Q. This is Judy Fountain and today is December 8, 2004. I have the great good fortune to be with Phyllis Bailey this morning. First question, Phyllis, I’d like you to reflect a little bit on your childhood out by Lake Erie, beautiful Lake Erie. I’m curious, did your family have an interest in athletics? Did you play sports as a kid? Kind of talk about that a little bit.

A. Well, I was an only child, so I had no siblings who encouraged me to be involved in sports in any way. But both of my parents were very interested in sports. My father was a baseball player. He played in what today would probably be a minor league. It was a league that was along the shore of Lake Erie, from Fairport Harbor on up to Conneaut. And he went up and down that road every weekend for the summer for several years. And you know how small towns are. My father was one of 11 children, of which there were three boys, and he was the next to the youngest. So he had to drop out of school at the age of 12 and go to work. But everybody in town and some of them still living there say that if John had a chance, he’d been a major league baseball player. My mother showed interest in baseball particularly, but in all sports. The two of us followed him for all my early childhood every Sunday wherever he went to play. I remember vividly in getting patched up and all that sort of thing when he slid the wrong way. After he played, he coached an American League baseball team which was a team primarily at that time for high school fellows. Then he umpired and then he
helped set up a Little League program for the young children in the city and umpired that group. So I got a lot of interest from him. But the three of us went to football games and basketball games and hockey games. My mother took me to tennis matches. So you know, there was a great deal of support from home. And then there was probably subconsciously another interesting thing happened to me in my early childhood. It was the end of the Depression. You know how people say I was a child of the Depression. I did not suffer from being a child of the Depression but we lived in a house, a double house, that was directly across the street from the public library, and diagonally across the street from the high school. And in order to help ends meet a little more, mother decided they had to rent out a room. And the first renter who lived with us for several years was the football coach. So I learned football. When it came to playing I was probably the only girl in town who played football because I was the one who had an official football. But when I was growing up there weren’t too many things, and certainly not many opportunities for girls, for children or young girls, to do. So obviously I played a lot of softball. When I had just turned 12 I was invited to try out for one of the teams that was in the softball league in that part of the state. My father let me do it. I made the team. I was very excited to make the team. He wanted me to have that experience, to either make it or not make it. And then informed me politely that I was not going to be a member of the team. Didn’t understand it at the time. But he was officiating or umpiring of some of those programs. They were all gals who were, at least four or five, six years older than I, who almost always smoked and all of them went to the bar after the game and met up with the
other teams and so on. And he didn’t think I was old enough to handle that. And
I wasn’t.

Q. How long did it take you to realize that? Were you more in your adulthood when
you looked back on that?

A. Yes, actually. I’ve thought about that and I don’t know how he did it, but I was
very disappointed. But if my father said that’s the way it had to be, that was fine.
That was okay.

Q. It gave you the experience of competing and make the team.

A. That was a lesson.

Q. Absolutely.

A. And that was exciting to me.

Q. Absolutely.

A. I had an uncle who handed down a used tennis racket and I spent hours and hours
playing tennis and teaching myself how to play the game. Batting a ball up
against the gymnasium wall at the high school across the street. I thought I was a
pretty darn good tennis player until I went to college and they tried to teach me
how to play and I was never any good after that. Always wanted to be a swimmer
because we lived a block and a half from Lake Erie and I could see the lake out
my bedroom window all the time. I always wanted to go to the lake and swim.
Couldn’t go unless my father would take me after work because my mother
almost drowned in the Ohio River as a teenager and had a lasting fear of the water
and couldn’t make herself take me down to let me swim because she knew she
wouldn’t be able to go in and rescue me if I got into trouble. And so that was
always a desire I had but I didn’t get to do that. As I said, I played football until finally she decided I was at an age where I should no longer be playing football, even if it was touch football. That one I had a hard time understanding for a little while too. But we got there.

Q. This isn’t one of the questions on our list but I am curious about, how did you make your decision to go to college? I assume you majored in athletics in college.

A. Well I think it was just of always understood I was going to go to college. I came from, I’ll probably touch on that some other time in the course of it, but people went to college when it was time for me to go to college for three reasons. They wanted to become a teacher or become a nurse or become a wife. And I was bound and determined that I was not going to be a teacher, and I certainly was not going to be a nurse. My mother had been a teacher, so I had nothing against teaching. But I wasn’t going to do what everybody else did. So I was going to become a research chemist. I’d loved chemistry in high school. There was a small college in town. We had then moved five miles up the lake to Painesville. I rode my bike past Lake Erie College everyday going to high school and going back home. And finally my senior year was able to take a course in quantitative analysis in chemistry. Quantitative analysis was so intriguing to me because the finite process from beginning to end, dividing out those elements and getting down to a milli, milli, milli milligram of what was in there. Any little mistake or any fleck that you got in there destroyed it and you had to start over again. And my father worked for the Diamond Alkalite Company which was primarily a
chemical plant. So I decided I wanted to be a research chemist. Loved chemistry. Liked physics. Did well. And near the end of my freshman year in college World War II ended. Didn’t find a husband cause there were very few men on campus. But World War II ended and I got to thinking about it, because it was known that the government was going to send all the young men who wanted to go to school back to college to get a degree. I thought, “You’re barking up the wrong tree here lady.” The men are going to come back and many of them are going to come to chemistry and they’re going to major in chemistry and want to be research chemists. And because they are men and because they are veterans, they are going to get the job and you’re going to be down at the end of the alley. You better think about something else you might like to do. Well the year that they’d not been on campus, of course one of the ways in which many of us had entertained ourselves because we were in a confined community, was to participate in sports. And I thought about it and I thought about it. I thought, well I enjoyed sports more than most anything else I could think of. I had shied away from it because I didn’t want to be a teacher and I had shied away from it because of some of the social stigma that went with young women who were in sports. And ironically maybe the person that was most influential in my deciding to major in physical education was my high school teacher, because in 12 years of education I had one year of physical education and that was in the ninth grade. And by then I was frustrated to learn something and she taught us absolutely nothing the whole year and I had never been more frustrated in my entire life. I said to myself, “You can do no worse; hopefully you can do better.” So I wrote
home and asked my family how they would feel about my going into physical education, and my mother wrote back immediately and said, “Your dad and I will approve of whatever you chose to do but please remember if you going to go into education you are not going into a 40 hour a week job.” And so with that kind of blessing, I changed my major. And I was fortunate in that I was still able to get out in four years because for the last three years I had one elective. But everything I had taken my freshman year would count as one of the electives that I needed. And so I had one left. I can’t even remember what I took. I just know I was always kind of tickled about the fact that I had one more elective.

Q. So you went from there to Earlham?

A. Yes, I did. I had a major decision to make at that point. I had a lot of major decisions to make in my life and I thoroughly believe that fate steps in lots of times. I had an opportunity to go to a private school in St. Louis, and probably as a result of that would have gone on. The head master had already talked to me about the fact that I should eventually move on to Columbia and concentrate in getting graduate work in elementary physical education and go into the world and make elementary physical education just perfect. And at the same time I was at Miami University, and so I was not far from Richmond, Indiana. One of the instructors over there had been on campus and had seen me perform in something and asked me to come and have an interview there. The man from St. Louis came to campus. I’ve never had such an experience in my life. We sat down in a room like this and he said to me, “I’ve not come here to interview you for a job. The job is yours if you want it. I’ve come to sell you on our school.” And in that
moment I learned the importance of recommendation, because he told me two people he had talked to and what they had said, and that was all he needed. Well I went to Earlham because at that point my mother developed cancer. And I thought, I don’t want to be all the way in St. Louis. From Richmond, Indiana I can drive home and help out in whatever way I need to. And so instead of going into elementary I ended up at the collegiate level, and my mother recovered fully from cancer.

Q. Interesting isn’t it, how life just intervenes?

A. Yes, it does.

Q. I think that’s the wonderful part of having a certain perspective, that you can step back and really look at this and really appreciate all those. So then, from there you went to Wayne State, and then ultimately to Ohio State, right?

A. Right.

Q. So I’d like you to talk a little bit about what brought you to Ohio State as an instructor on 1956. What attracted you? Did someone sell you on Ohio State? Talk a little bit about that.

A. Well while I was at Earlham I had an opportunity to take three extension courses from Indiana University. And at the end of my third year at Earlham I came to the conclusion that I really needed to go back to school and move on or I would never do so, because I had fallen in love with that small college campus, with the philosophy of the Quakers. And I just thought in my early 20’s I don’t need to just stay here, I need to do something more. So I went to Indiana and got my Master’s degree and then moved on up to Wayne State. And after four years
there, I knew I needed to get away. In fact, I told my chairman at the end of the third year that the following year would be my last year, and she said, “What are we doing wrong?” And I said, “You’re doing absolutely nothing wrong but I can’t stand to be a person of the city.” And it was just too difficult for me. I had tried every avenue where you are supposed to be able to meet people and they were not friendly. They were not friendly in organizations. They were not friendly in the church. And I just couldn’t find a way to get in. And so I chose to come to Ohio State to go to graduate school, because in the course of those seven years that I had been out and about and going to professional meetings and so on, I had gained a great deal of respect for several professors who were here, liked their philosophy. So I thought well, I’m going to go to Ohio State and get my Ph.D. before I’m 30 years of age and get out of there as soon as I can. And as I said a number of times along the road in speeches, and I failed at both.

Q. And we’re glad. Who were those people that first affected you, faculty I’m assuming?

A. Yes. Well, Professor Gilbert Overtoysa, was nationally known and I had heard him speak several times. Had a way of just convincing me that there was nothing so wonderful as what he was talking about and said, “If I tell you the moon is made of blue cheese, then it’s made of blue cheese, and you’re going to believe it.” And he had a wonderful reputation. But I also was more attracted to Dr. Arthur Daniels, because he was in areas that I thought I wanted to be involved in. And Dr. Margaret Mordy, who was at that point Chair of the Women’s Division of Health, Physical Education and Recreation, and then one of my three other
office mates at Wayne for three years. So I knew her well. I just decided that there were a lot of good things going here. She offered me an opportunity to drop rank because I was an Assistant Professor at Wayne at that point, to drop rank and come back here as an instructor’s level if I chose rather than a graduate assistant level. Because at that point Ohio State University allowed instructors to study on campus and to get their degrees. So when I came I promised her that I would not take any classes the first year in fairness to her and to getting established within the university system, that I would do my duties as an instructor that first year, and then I would begin to study. Well one of the main reasons I wanted to go on to graduate school was to get away from the extra-curricular side of physical education. As the youngest member of the member at Earlham and also at Wayne State, I just automatically said you’re going to take care of intramurals and recreation and any other. At that point there were play days and sports days. And you understand what I’m saying. Put a sign up on the wall and girls who wanted to go to some other place to play would sign their names and off you’d go.

Q. We do that with preschool children now.

A. That’s where we were. So I came to Columbus to look for a place to live and stop in the offices to say hello to Margaret Mordy and she said to me, “Oh I’m so glad you came because I have to talk to you.” She said, “You have to take over as advisor for the Women’s Recreation Association. The gal who is doing it will co-advise with you the first year, but she doesn’t relate with the girls at all well and she doesn’t take it seriously. And you’ve got to do it.” So the very thing that I wanted to get away from was in my lap one more time. And you have to
understand that in ‘56-’57, those kinds of activities were student run. But it meant that I was there in the evenings that the intramurals were going on or any special recreation event was going on. Obviously I worked rather hard helping them get sports space put together in the right kind of way. But they were student run. And that was a very good thing if you could pull it off the right way. In some ways as changes are made you lose something good as you begin something. Those were the sorts of things that were happening at that point. So, in September of ’58, a woman [Dorothy Wirth Wein] who was the coordinator of that program of intramural and recreation and sports clubs as they were called at that particular time, was killed in an automobile accident on the way back to campus. And I was in a state of utter confusion because one of the other members of the faculty whom I had known before I came here called me in when I was at home. And I was out in the backyard hanging clothes for my mother and my mother called to me and I went into the phone, and I was informed that Dorothy and Carl had been in a very serious automobile accident and that Dorothy was critically injured. And I said, “Well, why are you calling me?” Well, “Miss Mordy asked me to call you.” I said, “Well, what does she want me to do?” “Well, nothing, she just wanted you to know.” So about two hours later the phone rings again and it was again this friend calling and saying, “Dorothy Worthline passed away. And the services are going to be on such and such a day and this and that.” And I said, “Did they want me to come back to campus?” “No, they just wanted you to know.” Well this was very confusing to me. And I came back to campus and one of the women who had been here for a number of years by the name of Evelyn
Rupert was coordinating this particular program for the department. I thought, that’s great, Rupy’s good, she can do a good job of that. And I can work well with her in the WRA. In February, in fact the first of February, I was called in and Margaret Mordy appointed me the Coordinator of Intramurals and Recreation and Women’s Sport Program. I looked at her, I still remember, I looked at her and I said, “How long do I have to keep this job?” And she told someone, I found out afterwards, that she had gone to dinner with several people that evening and she said she thought she’d had the biggest disappointment of her professional career. She thought she had offered a great opportunity to a staff member who said, “Okay, I’ll do it, but how long do I have to keep this job?” And I was concerned because I wanted to study and get my degree.

Q. So you were still working on your degree at that point.
A. Yes. That’s a conflict. That’s a huge conflict. So, after a short while, of course she felt obligated to promote me back to Assistant Professor’s position and then I was no longer eligible to study at Ohio State. And that became a real dilemma for me for several years. I remember one time when she called me in and I was thinking about going to school. I had started thinking about how much it would cost me to go somewhere else to school and was there any way as a female in the sports world I was ever going to make up that expense. And she called me in about something else and she said, “What are you going to do about school?” I said, “Well, I think I’ve about decided to give it up.” She said, “Well, I want you to think about something very hard.” I said, “Yes.” She said, “You have twelve friends, really good friends that you run around with on this campus, and all of
them are working on their Ph.D.’s. How are you going to feel when they all have it and you don’t?” That was a wonderful thing to say to me, because it really gave me an opportunity to think hard about whether or not I could commit myself to what I had been asked to do in an emergency to the point that I could find my satisfaction there. And as it turned out ultimately, the Ph.D. would have done little for me that I was not able to achieve. And I never felt less because of it. About half of that group has always considered me less, and to this day do, but I have never accepted that. So I was glad she asked me that question. So, we went along well in the division for women. We were living in a period where there was division of health, physical education and recreation. For women housed in Pomerene Hall. For men, housed in the men’s gym which eventually turned into Larkins Hall. And heaven forbid that you would ever cross Neil Avenue to do anything together. One of my all-time favorite stories, I tried desperately to get our synchronized swimming program to move from the undersized swimming pool in Pomerene Hall to the Natatorium to do their show once a year. And we couldn’t do it. Yet I was asked to go over to the Natatorium on Wednesday evenings and supervise when they had family swim night.

Q. It was a girly thing.

A. Yes. I kept after it and after it, and finally I said, “I wish you would give me one good reason why we cannot have that pool for one week to practice and for three nights of performances.” And the answer I finally got was, “The men would have to put bathing trunks on.”

Q. That’s great.
A. So that’s where I tell on them.

Q. Is that really true, or do you think they were just giving you that story?

A. No, that was the truth. No, the men went naked in that building and lots of places, but they always went naked from the locker room to the pool, and never swam. I said, “Well the fathers put on trunks on Wednesday night. Why can’t they put them on the rest of the time.” I tell that story because I think …

Q. That’s a really important story. It’s very important.

A. It shows how far we’ve come and how much privilege men had at that point, to just assume they could live their life so completely on their own terms. That’s what I heard.

Q. That’s pretty amazing. I also did not know there was a swimming pool on Pomerene.

A. Well there hardly is. There’s a bath tub over there.

Q. Is it like in the basement?

A. Yes, it’s in the basement. It’s like a 20 yard pool. It was a good teaching pool but it couldn’t be used or competitive swimming, so we didn’t have a competitive swim team. Couldn’t really be used for a synchronized swim show but we tried it there anyway, and that sort of thing.

Q. So that position that you took, that you were only going to stay there for a little while, ended up being more than 10 years.

A. Actually, it ended up being about 30.

Q. The Coordinator of Intermural part, that particular position?
A. Yes. Along came a great concern on the part of many people in academia here at the University about the fact that two divisions of Health, Physical Education and Recreation were linked directly to athletics. They were the Department of Health, Physical Education and Recreation and Athletics. And Dick Larkins, who at that point was the Athletic Director [1947-1970], was also our boss. I was interviewed by him when I came here to become an instructor in the women’s division. And as time went on, I would go to him on rare occasions to ask for the use of the golf course and some assistance financially to run a national golf tournament, that kind of thing. For several reasons I think, one of them was jealousy, there were people who thought that the individuals in our divisions were getting more financial support for things than they were getting in their academic area, and they didn’t like that. But there was also a great deal of unrest within the two divisions about being linked too closely to athletics, that they weren’t being taken seriously as some academic areas. And so the end result of that was that in the summer of 1971, both of those divisions had combined and went to the College of Education.

Q. So they were free standing before that?

A. Yes, they were free standing. And they still were free standing actually. The two combined as a school and they had a director of the school. The first director of the school, who was my immediate boss, was a female. She actually was the woman I live with.

Q. That was pretty amazing too, to think about a woman being made the director. I would just assume it would have been a male.
Yes, you would think so. Maybe I misquoted on that as a matter of fact. Maybe Lou Hess was the first director and then Mary Myerly became the second director, when Margaret Mordy chose to go to the College of Education instead of staying on as Director of the school. The older you get, the less you remember, Judy. But in the process of doing all of this and trying to get the program moved to education, the question came up, “What happens to intramural and recreation.” And to the women’s sports program or intercollegiate program, which at that time was a full-fledged intercollegiate program. And there was no doubt, the men would go to athletics. They’d stay with athletics. Well there was little way that we could take the women’s program directly from women’s physical education and move it to the Athletic Department. And so the decision was made that the Division of University Recreation and Intramural and men’s intercollegiate athletics would be established, I mean women’s intercollegiate athletics, would be established and become a part of the Student Affairs Office, still receiving some financial assistance from athletics, but most of it from Student Affairs. In that hassle of what should really happen to the women’s intercollegiate athletic program, I suggested very strongly that it should go with the new division, because it was closer to the men’s sports clubs than it was to the men’s intercollegiate athletics. I guess I really need to back up a little bit here to say that there had been … well, I’ll do that a little later. So we went that particular way because I thought we were closer to the men’s sports clubs and also because I felt if we went directly to athletics we would be put under NCAA rules and we’d be the only school in the country living by the NCAA rules, and it was going to be
extremely difficult for our young women. There had been cause to look seriously at developing an organization for women and one of our faculty members who had been on a committee, a commission of women for intercollegiate athletics, and tried to establish a national organization. And they had taken our files. They had literally took our files and used them to be a prime example of how they were going to set up this national organization. That’s why I said I probably better back up here pretty soon for you.

Q. That’s alright. We’re doing fine.

A. And the Association for Intercollegiate Athletics for Women or AIAW, which was the counterpart of the NCAA, came into being in ‘71-’72. And I knew that was on the board and it was going to come along and it was better that we go under that leadership than to go another route. So, I had this transition to the position of Associate Director for University Recreation and Intramural and Women’s Intercollegiate Sports.

Q. One of my questions during that time, Phyllis, were you able to make an impact in the way this was being structured? Were people listening to you at that point here on campus, or were you pretty much having to react to what somebody else was doing, or both?

A. In a way I am kind of sad to say that I had a point to do almost anything I wanted to do because no one really cared.

Q. So there was a void.

A. There was a real void.

Q. So there was a void, so you could.
A. Right.

Q. So there was no resistance.
A. There was no resistance.
Q. Nor any institutional excitement or support.
A. No.
Q. They were just glad somebody was fixing it.
A. Yes. That’s terrible, yes. I discussed this with people in Student Affairs to some extent, but they realized that probably that was a logical place for that whole women’s program to go. If the men were going there, the women ought to go there, and they created this new department.
Q. Right.
A. Maybe this is a point where we could back up a little bit, because I had gone to a staff meeting, well armed I thought, with a concern of mine and ready to argue with the whole staff about what we should do in April of 1964. Now that particular morning I went in and I said I had a concern and I would like to discuss it with them and get their opinion. I said to them that I thought the time had arrived or we ought to call a spade a spade. We no longer had sports clubs on our campus. The women from physical education who were supposedly advisors were not advisors, they were coaches. Our sports clubs were not open to any students who were interested. There were tryouts and they kept only the best. We had a full size schedule of competition in all of our sports, and we had a set of written intercollegiate rules by which we lived, our own set of intercollegiate rules. And it just seemed to me that the time had come that we should quit calling
them sports clubs and call them what they were, intercollegiate sports. Ready for a
great argument. The people around the table looked at me and said, “Well, if
that’s what you want to do, go ahead.” So it was kind of that way again when it
came down to what’s going to happen. We knew that the program of recreation
and intramurals and women’s intercollegiate sports which they were then called,
were not going to go to the College of Education. There was some discussion, do
you want that phase of the program to go to the College of Education, or do you
want it to go to Athletics, or do you want it to stay with the intramurals and
recreation. Well in education there would have been no money to run the
program. No one interested. It would have been a constant battle and a loss of a
program.

Q. Exactly. That was good thinking.

A. And they weren’t ready to go to Athletics as far as I was concerned, because the
rules for women’s competition on the national level were at that point written but
not published and accepted. So there wasn’t really much choice but to go to
intramurals and treat them like sports clubs only try to make them two levels
above that. So, that’s where we went on all of that.

Q. Your own interest and background in connection with the national level helped
and formed the structure here at the University obviously.

A. Well I was very fortunate.

Q. But it’s true.

A. Well, yes.
Q. I mean, if you had not had that insight and not had that information and been able to also put that together in some logical way with some foresight about what was going to happen, I think things would have been very different.

A. Yes, it could have and it was on many campuses. But I also had a wonderful advantage that nobody else in the country really had and I’ve received too much credit for it over the years. There were some women with a great deal of foresight long before I came along. When I was just starting high school there were women here who saw the need to present competition for women.

Q. Who were some of those women?

A. Main force was Chair of the Women’s Division of Physical Education, a lady by the name of Gladys Palmer, who had listened to a young student from the University of Minnesota who came to a student conference on this campus back in ’39, who happened to be a pretty good golfer. Said she played in all the amateur golf tournaments that she could play in, the local club, the state tournament, the TransAm, and went on to name all of them. And she said she really wished she had an opportunity to play just with some collegiate women, that she thought about going to the PGA and asking them if they would be interested in developing a program for college students. That young lady was a woman by the name of Patty Berg.

Q. Oh my gracious!

A. Gladys Palmer heard that little speech and was very much bothered by the fact that, here was a college student with a real need, who was highly skilled and her need was not being satisfied in any way whatsoever.
Q. No vehicle.

A. No vehicle available to her. And so, something needed to be done. She wrote a letter to all the women chairmen of physical education across the country expressing this concern, and saying that in order to try to develop an avenue for the highly skilled women, that she would like to start with golf and she was going to hold a national golf tournament here at Ohio State University in June of 1941. That’s when our scholar course was brand new. She was so ostracized for doing that, that the first thing I knew about Gladys Palmer was, I saw here in the distance at the first convention I went to and someone pointed her out. She was at Ohio State but no one spoke to her. Well, they held the golf tournament and the golf tournament kept getting better and they developed what was really an excellent pattern for running an intercollegiate event. They established the policies of intercollegiate competition at this University. If anyone else wanted to follow them, they were welcome to do so. So what happened at this University, and this started long before Phyllis Bailey ever came here, and I think that’s important to be recorded.

Q. It is important. I absolutely agree. I think, you know, each of us play a role in creating the future, and I think it’s important to acknowledge each of those pieces. That’s a wonderful addition to this story. So you were then able to build on what she had done, just in her thinking and developing the thinking and beginning acceptance of an intermural program on a larger scale.

A. Well, yes. And with her intercollegiate policies, and the women in her program had really thought about these. They were good policies. You can pull them out
now and get them and say, “These were really good.” One of the things that many schools just did, not as a written rule, but they never let the girls go any further than fifty miles away from campus. Well this University never said that. We ought to let girls go where they can get the best competition. That was just the philosophy that was already here when I came.

Q. So let’s move forward, Phyllis, then from where we were and pick up with 1971. Is that where you want to be, or 1975?

A. Well, 1971, I think I’ve pretty well covered. 1975 came about basically because of Title IX and there was no other way to look at it. I know we’re going to discuss Title IX. But it was an interesting move. All the coaches were paid half of their salary from athletics in 1974. All of the budget for the program came from athletics in 1974, but they had no one in charge of the program, deliberately. Coaches still came to me and I was responsible for them but I wasn’t really a part of it. And we’ll get into that story in a little greater detail too, because not only was I not taken into the program until the next year, but I was not wanted in any term whatsoever by the athletic director. He didn’t want the intercollegiate athletics, but more than that, he did not want Phyllis Bailey.

Q. So you want to do a little bit of history then, sort of some of the history?

A. We’ll just take this up and bit by bit the program grew. I know that you’re going to ask me a question about the various directors and therefore I’ll wait, either with Title IX or with that, to discuss a little more what I attempted to do during those years.

Q. Well go ahead and do it now.
A. But we did have an opportunity to develop those programs and move ahead as you know, to the point where I became convinced but had not said anything, that we needed to make the change, that we had gone as far as we needed to go at establishing a women’s intercollegiate program. Now we had to have an intercollegiate program. And I got wind of the fact that Jim Jones, who was the Athletic Director, was thinking about reorganizing. So I went into him one day and I said, “Jim, I understand you’re thinking about reorganizing the department.” He said, “Well, yes I am, and I was going to talk to you and Bill about it at some point.” Bill Myles, who was the other Associate Director. And I said, “Well, you don’t have to take my ideas but I’d like to make a suggestion to you.” “Alright.” I said, “I think the time has come where the women’s program has been developed enough that it can stand on its own two feet, and we have arrived at the point where we need to divide everything up by sport. That way we don’t have the swimming coach going to father and the women’s coach coming to mother, and we’re giving them different answers and we’re trying to say that we’re working towards equality here and that Title IX has dictated that we are going to work for equality, and I don’t think we can do it separated anymore.” So, the last year that I was there I was Associate Director of both some of the men’s and women’s sports. The one thing I did say to him that day, he looked at me and started to grin and he said, “That’s exactly what I wanted to do and I thought you were going to fight me.” And I said, “Well, there is just one thing I will say. In your own eyes do you consider the job that Bill Myles does and Phyllis Bailey does, as your two Associate Directors to be equal,” and he said, “Yes.” I said,
“Alright, then you cannot give football and men’s basketball to Bill Myles and have anything that comes close to equality.

Q. Exactly.

A. He said, “I already know that. Are you willing to take on men’s basketball?” I said, “Of course, I’m willing to take on men’s basketball.” And I guess one of the real concerns that I took away with me is, it would have been fun to work more closely with the men’s team for a longer period of time, which I guess leads us right on it to coping with Title IX and the growth of programs. Since I have confused myself, do you have a specific question about that.

Q. Let’s focus just for a minute just on title IX, because I think it’s so important, and I’d like to hear about it from your perspective. Obviously, you were aware that Title IX was going to happen, contributing to the thinking on this. This was not a surprise. But when you finally heard that the legislation had passed and it was going to be implemented, do you recall that moment? Was that significant personally to you, or did you just know it was going to happen?

A. You give me more credit than I deserve. I had read some portions of the Education Act of 1972 and I have read the paragraph that became known as Title IX, which said there would be no discrimination within education on the basis of sex. But it was never interpreted in the beginning to include athletics, by anyone in this country.

Q. I did not know that.

A. It means that now boys could take home economics and gals could take industrial arts. We did have to share the gym more equally as far as physical education
classes were concerned. We probably ought to put in more co-educational classes. From a professional level we probably ought to start teaching all of our classes co-educationally instead of separate, and so on and so on as they looked at programs. They struggled for a little while at Ohio State for example over the marching band and whether or not they had to take women into the marching band.

Q. Right, I did know that. Glen Harrison had shared that.

A. We talked about what could be the exceptions. Well you could have the women’s chorus and the men’s glee club because of the differences in voices. That you could continue to do. But somehow along the way Title IX didn’t include athletics.

Q. From your perspective, did the University not see it as part of it?

A. The University didn’t see it but they weren’t the only university who didn’t see it. Universities all across the country just didn’t see it. Athletics is athletics. It’s almost like it was a separate entity, that we didn’t have to worry about it. Well, the AIAW, which had come into existence just during the …

Q. And that is the?

A. The Association for Intercollegiate Athletic Women, it was the counterpart of the NCAA so to speak. They had just become truly active in ‘71-’72, really during ’72, so they almost paralleled Title IX completely. They had their first national convention in November of ’73 in Oberlin Park, Kansas, which was the national office of the NCAA. And we went there because we had a couple of really pressing issues, the main one being that when the rules and regulations had been
drawn up for AIAW, that the women who were involved had talked with the men in the NCAA at great length about, what should we do and other things we should not do to avoid the pitfalls. And the one major suggestion that was made to them was, avoid athletic grant need. They have become the largest problem that we have. They take too much money for recruiting. They take too much money to carry them out. When you’re paying University room and board and tuition and fees and books, and some of the young men get entirely the wrong notion about why they’re coming to school, to compete in intercollegiate athletics. So avoid that. Well by the time we got into the first four years, seven tennis players, I believe it was one of the Florida schools, sued the AIW saying, “You cannot deny us this opportunity.” So we went to the convention to hassle about, what were we going to do in regards to the grant need program. And the legal advisor for AIW, AIW was situated in Washington, D.C. and the woman who was the legal advisor had her ear to the governmental offices that a lot of other people didn’t. So after much discussion about how were we going to handle this with her telling us from the beginning, you’re going to allow grant need, you have no choice. She dropped Title IX on us. And this is a very big part of the athletic program from this point forward. She had invited two of the legal counselors from the NCAA to come to the meetings and they haven’t come. So we had to come back and tell our counterpart here, “Hey buddy.” Well, as you can imagine, I came back and reported to Fred Beekman, who was the Director of the Division that I was currently in, that he had to go to Ed Weaver, the Athletic Director [1970-1977, and tell him that Title IX did not exempt athletes and that the women’s athletics
program at Ohio State was going to become equal to the men’s program. All I got was a laugh.

Q. I’m sure. And shot as the messenger.
A. Yes and the messenger was shot several times.

Q. That’s a wonderful story. What an incredible experience.
A. So you’re wrong. I hadn’t been anticipating Title IX.

Q. So I gave you way too much credit.
A. Yes.

Q. So that really was the shift that occurred.
A. Absolutely.

Q. Around the country really.
A. Well, this was in November and the men went to the NCAA and faculty. We always had faculty reps, but all of our representatives, some of them from the Athletic Council and faculty representative and the Athletic Director and his Associate Director, went to the NCAA meeting and lo and behold, they found out that I had delivered the correct message.

Q. And that would have been what? ’71-’72?
A. No, that would have been January of ’74.

Q. That had to be in compliance by ’75.
A. Well, they gave us a period of time between ’75 and ’78 supposedly. But we at least had to be working on it by ’75.

Q. That must have been an amazing shift around here.
A. It was an amazing shift in every way. Personally one of the truly major shifts was, I had gone to school and spent the first major portion of my professional career strictly in a women’s world. And suddenly I was the only woman in a man’s world. So it was a real shift for me. There was a shock there that I had to go through in exactly the same way that they had to go through.

Q. I’m curious about that and this is one of the questions. How did you win their support of you and your ideas? What were some of the things that you had to do, particularly in those early years, because that was so easy for you to have been dismissed. I’m sure it was your charm.

A. Well I hate to say this but in a way it was.

Q. Yes.

A. I felt when I first talked to you about this, this was not going to be a personal issue, a personal thing, but it is. Everything we’ve talked about so far has been me, and I guess there’s no other way to do this.

Q. Well part of it but you are in the context of all of this. But I am curious because I think when women, one of the things that women who will listen to this and read this in the future won’t experience it, there will not be groups of women being a first and the only. And I think it’s important to talk about, being the first and only, how did you get to be successful, especially at the beginning? You were bringing a message they didn’t want to hear.

A. True.

Q. Didn’t want to do.
A. That’s right. And financial support that they didn’t want to give. It became a rather touchy period of time. I guess I would have to say that, when I came home from that first meeting, I was excited and I was very apprehensive.

Q. Absolutely.

A. I was excited that at last, maybe young women were going to have an opportunity to have what I had always been denied, and frustrated that I couldn’t even try.

Q. Right, no mechanism to get there.

A. And I was so apprehensive that I was afraid I didn’t have the wisdom and the commitment and the patience to see it through. That’s the easiest way I know how to say it to you, because I learned rather quickly that the athletic director at that time did not choose to have Phyllis Bailey on his staff. I learned just by a statement from a woman in personnel after I had been on the job about six months, which was really a blessing for me, she said, “Well you know what your biggest problem is?” I said, “Well, no, other who knows if I’m going to stick with it.” And, “That’s not your biggest problem.” I said, “What is my biggest problem?” She said, “Jane,” which was the name of his wife, he had a wife who was about my height, a very independent soul. Had to be independent. He loved her dearly. He didn’t understand her and he got very annoyed with her independence. And as soon as that was said to me, I had a different handle to grab hold of in talking to him.

Q. What a gift she gave you.

A. But initially I said, “Hey you know, I don’t blame him. He’s going to have to take on a program he doesn’t want. The University is forcing him not only to take
over the leadership but to support it. He’s going to have to deal with all of the other people in his department who don’t want us there. I can’t blame him at all. I’m not going to ask him to buy a brown bag when he doesn’t know what’s inside.” And I was in a meeting with the director of the school who was at that point Lou Hess and Ted Robinson, who was a vice president for student affairs, and Jim Jones, who was assistant director in athletics but had been sent over to deal with this issue. And I said, “I want to put together a five year plan and give it to Ed, so he at least knows what I’m going to be after. If he chooses not to have me do it, whoever is going to do it, ought to have a similar plan. It doesn’t have to be identical but at least this would be an outline for someone else. I’d like to put together a five year plan,” which I did. And the other thing that I spent a great deal of time doing for a year because there was a year there to really try to work this out. I had a two-hour weekly meeting every Monday morning with all of my coaches. And I hammered at them every single week. When I think back on it that’s the only way I know to say it. I hammered at them that we were going to move into a house where we were not welcome. And we were not going to help ourselves or anybody else if we went in with a bulldozer and tried to knock the house down. We were going in as unwelcome guests and we were going to help them remodel that house to accommodate us. I was dealing with a group of young women who were of themselves competitors. “Are you telling us we have to go further than they do?” And I said, “Yes, I’m telling you you’re going to go at least 80% of the way.” And that didn’t go over very big. But we kept at it and kept at it and kept at it. And then, I don’t know who, I could guess, but I don’t
know who, but someone had really talked to all the coaches of the men’s sports. “Women come over you’re going to lose half of your time in the facility. You’re going to lose half of your grant and aid so they can have them. Your budget’s going to be reduced almost by half, so they can have it.” So there were a whole group of very angry coaches.

Q. Yes, absolutely.

A. So I made a point to try to see them casually, socially, try to get the idea across to them that, “Look, I don’t want to destroy your programs. I don’t want to destroy your life in any way whatsoever. I have an obligation to try to provide some of the experiences that you think are so healthy for young men on this campus for young women on this campus. And you could help us. One, we’re not going to take anything away from you, and two, you could be very helpful to the women coaches if you choose. I need you. I’m not fighting you. I need you.” They were probably the three major things I tried to do before I actually went.

Q. To build the groundwork for it.

A. Yes. Just to try to build the groundwork.

Q. Did you see shifts then, both from the women themselves in those weekly sessions? Did they start to accept this, or did they hold out or did you get some shifts early on?

A. I think by the time we left we had major shifts. One by one they’d kind of come along. As I think about it there were two or three you could see, yet I understand. And then there were others, you’re not going to do that.
Q. Were there men coaches that were welcoming right at the beginning? Had you made converts?

A. Yes, interesting enough long before this even came up, the men’s gymnastics coach, a man by the name of Joe Hewlett, had invited me to send my women’s gymnastics team over to the gymnasium to work out two days a week, cause they had the equipment, they had a room, they had all sorts of things that we didn’t have for the women. And I so appreciative of that, and I remember one time saying to Joe, “Joe, I don’t know how to thank you enough for including the women in your program.” “Don’t thank me. You don’t know what’s it’s done to my guys. The gym is cleaner. They’re cleaner. Their language is better. They are working twice as hard cause they don’t want the gals to pass them. You’ve done me a favor.” Fortunately he was still there for just a little while. And bit by bit. It was interesting the coaches who kind of came on board. The ones that weren’t threatened. And you can look back at it and realize that it was the sports that were in no way going to be threatened by you. Then the coaches of some of the individual sports who were afraid they would be threatened. If they were going to lose ground here, they were going to lose a lot. They fought to the bitter end. I think I’ve always said because I had a number of friends who started down the same road I did in athletic administration, who left bitter women because they tried to go in and make it happen right now, and tried to go in very forcefully without looking at the people they were dealing with. I’ve thought many times, my sense of humor and my sense of patience helped me survive and I hope helped this program.
Q. You know, you don’t like to talk about yourself, but I want to say this on the tape because I think it’s important. Your contribution has been your style of being able to implement change in a long-term systematic way, just knowing what it takes to get it done. That wisdom that you hoped you would have had, that patience you hoped you would have had, the endurance, clearly were there. And you’re right, you can’t make those kinds of changes quickly. You were breaking ground on every single one of those changes. I’m curious, did you have mentors during that period of time, because one of the things from my own experience has been that, when you’re trying to make changes you’re very isolated. You’re isolated by others and you’re seeing things that others don’t see. Did you have people who were mentoring you during that time or supporting you?
A. Yes, you suggested a question to me of what was it like to move over there and my response would be very lonely.
Q. I imagine so.
A. Very lonely.
Q. It had to be.
A. All the women who had been my professional friends that were involved in physical education, just kind of walked away. They didn’t want to be involved with athletics. If that was the choice you made, in which I had a hard time making to be very honest with you, but I had decided you’re better equipped to do this than anybody they’re going to bring in from the outside. You’ve been in this University long enough. You know some of the personnel you’re going to be dealing with well enough. You know how the University as a whole functions.
Q. And dysfunctions.

A. And dysfunctions, yes. This is another call. You don’t have any choice. You’ve got to do this. So I moved over but people that I thought were good friends of mine, just didn’t bother after that.

Q. Yes, because I would think especially then when you were going to the dark side almost. I would just think that would have to be. So in a sense your traditional base of support, that didn’t follow you. Then moving to a setting where you hadn’t built a base of support.

A. I lost those friends and I was startled that I developed a group of enemies, near enemies, that I never dreamed that I would develop. And that was a group of women on this campus.

Q. Yes.

A. I didn’t realize until I got involved, as much as women at that stage in our history wanted to advance, they resented any other woman advancing. And they often tried to put them down. And this move was also coming at a time when there was a great deal going on in the women’s movement and feminist movement, in which they’re trying to move forward and they were doing much of it in a very rebellious way. There was a very strong group on this campus who was extremely upset with me because I refused to go that way. And I understood Ed Weaver well enough to know that we were going nowhere if I tried to go in that way.

Q. Absolutely Phyllis. I think I shared with you that I had interviewed Elaine Hairston. So your sequence of careers paralleled each other during that period of
time, because that’s when she was the first Affirmative Action director. And
talking about very similar kinds of experiences. What do you need? What kinds
of behaviors does a leader need to have when they walk in, are really a change
agent. And it can’t be with a sledge hammer.

Q. It can’t be. You’re right. It can’t be.

A. Can’t be with a sledge hammer. And Judy, it can’t be with an ego.

Q. Exactly, Phyllis, exactly. But I do think from a feminist perspective it’s important
to recognize that that is a consequence though of getting the job done, often that
for you and other women, they couldn’t get the rewards that men would get.

Because that just wouldn’t happen.

A. Yes, but didn’t we get the greatest reward of all?

Q. Absolutely. There’s no question you got the change done, absolutely. I wouldn’t
trade one for the other. I wouldn’t. I agree with you completely. But I think
when people look at this historically it is important to say those things out loud so
other women can understand that we didn’t sell out. Our eyes were open as we
accepted these trade-offs. And they are trade-offs. You had an eye on a long

34
term goal and that’s what you were committed to. And how do you get there is the goal, not the smaller steps along the way. I’m struck by the analogy you made when you talked about going to, I assume it was Lake Erie College for Women, where you got a year in chemistry class. Is that right?

A. Yes.

Q. And you talked about how, as you got down into the data, one time in a woman’s day could have thrown the whole thing off. Just as you said that I thought, that’s sort of what you were looking at, that same experience in athletics, you knew that one miscalculation in a relationship could hurt your long term goal.

A. I think that’s right.

Q. To me that’s a valuable lesson that’s just repeated.

A. You asked me if I had any mentors and I said, “No, I really didn’t.” But over the years I realized that I had one very important one, was my mother. If my mother had been a young woman during my age, she would have been, my mother was a lady but she was a leader. And so many people in the community respected her and depended upon her to get things done, and did it in such an efficient and effective way and still such a lady, that I wish I had been more like her. But I know I learned a lot from her, watching her.

Q. I can hear, actually if you speak about both of your parents, I can see how you pulled from both of their lives and how they informed you so much. You can hear that. That wonderful story about you making the team and then your father saying you’re not staying on the team, was part of all of this. Well, is there anything more that you want to talk about during the history. If not, I’d like to
move on to this next set of questions about, sort of reflections on women in athletics. It’s kind of question number 5. Are you comfortable moving on, or do you want to check your notes?

A. Sure, I’m always comfortable moving on. I go away and then I think, “Why didn’t I say this and why didn’t I talk about that?” I think this is maybe a good point for me to try to give my perspective of what happened for women in sports over the century really. I’m trying not to be too long in the process.

Q. That’s fine.

A. At the turn of the century, when we were really involved in the Industrial Revolution women had a pretty active role in lots of ways that later on we didn’t realize. They were different kinds of roles but they really had active roles. And there were young women who were very much involved in athletic sports and it was fine. For example, on this campus, we had a women’s basketball team. At first the men weren’t allowed to go in and watch them, and then they could go in and laugh about the bloomers. But they competed and that was good. And during WWI, there were a number of things that took place of course in which women had to step up and keep things going. And along in that period of time we had some young women in 1920 were picked to go to participate in the Olympics. We had sent some gals over to run in track and field, which we did. And they failed miserably and they were very frustrated that they weren’t skilled enough to do the things they needed to do. They did some rather unseemly things as a reaction. And immediately, the perception went out that women can’t take competition. In 1922 they asked Mrs. Herbert Hoover to chair a commission to study the issue of
women and sports. And the end result of that was, yes, indeed, physically the 
female body couldn’t take the pounding and the strain of a lot of competition, and 
emotionally women weren’t set for competition, at the same time women were 
competing every day over who was going to get the guy and who wasn’t going to, 
or who is going to be the most popular in the class. They competed with each 
other constantly but in a different sort of way, not in sport. Well the upshot of 
what happened at that time was that really, except for a few hours of physical 
education and maybe an hour of intermurals once in a while, the girls and the 
women were closed out of all the gymnasiums in this country. And the rules for 
women, the rules of sport for women, were really developed for the average girl. 
There should be a sport for every girl and a girl for every sport. And then we will 
modify the rules to accommodate those who are not able to abide by that kind of a 
rule. And that went on from 1920 to again another world war, when women 
began to take a new position in our society again. They kept the factories going. 
Many of them went into the service if they could. Lots of them were out there 
competing in sport because they had to do something to keep going. And now 
people begin to look at it again; what’s happening here? And you had a few 
fortunate people, and Ohio State was extremely fortunate, because they had a real 
leader in Gladys Palmer to say, “Hey look, we’re ignoring the highly skilled.”
Well that helped a little but not much. Mostly it was, you go your way, you’re in 
the wrong spot. Then came the Olympics of 1956, and now we sent a number of 
teams, men and women. And when we were through we took the worst beating 
we had ever had in the number of medals. Now the Olympics weren’t meant for
medal town, but people count medals. And we had fewer gold medals than we had ever had. The people in the government were concerned, clear up to the State Department. After all, all of these sorts of things go into political negotiations whether you want to believe it or not.

Q. They do.

A. And so, they had people sit down and try to figure out why this happened and it didn’t take them long to figure out that that it was the women who had lost the medals. That we hadn’t trained our girls. And so, the Department of Education and the Secretary of State came to the women who were in physical education and said, “Look, you’ve got to do something about this. You’ve got to start training the highly skilled.” Well, of course the first thing that had to happen was the rules of the game had to change. So, Phyllis Bailey for one, and the game of basketball, had gone through and had taught and had coached a game that consisted of six players with a divided floor and you played either defense or offense, to a game that still had six players but two of them were allowed to roam the whole floor. And I was coaching basketball and we won a lot of basketball because I’d sit at my breakfast bar and think, now how am I going to do this, and most people picked their two best players to roam the whole floor and I thought, we’re not going to do that, we’re all going to roam the floor. We’re going to confuse our opponents because they’re not going to know who is going. To a five player game, which started with women being allowed to dribble the ball. Those are just wild examples but they are true.

Q. They are symbolic.
A. Yes, they are symbolic. Volleyball was a game in which you had to set the ball up to yourself before you could pass it, to a game where now you have a setter and you do digs and dinks and kills. All of this happened basically because women were forced to change the rules, so that they would be good rules for the higher competitive girl. So now they began to look a little more seriously, all the school said, “Hey, what is this bit about our sports clubs and do we need to be looking at the potential of going further? Do we need to start coaching these young women?” And they were told you don’t do it in education, someone else will. And so, when Title IX came along, they were ready. It was just the next logical step. I’ve said many times, girls had fathers, girls had desires, the rules had been changed and the nation was beginning to accept slightly girls participating as respectable activities. Title IX came along and was just the engine that pulled it down the track much more rapidly then would have ever come otherwise.

Q. That is one of my questions. Would this have happened without Title IX, and your answer is yes, it would have taken longer.

A. It would have happened to a certain extent. If I can use another example, and I hope this is not a poor one to use. We went through Civil Rights in this country. We thought we were doing a really great job and that we were all going to be equal regardless of color. And now we had the laws in place and it was going to work. But it hasn’t worked all the way. It hasn’t. And it hasn’t worked all the way for women in sport yet either. But Civil Rights didn’t have a Title IX. And women in sport were fortunate to have that regulation come along to be
recognized, to be accepted, and to just pull the whole program down the track much faster.

Q. I’m really glad you put that all in the context of that story of how sports developed, because that all makes better sense. The whole thing makes better sense. I had not heard the story of the 1920’s. That helps me as a listener. It’s pretty amazing.

A. But it made it very difficult for us later, cause we’d been closed out of the gyms by our own doing, women had been. Now how are you going to get back in?

Q. That’s pretty amazing. And I think that’s one of the lessons, as you think about women today and how you help them define themselves today, but they don’t define themselves in a less than way. I worry about that with our young women, whether it’s in athletics or wherever it is, that their definition of self is not self limiting. You’re right, we can do that to ourselves. I want to kind of move into sort of a reflective place here. As you look over that time, when did the likelihood of graduating and recruiting women in athletics that could graduate, was that a factor as you began really recruiting in athletics or athletes with scholarships? What was that balance like? Were you concerned about graduation rates?

A. No, I wasn’t concerned about it. The balance was very good. And actually, in the 70’s the balance was good for men. Remember I said at one point, we were all together, that athletics and even at the time that the women moved into the athletic department with few exceptions, football, men’s basketball, well not even those two sports totally. Most of the men coaches were half time coaches and half
time instructors in physical education. And that’s the way all the women went in. So in one way there was a balance there, and that balance stayed there for a period of time. And so the young women who came here, were coming to Ohio State to get a degree. And to this day that basically still is the answer as far as women are concerned, because they don’t see that they’re going to make a living. There are no big salaries out there in the professional sports for women. So, they’re protected. I worried more when the time came with women in full-time coaching positions. Because I worried about the fact that most of the women were going into coaching were ambitious young women, and what were they going to do? Spending 18 hours every day thinking about how they’re going to run their team, and where they’re going to recruit their gals from, and are they worried about whether or not they get an education. But they were. And most women recognized that they have to have it.

Q. What factors did you look for in your recruiting coaches over the years?
A. Well, I started out with a group that were acceptable to the school, Health, Physical Education and Recreation. And actually, in the early years of the intercollegiate program most of the coaches were on about a 50% contract, 50% teaching and 50% for the extra-curricular activities (end of tape).

Q. We may have to come back. They’ll make us come back.
A. No, I don’t think so.

Q. You were talking about recruiting coaches and you said initially that they were recruited to be teachers as well as coaches.
A. Right.
Q. And then over time that changed. So what were you looking for in coaches later?
A. Well, it really started to change when we gave athletic grants in aid to women. And incidentally, we started that in a very different way than any other school that I know of.

Q. In what way was it different?
A. Most schools started out trying to ease into the grants-in-aid program by giving coaches say, 45 grants in aids of tuition and fees. I had an opportunity to sit down with Jim Jones, who was responsible for the grants-in-aid program for the men, was then an assistant director when I first went over there as an assistant director. And he said, “Well, we’ve got to decide what we’re going to do here. What do you think we ought to do? Give you 60 or 70 tuition and fees?” I said, “I don’t want 60 or 70 tuition and fees. According to allowing yourself to be lesser. I’ll take 34, exactly what the men have. I want a female tennis player to be able to get what the quarterback on the football team gets.” And we started that way. We had less and they were allowed to break them down as they still are allowed to break them down. But I give myself a little credit on that because I had the foresight to say, “We’re not going to take a lesser position on this.”

Q. Absolutely, Phyllis, absolutely. If you always had a smaller piece of the pie, you would have always.
A. The other thing was that the facilities were a big excuse for a long time.

Q. Yes, I want you to talk a little bit about that.
A. Okay. It started with the fact that I was appointed Assistant Director of Athletics in charge of the women’s program on July 1, 1975. And on September 10, I still
was working out of my old office. And I would run over to St. John Arena with receipts and pick up checks and all that sort of thing and do what I had to do. There was no place for me to go in the department. They had no office for me. Now I’m sorry, there were times when I was a little angry at the fact that they thought I was too stupid to not see through some of these excuses that were given to me. I had a real hard time with that. I ran into Ed Weaver on the stairs about 4:30 one afternoon as he was leaving and not using terribly kind language because he wanted to know when I was going to move in. And I said, “As soon as there is an office.” “Well, there is an office up there.” So I went upstairs and went to go into the room he told me there was an office in and it was locked. And I went next door and said, “Can you give me a slip to go over to facilities right now and get a key to the outside door and a key to that office.” And the secretary looked at me and I said, “Well, Mr. Weaver told me it was ready to move in. Can I have keys to those two?” She said, “Yes.” And I tore over to get there before 5:00 and got the keys. When he arrived at work at 8:15 the next morning, I was sitting in my office with all of my belongings. I had a very short night.

Q. He was surprised. Give her an inch; she’ll take a mile.

A. That’s the way he felt.

Q. I’m sure he did.

A. There are no lockers rooms. Yes, there are locker rooms. You just have to readjust who uses them. We don’t want to send those women in that locker room with those urinals. They’ll adjust until we can take them out. It doesn’t make that big a difference. Well, you can’t use the same training rooms as men use. I said,
“Well, they’re going to have the same injuries. They can both go in there in their uniforms and be treated, can’t they?” Every little notion we could find on facilities we found it. Well, we don’t have anyplace for these outdoor. How much is this going to cost to add just a narrow addition here to the French Field House, where we could put in a couple of locker rooms and some showers? Oh, we can’t do that. Why not? That’s one of the cheapest things you could do. It was an interesting, interesting three or four years.

Q. Constantly having to challenge without challenging him. It took a fine finesse.

A. It was fun.

Q. It is fun.

A. It takes a long time. Friends would say, “Why?” “Well first I have to go in and look at the field and then plow it. Then I would go in a couple of weeks from then and plant a seed and then I’d water it a little bit and nurture it along the way. Then when it comes to the full bloom he’ll call me in and say, ‘Phyllis, I’ve had an idea.’” That’s exactly the way it went. And that’s why I said patience and a sense of humor and lack of ego are tremendous assets in those days for all of us who were involved. If we didn’t have that we wouldn’t have made it.

Q. Absolutely Phyllis, absolutely. What do you think was your greatest success during the time you were at Ohio State? If I said, what was the one greatest success you had, what would you tell me?

A. I’d like to believe that we had in the early years the best women’s intercollegiate program in the Big Ten and one of the best in the United States. No one person does that alone, even I know that. But I would like to say that I really believe that
that was one of our greatest successes. Five years after we went into the Conference, the Ohio State women had more Conference championships than all the other schools today. And there was satisfaction in that.

Q. Absolutely.

A. Along that same way, my real disappointment was that we never won a national championship in any sport other than synchronized swimming and that wasn’t an NCAA sport. But when asked whether or not I felt we had one of the best programs in the country, I would still say yes we did because we had one of the largest. And therefore we provided an opportunity for a far greater number of young women to compete than most schools that had five or six or seven intercollegiate sports and winning national championships. And that was my philosophy, right or wrong.

Q. Well, when you look at the heritage that you built on with thinking about, I apologize for blanking on the woman golfer, Patty Berg, think about the heritage of her story as an athlete and thinking about building from that story, that one woman’s story, to expand to all of these women.

A. Right, I would agree with you.

Q. That is a huge strength. When you left on that last day of work, what did you feel you had left undone? Was there anything that you said, “Oh, I just wish I had five more years to get one more thing done or two more things.” What would it have been?

A. I don’t think there’s a human being who doesn’t think there’s something else they would like to do, like to achieve.
Q. What would it have been? Besides that national championship.

A. Besides that national championship, I would have liked to have added a couple more sports but the timing was not right yet and they both have been added since then interestingly enough. I had been getting a lot of pressure, and good comments from graduate students, requesting an nice hockey team. I kept trying to tell them, “I’m with you and I wish we could have an ice hockey, but we don’t have any competition. There’s no point in having a team if we can’t really get some competition.” And as other people began to try to improve their participation records, Minnesota and Wisconsin said, “Hey, ice hockey’s a logical one for us.” And then we were in a nice central position between those schools that are in the cold country and the schools in the New England states, who were already playing ice hockey. And so ice hockey was added a few years after that. And I would have liked to added crew, but that’s an expensive sport to start. Shells cost a lot. Just couldn’t see where it was going to come in the budget. And again, there was no one to compete with unless you went up to New England. So why have a crew team? But why have a crew team became more clearly understood by colleagues after I left. And that is that you can equalize out the number of participants you have, because a crew team can take care of 70 women and that counters a football team.

Q. So there you go.

A. I think I need to say to you, because I think it needs to be on record, and I can’t tell you the exact year. My guess would be it was probably ’78. The Office of OCR came to check on where we were with Title IX. They had nowhere to put it
I don’t think, several different people, or who is going to assume this responsibility. But they came in on this campus and during a period of three days they interviewed every administrator and every coach in the program individually, and some, a few students, the Office of Personnel Services said, “None of you should be in the room alone. Someone will just sit in.” Fortunately they were there so no one would hang themselves.

Q. I can here guys saying …

A. Yea, that’s right. Absolutely. So someone sat in the corner of the room and each of us was in there and interviewed during the course of that week when they asked how many sports we had and asked how much the budget was, how many grants in aids we had, and they asked what facilities we used as opposed to what the men used. On Friday afternoon they called the administrators back in and they told us we’d lied to them. It couldn’t be that good. But there again, I would say that goes back to the thinking of the 1941 championship.

Q. Absolutely, absolutely.

A. So if I had a mentor to look back to, although I never had an opportunity to work with her, I would have to say that I realized that Gladys Palmer had a vision.

Q. Absolutely. She was a role model for you very clearly. I can hear that loud and clear. She implanted in you something that you continued to carry on. I’m just curious, now that it’s for the history, but what happened when they said you lied? What did you have to do?

A. We just kind of chuckled and went on. We knew they’d be back in a few years. Scotty said, “Don’t worry about it.” Well we did have to worry about it because
then there was a moment when we'd done it, we don't have to give them anymore.

And we weren’t there yet by a long shot.

Q. Exactly.

A. We weren’t there by a long shot. And I do need to say that over the years I always had support from the one or two women, who were members of the Athletic Council. If there hadn’t been women on the Athletic Council, many things probably wouldn’t have gotten done. If there hadn’t been two women, Peg Hines in Anatomy, and Joann Stevens, who was in Nursing, on the Athletic Council, when the women went to the Athletic Department Phyllis Bailey would have never had that job. I’m convinced of that, because Ed Weaver would have looked to the outside to bring in someone who he could mold in the way he wanted to mold the program and the person. I was too old a dog to be molded at that point.

Q. It’s good also to hear their names. Peg Hines especially is someone I personally know, she was such a champion for individual women. I count myself lucky to have known here.

A. So did it. We lost a great one when we lost her.

Q. Absolutely. She’s hear in many ways, but to miss her physical presence. Well, since you mentioned athletic directors, I’d like you just to talk a little bit about, if you could, about that.

A. I’ll go through it rather briefly. I think I’ve probably said most of what I need to say in regards to Ed Weaver. He fought me every inch of the way but we won the battle together and I will always respect him for that. And at the time of his
death, before he passed away, he had said to someone that he considered his
greatest achievement was the development of the women’s athletic program. And
I personally felt good that that man would go to his grave feeling that he’d done
it.

Q. Absolutely, absolutely.
A. And Hugh Hindman. Hugh Hindman and I had had similar education at Miami
University and in some ways probably had some other similarities along the way
and understood each other. And he, by the time he became Athletic Director,
knew there’s no point in fighting this and his attitude always was, “We’ll do
what’s right. And we’re going to be the best in the country.”

Q. A good partnership.
A. It was a good partnership. And he felt comfortable with the fact that whether or
not he had the best, he thought he did. So that helped. Rick Bay was not here for
a long period of time. Rick Bay believed in the women’s athletic program and he
wanted to carry on the improvement of the program. Rick Bay and I personally
had a very slight problem we had to deal with. And I don’t know whether you
knew him or not, but I was several inches taller than he was.

Q. I was just going to say.
A. And so I learned after the first two or three times, you don’t go in and stand in
front of his desk to ask a question. You move in the office and sit down in a chair
and look for a low chair to sit in. Cause he really did have a Napoleonistic
attitude about his shortness. It was the only problem that we ever really had.
When he left, it was silly but it shows respect. I had said to his secretary, “What’s
going to happen to his office?” Next one will come and change everything around. “Well, I suppose so. They always do,” not knowing at that point yet who it was going to be. I said, “Well, if they’re going to put all that furniture in storage, what are the chances of me getting his chair?” