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HERSHEY COMMUNITY ARCHIVES ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

90OH04, D. Lee Backenstose, M.D.

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Tape #1, Side #1

Narrator: D. Lee Backenstose, M.D.

Date: March 13, 1990

Interviewer: Cheryl Slavinsky

Interview #: 90OH04

Interview #: 1 of 1

Transcribed: June 8, 1990

Draft #: Final

Slavinsky: This is Cheryl Slavinsky. It's March 13. I'm interviewing Dr. Lee Backenstose in his home today for the Oral History Program for the Hershey Community Archives.

Dr. Backenstose, I want you to understand that none of these tapes will be used--they will be transcribed, but nothing will be done with them until you have a chance to take a look at them and sign off and give your permission for the Archives to use them. You understand that?

D. L. Backenstose: I understand.

Slavinsky: Okay. [Tape recorder turned off]

Let's get started then. The reason we're interviewing you this morning is because you have made a significant contribution to this community and you've lived in it for quite a long time. So let's start with how you came--Were you born in Hershey?

D. L. Backenstose: No.

Slavinsky: Where were you born and how did you get to Hershey?

D. L. Backenstose: I was born in Lebanon County, in Schaefferstown, the little town of Schaefferstown.

Slavinsky: Then did your family move here?

D. L. Backenstose: No.

Slavinsky: Or did you move here later in life?

D. L. Backenstose: I went to Penn State University and took agricultural education. So following graduation from State, I was looking for a job. Actually I was contacted by Dr. J. I. Baugher, who was the superintendent of schools here

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at Hershey. He called me and asked me whether I would be interested to see about a job in Hershey, which I did, and I was hired here by Dr. Baugher in the public schools, the Derry Township public schools, as the teacher of agriculture.

Slavinsky: You were teaching agriculture?

D. L. Backenstose: I was teaching agriculture.

Slavinsky: At what point were you called into the service? You'll have to give me some dates here so we know what was happening when here.

D. L. Backenstose: I was called into the service in February, 1942. I was in the service basically four years, which included overseas European duty. Eventually in the 3rd Army, General Patton.

Slavinsky: You were a military judge.

D. L. Backenstose: Yes, I was. Did your mother tell you that?

Slavinsky: I read it in your article.

D. L. Backenstose: Oh.

Slavinsky: In the article about you. So how long were you in the service then?

D. L. Backenstose: Well, I was in the service about four years.

Slavinsky: Tell me about being a judge and also about serving under General Patton.

D. L. Backenstose: First of all, we were the 94th Division. The 94th Division basically was a Michigan outfit. I was brought in as part of the cadre at Fort Custer, Battlecreek, Michigan. The cadre is the basic training group and administrative group of the division. The 94th Division Cadre was organized at Fort Custer, Michigan--the Division was trained at Camp Phillips, Kansas--maneuvers followed in Tennessee and Mississippi (Camp McCain). From there to the staging area, New York, Camp Shank, and boarding of the Queen Elizabeth.

So we went over to England on the Queen, the Queen Elizabeth. I might just tell you about that. The Queen had about 1,700 or 1,800 personnel of its own. But when we were on the Queen, we went with a full division, which was about 13,000 personnel, plus auxiliary personnel

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like engineers and support units. All in all, there were about 22,000 aboard that ship when we went across the Atlantic--alone. [No escort.]

Slavinsky: That sounds like a lot of people.

D. L. Backenstose: That's a lot of people. There were about 6 decks on the Queen, as I recall, and I know that my company was sleeping in the swimming pool of one of those. As I used to go down to see them, I stripped down to my waist by the time I got there, because it was so hot. It was beastly hot.

A lot of the GIs used to sleep on deck--out in the open. But the Queen went across, changing course every seven minutes, because the submarines were out looking. She could have been torpedoed. What a prize that would have been to knock off the Queen with 22,000 GIs, Army personnel from the United States. I think they came up along the coast of France and to Britain, although I'm not positive about that. Nevertheless, as soon as you approached the European continent, you had the possibility of the German Air Force coming out to torpedo or bomb the Queen.

We landed at Firth of Clyde in Scotland, and were equipped in England. Then we sailed to France and landed at the Utah Beachhead. Our first assignment was the containment of 25,000 German U-boat personnel that had been bottled up in the Normandy Peninsula. No effort was made to capture them. We just ringed them and that was all. Nevertheless, we did lose personnel from sporadic exchange of artillery fire. Night raids, trying to create havoc in your company perimeter, were part of the picture.

At Christmas season, the Germans, commanded by Field Marshall Von Rundstedt, attempted an extensive Ardennes offensive-- the Battle of the Bulge. This was designed to split the Allied offensive and march to the Channel through Belgium.

When the threat of the Bulge happened, the 94th Division was relieved of its duty in Normandy. We trucked across France to join and relieve the 28th Division (Pennsylvania Division) in the bottom of the Bulge. The 28th was severely mauled by the German attack.

One interesting feature about that crossover--it was winter, cold. Up to that time, I really hadn't used my alcohol allotment--I was not a drinker. Every time, though, that my allotment came around to buy Scotch or brandy or whatever --I bought it. Where did we keep it? We kept it in the supply sergeant's truck. The cute thing about this was, by the time we got over to replace the 28th Division, all my supplies of alcohol were gone. The GIs drank everything. [Laughter] They just raided that stock. I was a captain then, and, of course, the captain was a little bit upset about that. But we got there and replaced the 28th Division.

Some interesting happenings that took place. One of these saved my life. Now, I was company commander of Company L, a line company. The non-coms, the non-commissioned officers, of the cannon company revolted against their commanding officer and the lieutenant who was in second command. The colonel of the 301st regiment came down to me and said, "Hey, Back, I want you to go up there and take charge of the cannon company."

I said, "Yes, sir. What's the trouble, sir?"

He said, "Well, those non-coms mutinied."

So I went to the cannon company to take command. I was in command until the majority of the war was over. Anyway, my successor as commander of Company L, I will never forget, I was in on planning assignments as we ran some limited attacks against the Germans. L Company was picked on as one of the attack companies [in one of these]. Company L was assigned to occupy Bannholz woods. In the woods, were one or two Panzer tanks cruising around. This [attack by our forces] was something that I thought was folly for us to waste good GIs. But anyway, the attack took place and cannon company, my company, provided artillery fire for the attack.

The poor [attacking] GIs dug in foxholes [in the woods] but the big Panzer tanks came and they would just lock the track over the foxhole and just grind them. Not only that, they depressed their guns in the foxhole and just blasted them. It was suicide. The captain never lived through it. He died in that maneuver. Why couldn't something else be done against the Panzer tanks?

One of the desperate thoughts was when my planning and training officer for the regiment, S-3, came to me and wanted me to take my cannon, which were 105-mm [4-1/2 inches] Howitzer, (we had six of them in the company), to see if I could knock out the tanks [at point blank range]. I said, "You are out of your mind! That tank has a 88-mm [cannon or rifle], which is one of the best guns of the war. We had to throw an arcing [howitzer] shell at it." The 88-mm of the Panzer fires point blank. I said, "I refuse to do it. Why don't you send up your weapons carriers to face it?" They were armed with 76-mm guns.

He said, "Oh, they're hiding behind buildings--[they are scared]."

I said, "And you expect me to come out in the open with my guns?" I said, "Like fun. I'm not going to do it. I'm not going to sacrifice the men."

There isn't any question that I was correct. It would have been complete suicide for the company and the personnel. [Our shells would also have hampered our attacking forces.]

Well, the war continued, and we wound up in Ludwigshafen and Mannheim with our division. I think those were the last cities that we took before Germany capitulated. I remember some of those moments, too, moving up under fire, artillery fire, as we went forward. Again, what decides whether you're going to be killed or not, it's pretty hard to say. But anyway, the war's over, at least with Germany.

