then if they can, some of the older people have retired and want to come back to Hopkins, they will tell me to give that ticket to them, and I’ll get somebody to bring them out.
They work five to eleven on a Friday night. And I didn’t have no problem. We would have about 300 people. So now they want to start it again, but I got new people. Like [unclear]’s gone, Ross Jones’s gone.

Like I told Jerry, I said, “Jerry, you’re responsible for a table.” Dr. McGill, he was senior vice president. I said, “Because you all are leaders. You all in front.” And I mean I don’t have no problem. “Okay, Miss Minnie.” And you make the check out to Johns Hopkins University for the United Way. We would turn in about eight or nine hundred dollars to the United Way. We got one coming up in October, fifth of October.

Warren: And this is an oldies but goodies dance?

Hargrow: A dance.

Warren: That sounds like fun.

Hargrow: In the Glass Pavilion, five until eleven, dancing, in the ’50s, you know. And the people have a good time.

Warren: It sounds great.

Hargrow: We have food and we have wine and we have beer and have dancing and fellowship. So it’s going to start back again. We had to close that one time because we had some people working with us and they wasn’t fed. I mean, we sent them the ticket and they—I set about ten tables. Then they sent two people. That’s now fair if you’re on a committee.

Warren: No.

Hargrow: They said, “Well, you know everybody.” I said, “Well, you all better learning
somebody.”

**Warren:** So who goes to these dances?

**Hargrow:** People that are invited to the Hopkins community, different people. I know a lot of outside people come, that used to work at Hopkins. But it’s going to be on sale. You’re going to see some tickets floating around here, because I got an e-mail today, we’re going to have a meeting to give out the tickets, twelve dollars a ticket. We got food and we got Marriott to cater it. See, some people say, “Well, I’m already giving to United Way.” I said, “You’re giving that there, but this is [unclear] as a whole.” And I don’t have no problem. I go to the security department, I go everywhere, and a lot of people donate. Like the club donates stuff for us to raffle off.

**Warren:** I didn’t pick you for a party girl, but it sounds like you are.

**Hargrow:** [Laughter] Yes, you know, they say you have got to have variety.

**Warren:** What other kind of events happen around here? What’s the social life like for people who work here?

**Hargrow:** Some of them, they never work. But like I told you, some of them don’t have no life but work. Some of them just come in and work and workaholic. But another thing I told Dr. Brody, before I leave Hopkins, I’d like to set up some kind of meeting and have people to try to cooperate with one another more. If my office’s having a function and you don’t attend my function, I’m not going to attend your function. Like at Christmastime, they had a Christmas party. Jerry used to have the biggest crowd at his party, Jerry Schnyдman, [unclear]. Now, he had
a Christmas party.

**Warren:** So each department has its own party?

**Hargrow:** Their own party. But they was trying to get away with it and trying to let them work together, but they would not work together. If the provost had one, development had one. They should combine themselves and go and [unclear]. I told the—the provost has a party. I guess I get invitations to every party that they had, two or three a day, I try to make them all. But the provost had it here, had the party right here at Evergreen, and Dr. Brody was having a party there, too, so I told Dr. Brody—his was earlier, and I came here, because we had the [unclear] to bring us out here, and I said, “I’m going now.” I told him, I said, “God, that’s a dry party. If you’re going to a party, I want it to be lively.” I said, “I’ve been to funeral homes livelier than this.” [Laughter] Oh, it was dry. And the people just sit around. I said, “No life at all. Cheer up!” I mean, had all that food and nobody came.

**Warren:** My goodness. And whose party was this?

**Hargrow:** Provost.

**Warren:** The provost?

**Hargrow:** I think Dr. Cooper was provost then.

**Warren:** Oh, my goodness.

**Hargrow:** Now Dr. Knapp is. See, at some parties they just have outgoing and have music and, you know, Christmas music. I said, “If you [unclear], that’s no party.” It’s not enough togetherness. It’s not enough togetherness. “I work all day, I’m tired, I’m going home.” I said,
“You can set aside one day, one evening out of a year to go and be with co-worker.” “Well, I see them every day.” I said, “That’s why I’m going, because going to have something.” Dr. Brody always give—he gives his office a luncheon every Christmas and then he has a party for everybody, you know. He has it in the Glass Pavilion, faculty and all.

**Warren:** For everybody in the university?

**Hargrow:** Yes. Some say, “I’m just going to hear your president.” I say, “If in your heart you don’t want to go, you don’t have to impress him that way, if you don’t want to go.” A lot of them feel like they have to go because he’s the president. But you ought to want to go and think enough of your job that if he offers you something. I can’t see going over there and walk around and meet some of the people. Some of the people working next door to each other, don’t even know each other. That’s one thing.

I told all the presidents, I said, “Not enough togetherness.” They say, “You go to everything because you know everybody.” I said when they’re having something, Judy and all of them will call me—Judy Peregoff—“Miss Minnie, what table you want to sit to?” Like when they have a recognition dinner in the gym. “Miss Minnie, what table you want to sit at?” “Sit me to a table that I don’t know nobody, so I can introduce myself and learn more people.” What I want to sit with the ones I work with every day? A lot of people want to go and sit—you and I work every day together, sit together. I say, “No, you sit here and you meet people.” I said, “That’s where you learn people.” I said, “You don’t ever have to sit me with anybody I know. I make myself acquainted and start talking.”

I doubt if they’ll ever get it going. Some people are set in their ways and they’re just dry.
Like down the hall they've got three sections, all like in a different country—development, provost, and the budget and the president's office, all of them there. I say, "You all ought to be like one big happy family." Everybody's got work to do, but like in our office everybody's birthday, we have a cake. We take out a few minutes and have a birthday cake, sing "Happy Birthday, and cake and coffee or cake and juice or something. Everybody's birthday. And sometimes I told them, "You all can ought to eliminate mine, I done had so many," but they still have it.

So they asked me last year, said, "Miss Minnie, you know—did we surprise you?" I said, "No, because you give everybody a birthday cake. It's just like death; I know it's coming, but I don't know what time." [Laughter] I know the cake's coming. I don't know what time of day it's coming.

**Warren:** You were surprised about that.

**Hargrow:** They tried to schedule so Dr. Brody could be there. You can't go with his schedule. I mean, his schedule just meeting here, going here. He said he's going to be in the office ten o'clock. Maybe he's got a call, got a meeting to go do, and he's got to leave.

**Warren:** One of the things that I've heard, I've talked to a few people now, and one of the things that I've heard is that—and it certainly seems to be in the time you've been here—that this place has gotten really big, that it used to be relatively small.

**Hargrow:** Oh, Lord, yes.

**Warren:** And now it's gotten really big.

**Hargrow:** It is expanding, hon. Look at all the buildings they got now and parking lots. Oh, it's
expanding. In the last twenty years, my gosh. And they’re still building. Back all up there, back of
the club, they got those buildings, got the parking lot, and they’re going to take the parking lot up
there by Garland now and build another building. You know where Merryman Hall—you know
where Merryman Hall is?

Warren: Yes.

Hargrow: Going to take that. And Wyman Park [building] [unclear], that used to be the hospital.
I don’t know what they’re going to do to sick people over there, because they’re making them all
offices. You been over there?

Warren: Yes.

Hargrow: On the sixth floor and seventh floor, making all of them offices over there in Wyman
Park.

Warren: What do you think about how big it’s become? Do you think it’s better or different?

Hargrow: It’s just different. I guess it’s better in their way, you know. I guess they can see
further than I can see. It’s better, but you’ve got to be careful when you expand and put people in
different place. Sometimes they mess up and then they go on about their business. Sometimes it
be too big for you. If you’ve got some people that work together and try to make it grow, if you
have one mess up, then they’re going to bring some of the parts down. It has expanded. In some
cases it’s expanding, but they don’t have the right people working there as I can see.

You’ve got to cooperate. You’ve got to communicate. You’ve got be in one accord. I’m
going to have my little shop over here, do what I want to do. Have my little shop over there. Then
when it all boils down, somebody else come in and tear down and try to build it up. It has really expanded. It looks like it’s expanding, but they don’t think long enough to get it off the ground. I don’t know whether it’s too much for them, too much headache.

I tell them all there’s no job worth you losing your mind over. I say if the job’s too big and you can’t handle it, then step down and let somebody else take it. You can’t take on more than you can take care. A lot of people so greedy, want to do all the jobs for the money, and I say time you get the job, you have [unclear] and then you don’t know what you got. Ain’t got nothing. Any job you have, you need a peace of mind sometimes. It’s going to be a couple of rough times you might run through, but if you go home and can’t enjoy your family, can’t enjoy your friends, carry your work home with you, can’t sleep at night, I can’t see that.

I mean, I only sleep four hours. I go to bed at twelve and I get up at four, but when I go to bed, I’m asleep. But I said what’s the good of going to bed at eight o’clock if you’ve got something on your mind, you turn and twist until twelve? Laying there thinking about it, and it ain’t get done, and you ain’t rested.

By me working with travel agency, I do my work at home between ten and twelve, my paperwork, myself, writing up trips and getting trips and writing down. Then I get up and I have a lot of Scripture to read, my Bible, and concentrate and meditate. Then I leave at a quarter, 5:30 to come to work. This is seven days a week. But I got a schedule. There’s not a day that I get up and say, “Lord, I don’t know what I’m going to do today.” My schedule’s made up weekly. It might suddenly change, but every day I have something to do, every day from Sunday to Sunday. I know what my schedule is. It might slightly change, but very seldom. Sometimes I have to
squeeze something in there, but very seldom I can squeeze something out.

Warren: You are an inspiration.

Hargrow: And I enjoy everything I do. I enjoy everything. That’s why I come to work every day, because I enjoy what I’m doing. And when I leave there, I go to the nursing home, I enjoy what I’m doing. When I go to my traveling meeting, I enjoy that. Go to my church meeting, I enjoy that. And I’m not the type of person to argue and fuss, because I because I want to have friction. Then he’s going to charge you for it.

Warren: What haven’t we talked about, about Johns Hopkins, that we should? What do you think about the future? What do you think the future holds for Johns Hopkins?

Hargrow: Oh, Jesus. I don’t know about computers, because they sent me a letter asking me did I want to take a computer course. I said, “I don’t have any here. You can forget it at my age.” By the time I learn what you are learning now, they’ll have something else.

But the future, it’s hard to say, because you don’t know who you’re putting in these jobs. If you put the people in the job that’s going to do the job, not because you know them or you’re my friend, I’m bringing you in on this job, and don’t get the job done, see, something’s going to go slack. I mean, if you know somebody and you know they do a good job, bring them in here and get the job done.

I wouldn’t even accept a job if I thought I couldn’t do it. But some people, you get it and they don’t know what they’re doing than a man on the moon. They get on these jobs, you hear them say, “I’m doing this, but I don’t know whether it’s right or not.” If you don’t know, why waste your time? Go to school or take up a class or step down and get another little job. If
you’re going to be frustrated all day, eight hours a day, then you go home, you’re frustrated with your family, your kids, [unclear]. Relax. Do your job. Get a job so you can relax. It might be a couple of days rough, but whatever it is, take priority first. If you know you’ve got papers got to go out right away, like Mike Field—you know Mike?

Warren: Yes.

Hargrow: He [unclear] early one day. I said, “Mike, what happened?” I said, “You ain’t did your homework?” He said, “Yeah, but got so much to do.” I said, “Well, do priority first, honey. Don’t do that that you can do later. If he wants something right now, you do that right now. Get that out of the way.” And so he said, “Yeah.” But some people don’t know how to handle a job, though. That’s the reason I like working by myself, because, see, if you work by yourself, you’re doing what you need to do, you know what you’re doing. But if you got somebody else working with you and they come and they got [unclear], time trying to show them and tell them, that’s time wasted.

Warren: Boy, do I agree with you. People say, “Don’t you want to have people working for you?” I say, “No. It’s easier to just do it right myself the first time.”

Hargrow: That’s right. You got to stand up and tell them, then you go back, and that’s time wasted. [unclear] tell, “You need a secretary. You need—” Because last weekend I had a [unclear] took forty-five people to a play at Arena Theater, then I took forty-seven people to a crab feast with the senior citizens that Saturday from two to six, and I had to write down the names, I had to e-mail the men, give them the address, who to pick up, what time to pick them up, because they’re seventy-five or eighty years old. They said, “You need—” I said, “No, because they’ll mess
up.” I said, “Let me sit there and concentrate, and when I get it done, it’s done.”

Warren: That must be the Sagittarius in us.

Hargrow: That’s right.

Warren: It must be, because other people seem to be able to have people working for them and they do just fine. But not me. I just want to get it done myself.

Hargrow: That’s right. I went on a cruise, took sixty-five people on a cruise in July. “How do you manage?” I said, “Because I had everybody’s name, I gave them the schedule, we had a briefing. I told them, ‘Any problems, see me.’ Don’t want no problems. Go and have a good time.” And they did. Some of them from Virginia, some from New York, some from North Carolina. Some I hadn’t met up until I met them at the BWI Airport. I had my name tag on. Had never seen them, just talked to them on the telephone.

Warren: I’ll bet you organize a good trip. I’m going to stop this tape, because we’re just chatting now. I’m having a good time, and we’re going to continue, but we’re going to stop the tape. I want to thank you for a great interview.

Hargrow: Yes, Lord.

[End of interview]