Following the war, we were in occupation duty for a while. While that happened, one of the assignments I was given by the intelligence section of the regiment was to try to figure out some of the murders that were taking place in the area. Prisoners of the Germans were in [detention] camps. These were not Germans but prisoners of the German Army--Slovaks, Czech, Russians, etc. They were enclosed in a wire encirclement. But what happened, at night they would escape through the fence. If they were employed on your farm, say as a laborer, they might not always have been treated well. So if this Russian worked on your farm as a laborer, he would come to the door and knock on the door until you stuck your head out the window. He then would shoot you. He just felt that you probably had abused him or something like that or made him work a little bit hard. So a number of these were occurring all the time--these mysterious murders.

So I was given a special assignment to try to solve some of these problems. One of the very interesting ones involved two German girls returning home after work. A Russian prisoner was walking along the [same] path and as he came up to them, he just took their purses. He just took them off their arms and ran off down the path. A German farmer was coming home, but he was riding a bicycle on the same path. As he came down the path, he was going faster than the Russian, so he caught up with the Russian, and the Russian pushed him off the bike and just shot him in cold blood. Just executed him.

We had some idea of possibly the murderer. Russians would escape at night to terrorize like this. So I lined up suspected prisoners--maybe we had six or eight of them--to be identified. I cut a hole in a blanket and put the German girls behind that hole, one girl at a time. Then we paraded these individuals before the blanket. Both German girls identified the same person. He was a Russian soldier that had been captured and used for labor.

The next thing that happened was that a Russian Colonel flew into our area from behind the Russian lines. He came to headquarters to get the release of that soldier. Now, how did they know that the [Russian] soldier was there as a prisoner [of the 94th] because of a murder of a German? Word of mouth from camp to camp? It's a phenomenal thing that took place over there.

Anyway, the Russian Colonel came into Headquarters with his pilot. I remember sitting down at a meal with them, and [with] our Regimental [Commander], Colonel Hagerty. Colonel Hagerty just wanted to get rid of this prisoner. So the division--it was a division decision--gave this colonel the murderer. That Russian Colonel had so much authority at that time, that he could have gone outside and shot that [Russian] soldier. There would have been no question asked. They had absolute complete authority over those soldiers. It's not like America. An American captain couldn't go out and shoot a soldier like that. But the Russian could have executed the soldier just because of this misdemeanor.

We had powdered milk, if you wanted powdered milk to drink [with meals]. I was impressed by the Russian pilot, he drank four glasses of the powdered milk. He just drank one right after the other. I didn't drink the milk because I didn't think it was that tasty, and it wasn't part of my diet while I was in the service. But he emptied four glasses. Our rations, our provisions, I'm sure were superior to anything that they ever got in the front lines in Russia.

Anyway, that ended the episode pretty much of the time when I was on that special assignment trying to figure out why all these people were murdered. We had also a Military attaché that was found dead in his room with bullet holes in the ceiling. That one I didn't solve. There was nobody there when I got there. Circumstances were pretty hard to figure out. Possibly suicide. I think that we ended up making the death cause suicidal. I don't know whether it was suicide or not.

After that little assignment was over, the colonel came to me one day and he said, "Back, I want you to go in the Judge Advocate's Division, and I want you to hold court in four German cities for infractions against military law." Man, this was somewhat of a shocker to me. If you stop to think about 13,000 people in a division and in the corps there might have been X number of divisions, that they came and picked me. But anyway, every week I would take a jeep with a driver, and we would visit one town on this day, the next town on the next day, the next town the next day--so we had four cities that we held court in the courthouse one day a week. The military government then brought in the cases that were to be prosecuted.

We had an English captain who was the prosecuting attorney. I was sitting at the bench, the magistrate. I was the judge. The English captain brought up the case before me. The Germans in, I think, 100% of the cases, had no defense lawyer. Didn't request any. If a person would have been accused of disobeying the curfew laws of wandering around the street after 10:00 o'clock at night, he was arrested and was brought up for trial. Infractions that we took care of were like Germans housing an SS

soldier in their attic after the war. Stealing was a big problem that youngsters used to do. But the docket every day in these cities was invariably filled. We were busy for hours trying to adjudicate these cases correctly [and fairly].

In some cases where the decision was a little bit more than I wanted to do [alone], I would call a recess of the court and I'd take the English captain in conference. We had a German interpreter interpreting the German into English. But anyway, the captain and I would go behind the scenes. I'd say, "What do you think? What are we going to do with this case?" Well, we did so and so and made a decision. We'd either confine him for ten days in jail and let him go or we'd only fine him.

An interesting case was of two young German boys. I don't believe those German boys were over ten, eleven, twelve years of age. They stole a car. They were arrested. Their mothers were present [at the hearing]. They were hausfraus that you see pictured in the magazines, the German hausfraus who like to eat a lot of sauerkraut and pork. [Chuckles] Anyway, after the case was over, I said to the parents, the two mothers, "I'm going to fine your sons to be incarcerated for a month, put in a jail for a month. But if you will promise me that you will take care of this, I'll give them to you."

"Ja, ja, ja!" [Laughter] When it was all over, the mothers, I remember, grabbed the kids by the ears and marched them out of the court. It was the most human thing that I think occurred. Anyway, this duty went on for weeks and it was some experience.

When we pulled out of that area of Germany, we went over to Czechoslovakia to face the Russians. Actually, we were just patrolling a border there. As we pulled out, one of the interpreters, a female interpreter, came up to me (I had the rank of major, I'd been promoted from captain to major.) and she said, "Major Commandant, there isn't much we can do, but would you take a little gift from us?"

I said, "You know, this is forbidden. We cannot accept gifts from you."

And she said, "If you would find something in your room?" [Laughter]

I said, "I couldn't do very much about it, could I?" So there was a bottle of cognac in my room.

Anyway, she just said that she thought I did a good job in handling these court cases, and she would just like to give me something in appreciation. So here was the cognac bottle. So I put it in my trunk locker, and went to Czechoslovakia.

I didn't have the guts to taste that stuff, because I thought, "Gee, maybe the thing's poisoned," or something like that. So anyway, one of

the lieutenants came into my room one time and said, "Major, do you have any whiskey around here or anything like that?"

I said, "Why, yes, I was given a bottle of cognac over in Hilden in Germany." I said, "I've been afraid to touch the stuff because I didn't know whether it was safe to drink or not."

He was a little bit stoned at the time he came in. He said, "Where is the stuff?" and so on.

I said, "Right here. I'll let you sample it."

So I gave him the bottle, he opened it, and he drank and said, "My God, Major, this is the best stuff I ever tasted in Germany! This is really good!"

I said, "It is?"

He said, "You'd better believe it."

I said, "Then cork the bottle. I'm going to drink it myself after this," which I did. It really was, I think, a very good grade of Calvados or brandy.

So Czechoslovakia--marching in a couple of parades in Pilsen and so on. Having the Russians occasionally come in and invade our dances that we had for the GIs. This was about the only activity that really took place over there. Czechoslovakia, you know, reminded me about the United States probably back in the time of the Civil War, with the countryside and the roads, dirt roads and things like that. Maybe I am wrong in that, but anyway, that's what it reminded me of.

So while I was in Czechoslovakia, there was an opportunity to go to Paris to the Sorbonne University, to study French. Well, in Czechoslovakia, you're pretty well set, and you're not inclined to be too ambitious or create waves. There weren't any takers. So I signed up for it. The next thing, I got a phone call that said, "Hey, you've been selected to go into Paris to the Sorbonne University to study French."

I said, "Well, what do you know." So I was in Paris at the Sorbonne University studying French. We had a grade school teacher teaching us French. Her name was Madame Lizeray. She was a delightful old gal. She must have been 70 years old. She was just so kind and so patient with us. Here were all these GIs wanting to learn to speak French.

So we were there a couple of months, and I went to see every spot in Paris that I could see. Went to see the Sacre Coeur and Notre Dame and all those cathedrals. The city of Paris ran a lot of excursions for us while we were there, and I went on every excursion that was available.

There was a Frenchman who was in charge of supplies for the school, and he came to me one day and said, "Major, how would you like to stay on in Paris when you get your discharge?"

I said, "I don't know. What have you got in mind?"

He said, "I will make you a millionaire in a year's time."

I said, "I have to think about that. A year's pretty long."

He said, "If you stay with me six months, I'll guarantee you half a million dollars. Before the war, I had \$9 million, before the Germans came."

I said, "I'll have to think about that." Naturally, I didn't take him up on the proposition. It sure was something to think about. It almost seems like a dream when you think about it, but I'm telling the truth. I just don't know why, but I was afraid that he might have been in the black market using, maybe, my rank to help to procure some of these behind-the-scenes supplies and selling them on the black market, something like that. I was scared of it, frankly. I couldn't do a thing like that, that's all. If I'd been somebody else, [maybe] I would have grabbed the chance. But I wasn't about to do that. I couldn't do it. From the background I was brought up, that's something you couldn't do.

The promotion from captain to major was while I was with the 3rd Army, General Patton. I was promoted to a major over six captains that were my seniors. There were six in the regiment that had a lot of seniority over me, because I was young, at the bottom [of the totem pole]. I don't know whether there might have been any animosity from those other captains because I got this promotion to major or not, but nevertheless, it was done. I think I carried on very well from the standpoint of the rank.

General Patton came down and talked to our division one time when we had made an attempt to cross--it might have been the Saar River. We really lost a lot of men. We lost a lot of men in that we had a whole company, Company B, surrender to the Germans because they got inside the Siegfried line and were trapped on the inside. They couldn't get out and we couldn't get in to rescue them. The whole company surrendered to the Germans. Crossing the river was a big loss of life. General Patton came down and talked to us after the division was withdrawn to Thionville. He, of course, gave us the real pitch, "You have all the fire power in the world. The German Army doesn't have the fire power you do. Why in the world don't you use it? The only good Kraut is a dead Kraut. The only good Indian [to paraphrase]. . ." You know that old saying, "The only good Indian is a dead Indian." That's what he said. "The only good Kraut is a dead Kraut."

Anyway, [while] he was talking to us, one of the officers had a leaf of a tree on his helmet, behind the netting that covers the helmet. Patton said to him, "Why are you wearing that leaf on your helmet?"

He was a lieutenant colonel. He said, "So the snipers don't identify me with my rank."

General Patton said, "You see these stars up here? I never covered those stars. I'm sure that I've been closer to the front lines than you've ever been. I'm proud of the stars that I'm wearing. If you aren't proud of the rank that you have and don't take that thing off your helmet, I damn well soon will change it." Just like that. [Laughter] He didn't mince any words talking to us. He bawled the hell out of us. It was probably good. Probably good. In those movies that you see of Patton, I think there's a lot of truth.

Slavinsky: Let's get you out of the war and get you back now. One of the questions I want to ask is did seeing the casualties in the war have anything to do with your decision to study medicine?

D. L. Backenstose: Oh, definitely.

Slavinsky: That was a totally different turn.

D. L. Backenstose: There was no question about it. Not because--I had this feeling when I talked to Dr. Hostetter, who delivered our children, I was thinking, "I think I would really like to go into medicine." In those days, you didn't have any money and as a school teacher I wasn't getting much money. There's no way that I could have gone to med school. But here's the war [with the] GI Bill of Rights. So I came home with a real commitment of thought that I was going to go into med school.

So I dropped in to see Jefferson in Philadelphia and filed an application there, and then went over to University of Pennsylvania. Dr. Rabdin was the doctor who operated on [General] Eisenhower when he had ileitis. Well, his wife [M.D.] was the dean of the med school. She said, "If you get certified from Penn State in pre-med, we'll take you."

I thought, "This is a piece of cake." So I hopped in my old Mercury that I had at that time, and I drove right straight from Philadelphia in the afternoon to Penn State, (I was in uniform) and I tapped on the door of the dean of the pre-med division of Penn State. I invaded his sanctuary, his home. He wanted to know what I wanted. I told him what I wanted, and he said, "What are you doing now?"

I said, "I'm teaching school."

"Where?"

"In Hershey, Pennsylvania."

"You have two children?"

I said, "Yes, sir, I have two children."

He said, "You're out of your mind. If you want me to certify you in pre-med, it's going to take you two and a half years [of study at Penn

State]." Another thing that he said, "At your age, you won't be able to learn as rapidly as these youngsters can today. I don't think you'll be able to keep up the pace with these youngsters."

So naturally I left his home with my tail dragging. It was really dragging. I had been given the coup-de-grace.

I talked to a kindly doctor up on Ag Hill. His name was Miller, Dr. Miller. I related to him my dilemma. He said, "You go down to Harrisburg and get your credits evaluated." (I had a master's degree under my belt.) "Find out what you've got to do."

I went down to Harrisburg, showed them my credits, and Dr. Pentz said, "If you take one course in organic chemistry and one in physics, we'll certify you [in Pre-med]." Which I did at the Junior College and I took the one course down at Lebanon Valley [College]. I was six weeks late in the classes, but I achieved that easily. I tied the highest mark in the class at Lebanon Valley. Anyway, I was accepted, the first one [accepted] in my class at Jefferson.

Slavinsky: Let's just make a break here. I'm going to flip the tape.

[Begin Tape 1, Side 2]

Slavinsky: You were first in your class [accepted] at Jefferson.

D. L. Backenstose: I was accepted first in my class at Jefferson.

Slavinsky: I see what you mean. Okay.

D. L. Backenstose: I know it sounds almost unreal when you hear me telling you this. You say, "Oh, you're making this up." I'm not making it up at all; I'm telling you the truth. Because it was--I got a phone call from Jefferson and they said to me if I want to get in the class, I should come down and apply immediately. I was number one accepted.

Well, I endured to see some of the Pre-meds that the dean recommended at Penn State, in our class at Jefferson, that didn't last the first year.

Slavinsky: Do you think you just had the drive? What do you think?

D. L. Backenstose: There's no question about it. You had to be compulsive about the study, your study ethics, and your willingness to sacrifice. It wasn't a case where you were going to go to movies or golf or lose precious study time on anything like that. When you had time, you were at the books studying.

Remember I went in that course of medicine at Jefferson without any previous course in comparative anatomy, which all my classmates had [taken]. They all had comparative anatomy. So that meant that I had to learn the whole anatomy of the body fresh, learn all the bones and muscles and nerves and the whole systems. That was new to me, but I had to compete with them in the tests.

In the first two weeks of the course of anatomy, you had to learn all the muscles and bones of the body. When I went through a test like that, I used to study all night. Went through studying all night. Never stopped. [Laughter]

Slavinsky: Your family was back here at the time?

D. L. Backenstose: No, the family was down in Philly.

Slavinsky: They were down with you.

D. L. Backenstose: The family was with me in Philadelphia. We bought a house down there, half of a twin, and prices, of course, were a lot different then than they are now. So we went down there with Danny and Mary Beth and my wife, Dorothy. So we were living there.

When I was between the junior and senior year, she developed severe malignant hypertension and died. Then the children were raised by my mother.

Slavinsky: Then when you graduated, did you move back to this area?

D. L. Backenstose: Yes. I graduated and I went through internship at Lankenau Hospital, where I met my present wife, Dorothy Hall, and I decided to come up here to Hershey. It was a question whether I'd come to Hershey or go to Lebanon for my practice of medicine. Jim Bobb, I regarded as a very good friend. I came back and dropped in to see him. He really twisted my arm and said, "You just have to come back to Hershey and practice up here." And I did. But he was the one that I talked to when I came up after graduating from Jefferson to decide where to go and where to start practice.

Slavinsky: Were there many other local doctors in Hershey at the time?

D. L. Backenstose: Well, there was Dr. Hostetter [who was Medical Director of Hershey Estates, Hershey Foods, Milton Hershey School and the Hershey

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Hospital], Dr. Stouffer, Dr. Leaman, and Dr. Pierce. Dr. Fetterman was in Campbelltown. He later came up to practice in Hershey. Dr. Stettler was also in Hershey.

Slavinsky: And they were all established doctors then?

D. L. Backenstose: Yes.

Slavinsky: How was it for you to start a practice?

D. L. Backenstose: Well, it was slow. I did have time on my hands. Dottie was the nurse in the office. To fill in the time and to earn extra money, I used to go down to the Lebanon Sanitorium, which was run by Dr. John Grott, and I would assist in surgery there Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays. We started about 7:00 o'clock in the morning. I'd get up, run down there, and might be there 'til 2:00, 3:00, 4:00 in the afternoon. In those days, I had some patients at Lebanon, I had some here in the Hershey Hospital, and I was on the Harrisburg Hospital staff. At times I used to visit all three places in one day, which was a killer of energy [levels].

Slavinsky: Right.

D. L. Backenstose: I delivered some babies up at Harrisburg and some at Lebanon. Just because patients wanted to go there.

Slavinsky: I see. When, then, did you become affiliated with the Hershey Hospital? I don't know when that was built, the one that is now the Medical Center for the school.

D. L. Backenstose: Health Center.

Slavinsky: Right.

D. L. Backenstose: I think that was built on the foundation of a barn that was in that position. The building was built back in the '30s, [I think]. That was the Community Hospital for Hershey. [It is on route 322].

Slavinsky: Right. Were you working in that hospital, as well?

D. L. Backenstose: Yes. When I came, I had applied to Dr. Hostetter to get privileges to practice in the [Hershey] Community Hospital. He gave me privileges.

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D. Backenstose: That was immediately, on coming here, because that was vital, really, to the practice of medicine in the town.

D. L. Backenstose: There wasn't any question about it.

D. Backenstose: You know, the [Hershey] Community Hospital was in the Community Building before moving to the building on route 322.

Slavinsky: No, I didn't know that.

D. L. Backenstose: Fifth floor.

Slavinsky: In the Community Center building?

D. Backenstose: Yes.

D. L. Backenstose: Fifth floor--Community Center.

Slavinsky: Where the Hershey Foods--whatever--Administrative Center is now.

D. L. Backenstose: Yeah, on the fifth floor.

Slavinsky: I didn't know that. So you practiced in there, also?

D. L. Backenstose: No. That was before my time when it was in the Community Center.

Slavinsky: Okay.

D. Backenstose: Then the old [community] hospital was built on route 322.

D. L. Backenstose: That hospital might have been built in the [late 30's, nearly '40s]. Because I think in '41, Danny was born in the Community Building. I feel pretty sure about that. So therefore, the hospital was still there [in '41]. So when they moved out to the other place, probably had to be in the '40s. It was there when I graduated from Med School. In other words, when I graduated from school, the Hospital was there on 322. [Mary Beth was born in '43, while I was in Europe, in the Hospital on route 322.]

D. Backenstose: From medical school, you mean.

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Tape #1, Side #2

D. L. Backenstose: Yes. [It was on route 322 when I graduated from Medical School.]

D. Backenstose: Yes. We've been here in Hershey since '51, and that was the only hospital in Hershey at that time.

Slavinsky: Right. That was the only hospital in town. So that was a full-service hospital?

D. L. Backenstose: Uh-huh. Full-service hospital on 1950-1960 standards.

Slavinsky: And all of the procedures were done there? I mean, were there things that people had to go to Harrisburg for? That was a pretty complete facility?

D. L. Backenstose: It was pretty complete. Remember Dr. John Atlee came up from Lancaster to do all the surgery.

Slavinsky: I see.

D. L. Backenstose: He did the surgery here.

Slavinsky: One day a week.

D. L. Backenstose: Yeah. Thursday. That day, Thursday, they had the most magnificent meal out in the hospital you can imagine. It was really super.

Slavinsky: Then when did they open it up to other physicians? Other surgeons?

D. L. Backenstose: Well, I think when Welch England became administrator --[following Dr. Hostetter].

Slavinsky: Whatever date that was. Yes.

D. L. Backenstose: I don't know. But I think then they opened it and Dr. Edward Steele and the Kunkel group came down to operate. We had urologists and cardiologists, also. We invited those specialists from Harrisburg and Lebanon. They assisted us in completing the services to the patients. [Other specialists came on an on-call basis.]

Slavinsky: Musser.

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Tape #1, Side #2

D. L. Backenstose: No, not Dr. Musser. We lacked the equipment for Dr. Musser. Dr. Quickle, cardiologist, Harrisburg, visited Sam Hinkle in the Hospital. Dr. Sherk (Lebanon) came to do cardiology. We had coverage like that from various specialty groups.

Slavinsky: Any interesting stories about practicing medicine in those earlier days of Hershey?

D. L. Backenstose: Well, it was a time that we still did home deliveries. I remember taking Dottie along to some home deliveries, because, you know, it's nice to have a nurse helping for clean up and preparation and support like that. Sleeping on a couch, when it was all knotty from people who had slept on it routinely. Did you sleep on the floor or did I sleep on the floor?

D. Backenstose: You always slept on the floor. I had a chair.

D. L. Backenstose: So we did several of those home deliveries. You had to go out to help patients, and the majority of the time it was free service.

Slavinsky: People just didn't have the money?

D. L. Backenstose: Otherwise they'd have been in the hospital.

Slavinsky: I see.

D. Backenstose: Weren't they \$25 delivery?

D. L. Backenstose: Yeah, I think that's right.

Slavinsky: Isn't that incredible? [Laughter] So how did you feel then when the Medical Center came along in the [late] '60s?

D. L. Backenstose: Well, I was President of the Staff when Dean Harrell came to talk to us about the Medical Center.

Slavinsky: You were President of the Staff at Hershey Hospital?

D. L. Backenstose: Yes.

Slavinsky: Okay.

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Tape #1, Side #2

D. L. Backenstose: He came to talk, and the truth of the matter was that I didn't have any concept of the bigness that was coming and the closed Medical Staff.

Slavinsky: Sure. Probably most people didn't.

D. L. Backenstose: I had no concept of what was coming. I mean, so you knew Hershey was getting a medical center, but take a look at how big that thing is today, and it's going to get bigger and bigger. Sam Hinkle, [CEO of Hershey Foods], came and talked to me at one time. He said, "Lee, I think that you ought to go up and get on the staff of the Medical Center. I think you, of all people, ought to be part of that up there."

So I went up and I had a talk with Dean Harrell about joining the staff of the Medical Center. The dean proposed a standard salary to me. It was something like \$13,000 or \$15,000 a year. Then he said, "If you're part of family medicine, at the end of the year we will divide up the profit among the participating doctors," so that you can conceivably add another ten or \$15,000 to your salary.

I thanked the dean very much, and said, "Dean, I really believe that I can keep a roof overhead and food on the table doing what I'm doing now. I pay more income tax now than you offered me as a base salary. I just don't see the possibility of my coming up there to join family medicine on an arrangement like this. I just don't think it would be in keeping with the way that I feel toward free enterprise and the competitive enterprise system in our country." I think that we never had any regrets, did we, Dottie?

D. Backenstose: The only regret that I see that he has such good administrative ability that they missed a bet there. He's an organizer and he can think ahead, and I do think the Medical Center would have had someone very good and a positive addition to their staff. As far as we are concerned, there's no problem.

Slavinsky: While you were the President of the Staff at the Hershey Hospital, you also had your own practice?

D. L. Backenstose: Oh, sure. That had nothing to do with my practice, being President of the Staff.

Slavinsky: I see. Okay.

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Tape #1, Side #2

D. L. Backenstose: No, that had nothing to do. We had Hummelstown doctors on the staff, Elizabethtown, Hershey, Palmyra, and Middletown. They were all part of the staff at the Hershey Hospital. We had to have monthly meetings to keep up accreditation. That had to be done all the time.

Slavinsky: So you turned the Medical Center down. You turned down that offer. Then, of course, when the Medical Center was built, the Hershey Hospital was turned into the Medical Center for the Milton Hershey School.

D. L. Backenstose: Yes.

Slavinsky: Tell me how you flowed into that position.

D. L. Backenstose: Okay. Jim Bobb came out and knocked at our door one morning, [7:00 a.m.]. [Laughter] He just said that they were without a doctor at the Milton Hershey School, and he wanted to know whether I would help them out 'til they got somebody. Isn't that about the way it was?

D. Backenstose: Yes. He had already talked to the Medical Center Family Medicine Department and they said they were too busy. They couldn't help.

D. L. Backenstose: Yes. That's exactly right.

D. Backenstose: That's exactly right. And that ought to go down on the record.

D. L. Backenstose: He talked to the Medical Center. The department said, "No, we're too busy. We can't handle it." He went out there first and he came to me next. So I was pinch-hitting at the Milton Hershey School. That was in the summer of '68, wasn't it?

D. Backenstose: I think so.

Slavinsky: Yes, that was the date I had, 1968.

D. L. Backenstose: '68. It was in the summer then. I think I worked there about six weeks, more or less, and then along came Dr. Kreider. Dr. Kreider was here for a brief period of time. Then he went into missionary work. He left. The school again was without a doctor. It was at that time that Jim Bobb and Dr. J. O. Hershey came and made a formal offer to me to take over as medical director of the Milton Hershey School, which I did for the next 14 years, '68 to '82.

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Tape #1, Side #2

Slavinsky: And that was still something you could do while you had your practice.

D. L. Backenstose: That's exactly right.

D. Backenstose: But that was very difficult, too, because he was at the school from 8:00 in the morning 'til 4:00 in the afternoon. At that time he was handling all HERCO compensation at the Medical Center from 8:00 'til--what? Ten or 11:00? Then you would go to the Health Center.

D. L. Backenstose: Yes, I was in the emergency room at the Medical Center handling HERCO--

Slavinsky: The new Medical Center?

D. L. Backenstose: Yes. New Medical Center, in the emergency room. I was there from 8:00 'til 10:00 in the morning, every morning. All HERCO cases came out there, whether HERCO injuries, HERCO sickness, HERCO application for jobs. I did the physical exams. I was out there for two hours every morning handling HERCO. Then I went over to the Health Center, took care of emergencies and problems that were in-house patients that were there for the school. Then I made my run to Catherine Hall, then the junior division and up to Senior Hall in the afternoon. When I finished Senior Hall, then I came back to my office. I used to be in there anywhere from 4:00 o'clock 'til 10:00 o'clock, 11:00 o'clock, 12:00 o'clock at night. That was some push. [I attended all School home football games.]

D. Backenstose: Also in there was the Alpine. Somewhere in there, he was taking care of the Alpine, that whole thing.

D. L. Backenstose: I was the first director of the Alpine.

Slavinsky: I didn't realize that.

D. L. Backenstose: Then I might have had 30 patients in the Alpine at one time. So after I finished at the office, I'd go to the Alpine to take care of the [health] problems that were there, and then I'd come home and Dottie then would--

D. Backenstose: Supper!

D. L. Backenstose: That's true. Dottie would have supper for me. What a schedule.

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Slavinsky: Now, somewhere around that same time, didn't you start taking care of the Hershey Bears, also?

D. L. Backenstose: Hershey Bears went in with HERCO. '68. When I went aboard in '68, the Bears were part of it, HERCO was part of it, Milton Hershey School was part of it. Not only that, I was on alternate coverage for Hershey Foods when that doctor, Dr. Frantz, took a vacation. If he took a four-weeks' vacation, I had to cover Hershey Foods in the summertime. That was part of the health care, also.

D. Backenstose: For a while, wasn't it every other weekend, too?

D. L. Backenstose: That's right. Every other weekend. He and I alternated. He would cover the school and so on every other weekend, and I'd cover Hershey Foods every other weekend. That was the arrangement.

Slavinsky: You saw a lot of medical facilities develop in this town, going from so little to the Alpine, and then the Medical Center came along.

D. L. Backenstose: It's like day and night, you know. As Dean Harrell's wife said to us when we were in the theater, I don't know what play we were attending, but she was sitting next to me and said, "Doctor, you won't know your little old cow town in about ten, fifteen years." She said, "With the Medical Center here." And she's probably right.

D. Backenstose: Uh-huh.

D. L. Backenstose: She said, "You won't know your little old cow town in ten, fifteen years." She said, "I've seen it happen down in the Carolinas," and she was also a part of building a Med[ical] School down in Florida. The dean had been at those two places [building] before he came [to Hershey].

Slavinsky: Where were your private practice offices located?

D. L. Backenstose: We were at 75-77 Cedar Avenue.

D. Backenstose: We were first at 73 West Caracas Avenue when we started. 73 West Caracas. Right on the corner. Then Mandes Drugstore was right across the street. That's where we opened up. Then we went to 75 Cedar.

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Tape #1, Side #2

D. L. Backenstose: We built that building at 75-77 Cedar Avenue. [Dotties father was the architect. It's well designed.]

D. Backenstose: Yeah. Then [we moved] to 218 West Governor Road. We started out in three rooms at 73 West Caracas.

Slavinsky: What about being the team physician for the Bears? What was that like?

D. L. Backenstose: Well, I think that was a fun association. It was really very neat. At that time, who was the manager? Blinco. Lloyd Blinco was the manager at the time and the coach was Frank Mather.

D. Backenstose: I guess when you were officially associated with them, I was just trying to think of some of the other names.

D. L. Backenstose: I think Frank was coach and Lloyd Blinco was the general manager. You know, they played about 76 games a year and about 38 of those were home games. We had to provide coverage for the home games. Now, Tom Forker was an active orthopedic surgeon at that time. So Tom Forker covered Wednesday and I covered Saturday or Sunday and the extra games. There was no bigger roofer for the team than that person over there [Dorothy Backenstose]. She just loved to go to those games. [Laughter] Didn't you?

D. Backenstose: It was fun. He said it was work because he was working, but for me it was real enjoyable.

Slavinsky: Were you able to watch the game, and then you just had to be there--

D. L. Backenstose: Oh, yes. It was really interesting. I mean, that really was a fun association. Even though it was work and you had responsibility for being there and all that, but it still was the kind of thing that you loved to go to see.

D. Backenstose: Yes, it was fun.

D. L. Backenstose: Yeah!

D. Backenstose: The worst thing about it was having the people in front of us smoke. [Laughter] So when they stopped smoking in the Arena, that was really

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Tape #1, Side #2

nice. But that was the worst thing about it, just having to breathe in their smoke.

D. L. Backenstose: The Bears won two of the Calder Cups while I was medical director. That was a thrill, you know, because the energy is high then. The adrenalin is really flowing. It was really fun.

Slavinsky: Do you think it was the diversity of all of the different things that you were involved in that enabled you to do as much as you did? I listen to you talk, and you just seem to have been superhuman for these years. Do you think it was the original drive that got you through medical school, or it was the diversity here in the town and people? Talk a little bit about that. Because you were doing so much.

D. L. Backenstose: Cheryl, you're exactly right. What gives you the zip to do something where another person would probably turn away-- I think I was lucky enough to be given a good constitution and basic vitality and strength, body strength and so on, that I could endure the pressure that was demanded to handle all the activities that we went over. I think it is because I had that constitution and, of course, the mental ability to handle everything, too. I mean, that was, naturally, very important, as well. You know, some people are compulsive go-getters and stuff like that. I guess I was in that group, too, to really keep going. I guess we could be called workaholics.

D. Backenstose: You! [Laughter]

D. L. Backenstose: At the same time, Jim Bobb came and offered me all those positions with HERCO and all positions like that, and in a way, it was complimentary. I think the fact that it was a complimentary thing, I had to rise to the occasion and prove that I was capable of handling it. I think that's the way it was.

D. Backenstose: Yes, he just kept taking on more and more and more and more. Any job, he did not take the easy way out. I can remember the doctor before him at the Milton Hershey School, I would see him at the zoo with his children like at 2:00 in the afternoons. So that's why I went along with that job. I thought, "That's a cinch!" But he did not take the easy way out. He brought medical education to the Health Center, to the nurses, to staff meetings. He stayed there and did his job, and he was there 'til 4:00 every

day or longer if he had to be. So he did not take the easy way out of anything.

Slavinsky: I wanted to get back to the Medical Center a little bit, because you said that you turned down the offer to work there. But you were involved with the Medical Center as it developed, weren't you? Or not? I think you were affiliated there, and I'm not sure what that affiliation was.

D. L. Backenstose: Well, first of all, I was in that emergency room for ten years. Okay? As representing HERCO. I also, because I was with the Milton Hershey School, was automatically on the staff of the Medical Center. That was written into the contract with the Milton Hershey School. If you were a Milton Hershey School doctor, you were on the staff. So the doctor of the school was on the staff of the Medical Center.

D. Backenstose: Was everyone at the old Hershey Hospital allowed to join the staff just as a grandfather clause type of thing, as a courtesy?

D. L. Backenstose: Uh-huh.

D. Backenstose: I think they were allowed that in the beginning.

D. L. Backenstose: But there weren't any privileges, though. There were no surgical privileges there. But as far as going out and attending, say, a sickness and so on, I think that was accepted. And also like taking care of the babies that were born to your patients, you were allowed to go in and examine the babies of your patients.

Slavinsky: Did you have anything to do with how the Medical Center developed, though, and policies?

D. L. Backenstose: No, no. I had a lot to do with the way the Health Center shaped up.

Slavinsky: The Hershey School Health Center.

D. L. Backenstose: Yes. As far as the rooms and keeping the X-ray equipment and keeping the OR intact and things like that. I was very much in the development, helped to do that.

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Tape #1, Side #2

Slavinsky: What was the impact of the Medical Center on the local medical practice, the individual physicians like you? What was the impact of the Medical Center?

D. L. Backenstose: Well, we lost a lot of what we could do out at the Community Hospital. The Doctors could do everything out there. You couldn't do that at the Medical Center as a member of the family medicine group [at the Medical Center]. You were limited. You could take care, as I told you, like an in-patient with sickness, you could go down and examine your babies that were born to your patients. That was basically it. You couldn't do any surgery out there or procedures like that. It was just that type of an association.

Slavinsky: So that meant that you would have to travel--would you have to go outside the community to do some of that? Or you just didn't do those things?

D. L. Backenstose: Yes. If you wanted to deliver the babies, you delivered them either at Lebanon or Harrisburg. You had to do that. You couldn't do it out here. If you wanted to do any tonsillectomies, I would have had to do them down at Lebanon. I used to do a lot of them out at the [old] Hershey Hospital.

Slavinsky: Why was that? I don't quite understand that.

D. L. Backenstose: Because the Medical Center is a closed staff. It's a closed staff. Those doctors are salaried.

Slavinsky: I see.

D. L. Backenstose: And so that basically that's their Medical Center, and we are outsiders. The dean was not going to give us privileges.

Slavinsky: Did you ever regret turning down your opportunity to be a staff physician there?

D. L. Backenstose: I really don't think I did. They had a case of trying times out there in the administration at the Medical Center. Trying times. I think of a situation down in Philadelphia, when I graduated from Jefferson. There was a doctor there who invited me to stay on as an intern. In those days, they didn't pay interns anything like they do today. But he told me that--"I would like you to stay on here as an intern at Jefferson. I'm willing to

give you a monthly salary, pay you a monthly salary, which you can pay back or you can keep it." Now, how about that?

The idea written into that was the addition to the staff at Jefferson. I had been acquainted with the fact that there's a lot of politics in hospital staffs, to advance from one position to another position. I saw that down at Jefferson, to step over colleagues to get up to the top and to climb up into a position. I did not care to engage in that kind of a combat out here at the Medical Center. I thought, "I don't want any of that." And that's the reason, more or less, that I stayed in solo practice all my life, because I had my own--in other words, I had to answer to this guy here. I didn't have to answer to anybody else. The standards that I had are not the standards that guy had over there. They're my own standards. I had to police myself. And I still believe that today.

D. Backenstose: There are still a lot of politics in any hospital. When this first started, Cheryl, the people that came to town initially were very bombastic and ridiculed this little town. So there were hard feelings. There were definitely hard feelings between the people that lived here and even the physicians. And the staff that started that hospital, there were hard feelings.

D. L. Backenstose: Yes, that was a long time ago.

D. Backenstose: That was a long time ago. Dean Harrell was just--he was rough as anybody on this town, you know. They were going to be self-contained and they didn't need anybody in this town. So there were a lot of people that knew how the Medical Center felt and their patients said, "I'll never go there. Never, never, never." Some of them still feel that way, but most of the people have forgotten all that.

D. L. Backenstose: Well, the town-and-gown attitude was evident at the very beginning. As Dottie said, that was true. There was quite a problem with that at the beginning. I don't think you sense that anymore, do you?

D. Backenstose: No. Because when the medical people got here, they were a little bit more--what do I want to say?--normal. [Laughter] That's not the right word. But the original people were very--oh, I don't know what the particular word is. But they just kept to themselves, very snooty, and they just felt--at least we felt they thought they were better than everybody else. But I think now they don't have that [attitude].

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Tape #1, Side #2

D. L. Backenstose: No, I don't think you have a town-and-gown attitude here anymore.

D. Backenstose: No.

D. L. Backenstose: It's very good.

Slavinsky: I want to ask just a couple more questions, but I think I'm going to put another tape in here.

[Begin Tape 2, Side 1]

Slavinsky: Okay. Let's talk about some of those extracurricular activities on top of all the other extracurricular activities, your involvement with the Four Diamond Fund and how that came to be.

D. L. Backenstose: This went back to about '68, also, didn't it? Wasn't it pretty long ago?

D. Backenstose: It was pretty long, yeah. I don't remember.

D. L. Backenstose: Anyway, Dean Prystowski called me to his office one time and he said to me, "I would like you to be chairman of the Four Diamond Fund." I didn't even know what the Four Diamond Fund was at that time. But the Four Diamond Fund, as you know, is a fund to take care of families that are dealing with the terrible problem of child cancer, with all the expenses that are associated with such care.

I said to the dean, "But Dean, you have such a big staff up there in pediatrics. Why don't you have one of those take over as chairman of the Fund?" knowing full well that Dottie was--at that time, Dottie was saying, "Don't do anything! Don't do anything! Don't take on anything else or anything like that!"

The dean said to me, "What I want is your charisma in the community." [Laughter] Well, I couldn't believe what he was talking about. But anyway, the net result was that I acquiesced and became chairman of the Four Diamond Fund for the next ten years, which there's a lion here somewhere that the dean gave me for that service.

I established the first chair in the Medical Center, the Four Diamond Fund chair. That I established during my chairmanship. I got a total of \$1,300,000 that was raised while I was chairman of the Four Diamond Fund. Herbert Kraybill was in the gifts and endowments office, and between the two of us, we went to Penn State competing to get the Interfraternity Council to lend their services to the Four Diamond Fund.

And in those days it was really a touch-and-go, because you had multiple sclerosis and the Leukemia Society and everything else that were trying to get those students to lend their efforts and their performance to their cause. So we were really in competition up there a number of years before we established our dominance in having that IFC, Interfraternity Council, put all their efforts behind the Four Diamond Fund down at Hershey. This year the Fund, the IFC may have raised \$600,000 for the Four Diamond Fund. It turned into a tremendous thing that we started. At the beginning we started with something like [\$]50,000. That was the IFC goal. Now the IFC is up at [\$]600,000 a year. It's the biggest fundraiser we ever had. They raised a tremendous amount of money for the Four Diamond Fund. We couldn't do what we're doing today if we wouldn't have the benefit of the Interfraternity Council from Penn State. [I think to date, IFC contributed \$3,000,000.]

In those early days, I used to go around to Lions Clubs and 4-H Clubs and give talks for benefiting the Four Diamond to raise a dollar here and a dollar there, something like that, talk to schools and all that kind of business, which isn't even done today anymore. But that was the beginning. That's where we started. And look where we are now. Whew!

D. Backenstose: We went up to Perry County to Grange dinners. [Laughter]

D. L. Backenstose: That's right. In the middle of storms of all kinds. Oh, boy.

Slavinsky: I know you're heavily involved with the Hershey Museum. Talk a little bit about your work there and where the museum has come to be through the years. That certainly has been a facility that's developed.

D. L. Backenstose: I think the museum needs some help. It's good for you to print that. But there's so much over there from the standpoint of stock, material stock, and they do not have an adequate display area there for it. Dottie and I have visited so many museums across the country, and one of the greatest we saw was down in Houston, Texas. Remember that beautiful one down there we went through? Where was the hotel that we stayed at? What town was that?

D. Backenstose: That was Texas.

D. L. Backenstose: Houston?

D. Backenstose: Houston.

D. L. Backenstose: What a museum that was. So neat. As we went through it, I know I made a comment at that time to Dottie, "Boy, this is what Hershey ought to have."

I think they really badly need a new building with ability to display what they have adequately, and I think they're working with space there. I don't think the space is inadequate for what they have. Paul Gilbert and Feeman were in the antique business ever since I've known antiques. They were called up here one time to evaluate the Hershey Museum, and Feeman said at that time, which might have been 20 years ago when they came up to evaluate it, he said, "They have \$10 million worth of stock up there in the Hershey Museum. No one up there knows the value or realizes what is in that museum. Nobody recognizes [it]. They just don't know what they have. It's an unbelievable amount of stuff up there." And he said things which I don't want to put on tape about the Museum, but he just said how much material they have.

I think the museum should be improved, should be given some help to get a new building site, new quarters, and I really think it's an important part to the Hershey community to have a decent, a good museum.

Again, you're handicapped because you really don't have adequate funding to go forward in doing the thing that's needed. Getting those funds is terribly important. You need a staff there to help you to do things, education staff, teaching. It's so important, I think, from the museum's standpoint. They have something there that is really tremendous, but there's so much there, I think, that has to be developed yet.

Dottie and I were just down to Williamsburg over the past weekend in a three-day class seminar on food ways of the early settlers of Williamsburg. Just talking about food, what they went through for food, preparation of the dining rooms and preparation of the meals. Williamsburg is, to me, one of the most exciting examples of what was done by American money, to leave a legacy for this country, to look back and see what 1775 looked like in our country. It's an experience. The Williamsburg experience is something I can't even adequately describe. It's just one of our favorite haunts. Dottie and I have been there probably about 15 times, including three Christmases. We just can't get over--every time we get down there, "I wish Hershey could do something more like this."

The Tea House is gone. The Hershey house is gone, (by the department store). The Cocoa Inn, unfortunately, is gone. [Willowood

is gone.] So many structures like that, that would help to set maybe a different type of feeling for the town. But it's all, maybe--the dollar's more important than the other thought, the real rich heritage that was here at Hershey, that made Hershey very early.

Slavinsky: What do you feel about the money that was given from the foundation to start the Medical Center, and now there doesn't seem to be money to support the museum and the gardens and some of those things? That's real hard for me to understand.

D. L. Backenstose: That's hard for me to understand. But you had Sam Hinkle, [CEO of Hershey Foods], who was a prime mover at that time, Penn State oriented, got the idea with the then president [Walker] of Penn State about starting a Medical Center here. He was the one who got the change in the will to be able to do this, get this tremendous amount of money, \$50 million, to start the Medical Center. Sam had the power and he had the courts and everything else [they needed so] that they could do this. So here we are with a Medical Center. I think the Medical Center is a super institution, and I think the community is blessed with having it. It isn't going to be long before, you know, the Medical Center is going to have more employees than Hershey Foods. It's going to be the tail wagging the dog, because that's going to be the power in personnel and thinking for the community and everything else. ["You won't recognize your little old cow town."]

I mean, you have the industrial complex down here that's providing funds, but if there's ever going to be political involvement here of the people to a greater degree than it is now, that Medical Center is going to be awfully dominant. I am very happy to have the Center in the community. I'm very sorry to see the changes in the Rose Garden and things like that. I'm sorry to see changes like that take place. But again, it's a matter of money use, like HERCO's efforts in the Philadelphia Hotel, the Connecticut [Amusement] Park, the Hotel in Texas and Hershey • Poconos, things like that. Instead of forgetting the fact that, hey, this is the ground, the basic thing is right here in Hershey, why not really do this super-duper. Which could have been done and wouldn't have produced any financial debacle.

Slavinsky: Are there any other reflections that you'd like to make? We're about finished. I've asked all the questions I was supposed to ask and a few that I wasn't supposed to ask, probably. Is there anything else that you'd like to

say as a citizen in this community through all these years, where you've seen so many changes? Is there anything else that you'd like to reflect on?

D. L. Backenstose: Well, I think, first of all, that we are blessed with a marvelous community. I think Hershey's a marvelous community. Dottie and I, as you know, have a hotel down at Schaefferstown, and Dottie's the manager. She is doing a great job down there. But we also have a house down there at Schaefferstown. You know, Dottie doesn't want to leave Hershey. She has her friends here and I have friends here. It's true, we really have our roots here, basically. Dottie, to move down there, it's not--Dottie loves Hershey and she wants to stay here. And I share her feeling. I'm not saying to her, "Come on, honey, let's go down there and live down there." I agree with her in the way that she feels about this. I think if the time comes when I'm not around, I think Dottie's going to continue to live here for the rest of her life. So we know we're Hersheyites; there's no question about it.

Again, I lament, maybe, some of the changes, like physical things that have been done here and maybe lack of effort in other things and so on like that. But there are changes that are coming on. I don't think the Milton Hershey School is farming as many acres as they did at one time. There are rumors that maybe there's going to be a new Milton Hershey School building built and a change of maybe what's being taught at the school. I don't know. We have to wait for this meeting that's coming up to find out what the future of the Milton Hershey School is going to be.

I don't think it's any use for us to say that Mr. Hershey would turn over in his grave if he saw things like that. I'm not going to advance any thought like that. Naturally, the way that I think might not be like the things that other people think. But you know what? They have ideas, too, and maybe their ideas might be better than mine. I don't know. But I still think we're very happy here in every way.

D. Backenstose: I think what he's saying, though, about the museum and the rose garden, some of these things, even though they don't bring in money, are still necessary to make the community worthwhile. He has been after someone in HERCO for years about the canals and the locks. So much could be done with the "Swatty" as a picnic area.

Slavinsky: I never thought about that.

D. Backenstose: Think about that and push that a little bit, because the locks are going to be gone. They are still there now, but they're pretty well covered over.

Things will be disintegrating. But a lot could be done with that at that end of town. It's hard. I don't know what else Cheryl needs.

D. L. Backenstose: Not only that, I think right along with that would be maybe a real effort for nature trails and to develop native flora and woods and so on that are still here. I think a lot could be done that way to make it very attractive to people interested in flora and fauna and even the birders. I mean, the bird population and things like that. I think that phase of life, that side of life, I think a lot could be done there with maybe not too much dollar input, too, that could be done, because you could find a lot of organizations like the Boys Scouts and the elderly people, the AARP and so on like that, to get them to do this or do that. I think it could be done, but it's got to be planned. It's got to be thought of and to be executed. I think aside of that, we're just missing that in our effort maybe to make all the money we can out of the park, and we're missing some of the other things. But life still goes on, and I think that "Swatty" could be cleaned up and maybe made a tremendous place for fishing and for canoeing. I'm not much for motorboating, but I think that a lot of development could be done there to develop exoteric benefits.

D. Backenstose: Somehow to slow down the commercial homebuilding and some of that industry. Again, the home buildings that are going up, make sure that the sewage systems are included in that cost so that it doesn't come down on the rest of the taxpayers after that is done. And they should have sidewalks and they should have off-street parking. You know, there's got to be controls put in somewhere, somehow, and stop selling all the real estate. Because when the land is gone, it's gone.

D. L. Backenstose: I think that the shopping mall that's coming in over here in Hershey is questionable. I don't know how desperate the Hershey citizens are for another mall. But I just found out over the weekend that in Lebanon County, there are 11 malls that are being built or present there--11 in Lebanon County alone! Eleven malls! On the east side of Palmyra, look at all that activity going on. [And many are unoccupied.]

D. Backenstose: Look at all that asphalt. There goes all our good corn. Good farmland.

Slavinsky: Is there anything else you want to say for the record?

D. L. Backenstose: [Yes. Mohammed Ali. I answered a tapping at the office door and was informed that Stan Carpenter of the Hershey Park desired my presence at the Arena at once to examine Mohammed Ali and his entourage of boxers.

Grabbing my bag and calling Dottie to be my nurse, I terminated my office hours as soon as I could expeditiously.

In the First Aid Room of the Arena, Dottie and I met the boxing entourage. One by one, we examined the boxers and finally Mohammed Ali. He asked me if I had ever examined professionals before. I told him that I had, for I examined the Philadelphia Eagles and the Hershey Bears. When I completed the exam, he asked me, "How am I?" I told him that he was in fine shape.

After that, we sat through the exhibition boxing matches at ring side. Mohammed Ali fought bouts with three boxers.

Hershey Hockey. From 1968 to 1978, I was the team physician of the Hershey Bears. As stated earlier, the Bears won two Calder Cup championships during that time.

I was involved with care of injuries and illnesses of the players-- but probably one of the biggest challenges was the examination of the Washington Capitol National Hockey team.

Hershey was the farm team of many of the National League teams like Boston, Pittsburgh, Washington, and now the Philadelphia Flyers.

While the farm team of Washington, the manager and coaching staff of that club decided to have the players and staff undergo the physical examination in Hershey.

Frank Mather, general manager of the Bears, asked me to assume this function. The time schedule was listed from 7:00 A.M. to 11:00 A.M., during which time the team had to be x-rayed, blood drawn for exam, electrocardiograms taken, and strip-down physical exam with emphasis on cardiorespiratory and muscle joint evaluation, and all this on about 40 to 60 players and coaches.

When asked by the coach, in front of Frank Mather, if I could accomplish this in the time space of 7 to 11--4 hours, my reply was "absolutely". Frank was really tickled by this but he was more than amused when we accomplished this feat.

These examinations of the Washington Hockey team were performed consecutively for four years. I was referred to as 'Dr. Absolutely'.

Mr. Milton S. Hershey. I met Mr. Hershey several times but the one I remember best was the first time.

I was in Jim Bobb's office in the Farm Division, where he was assistant to Mr. P. N. Hershey, the Farm Manager. Jim, I believe, had

charge of the student homes. The year was 1936, when I had just been hired as Ag Supervisor of the Derry Township Public Schools by Dr. J. I. Baugher, Superintendent.

Mr. Hershey's first remarks after the introduction were, "Well, young man, what changes would you like to make?" Imagine the neophyte being asked this question by Mr. Hershey about an Ag Department that had been operating very well for years. I was not very impressive with my response that stated my acquaintance with the department was too recent to give a proper answer.

I met Mr. Hershey once or twice after that initial introduction--I was present at Mr. Hershey's funeral.

The Philadelphia Eagles. The Philadelphia Eagles utilized the Hershey facilities as pre-season practice conditioning. I was asked to be the local team physician for injuries and illnesses occurring during practice. In a pre-season period, I might see 35 to 40 players for varied reasons such as muscle strains of the legs and back, sprains of ankles, knees, shoulders, fluid in knee joints, sore throats, upper respiratory infections, et al.

Players included Mike Ditka, Sonny Jorgenson, Tommie McDonald, Ringo, Cous Canoson, Pete Retzlott, Tom Brookshire, Eev Cross.

The coaches changed periodically and the trainer was Moose Delt. The owners also changed--the one I remember most was Jerry Walman.

Imagine four Philadelphia Eagles in the office at one time--each large enough to fill a doorway, and Tom McDonald going through all the clipboards, drawers, and desks in the entire office. Well, this did happen. This was an interesting assignment in my medical career.

The Four Diamond Chair at the Hershey Medical Center. The concept of a Childrens Cancer Fund was suggested by Charles and Irma Millard after their son was treated in a free clinic for Rhabdomyosarcoma.

This concept was approved by Dean Harry Prystowski. The story of my Chairmanship of Four Diamonds for 10 years was previously told.

Dean Prystowski asked me into his office and suggested the goal of a Four Diamond Chair. It would be the first Chair at the Medical Center and would give perpetuity to this Fund.

The Chair concept that I took to the Four Diamond Committee was met with tremendous opposition, especially by the Millards, Irma and Charles. This eventually proved such an obstacle that I invited Dean Prystowski to discuss the Chair in a Committee meeting. His presence did

not calm the Millard opposition but did enable me to get a majority vote in favor of the Chair.

Mr. James Bobb was my choice as Chairman of the Chair Fund Raising Campaign. Jim was well known state wide and he had little difficulty in recruiting county fund raising chairmen. One of his attempts to allay the Millards was to give Irma Lancaster County. She resigned from this assignment in a few weeks.

The campaign flourished, and in a reasonable period, a sum of \$750,000 was exceeded to put across the first Chair at the Hershey Medical Center. The fact that Charles Millard apparently talked the IFC (Interfraternity Council) at Penn State to limit to 15% of their money for the Chair Campaign was the talk in the Gifts and Endowments Office.

The real eruption followed, when the Administration announced that in the absence of an Oncologist of suitable research stature, the Chair would be occupied by Dr. Nicholas Nelson, Chairman of Pediatrics. Dr. Nelson was not a favorite of the Millards.

I was told that a letter was sent by the Millards to the Board of Trustees of Penn State, the President of Penn State, the Governor of Pennsylvania, and the Dean of the Hershey Medical Center. This information was given to me through the Gifts and Endowments Office.

The letter, which I read, purported that the funds were misused in the Chair endowment and in the decision to have it occupied by a non-oncologist. I was stunned when Dr. Fred Rapp, Professor and Chairman of Department of Microbiology and Immunology, Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, Research and Graduate Studies, challenged me in the Med Center that the Four Diamond was fraudulently using money. I had not seen or known of the letter at that time. Herbert Kraybill showed me the letter. The next challenge came from Julia Yost, patient advocate at Hershey Medical Center, asking about fraud in the Four Diamond Committee. This fraud aspect went through the Med Center like wild fire and there was fear about this getting to the news media.

It was of such magnitude that it could easily have caused the entire cancer fund to go `belly up'.

However, forces of strength, notably Dean Prystowski and President Jordan of P.S.U., contained the spread of this most vicious attack on the activity of the Four Diamond Fund.

Dean Prystowski excused the Millards by saying that they did not understand the magnitude of the Chair.

Recently, Dr. Nelson passed the Chair to Dr. James Neeley, Oncologist, who now occupies the Chair. Dr. Neeley stated that Dr.

Nelson never failed to pass the funds of the Chair over to him during his (Dr. Nelsons) occupancy.

I did not mention that James Bobb, Herbert Kraybill, Dr. Steve Shocket, and myself flew to Boston, at our expense, to visit the Jimmy Fund.

This was a fund sponsored by the Variety Clubs for Childrens Cancer treatment at Harvard Medical School. The visit was enlightening in that we met the Secretary of the Fund, dined at Jimmy's, and visited Harvard Pediatric Center where children with Cancer were treated free. This is no longer so and today a fee is charged.

This trip served us greatly in establishing the concept of Four Diamond Cancer treatment and the organization of the Fund.

The Hershey Bank. From 1974 to 1985, I served as a member of the Board of Directors of the Hershey Bank.

Initially, Arthur Whiteman was President of the Bank. Upon his retirement, John Baum assumed this office.

When John Baum retired, he was succeeded by Fred Nightengale. Mr. Nightengale resigned from the bank following a loss of funds in an auto sales operation in Middletown.

Robert Allen succeeded the above and very aptly led the bank in his years as President.

Being on the Board of the Bank was a very rewarding experience, both in personal relationship and, of course, in the financial and business world.

Rotary. I was also president of Hershey Rotary for 1 term.] It was nice talking to you, Cheryl.

Slavinsky: Well, it was wonderful talking to you.

D. L. Backenstose: I think that you look pretty capable, to me.

Slavinsky: Thank you. I think we'll close off now. [Laughter]

[End of interview]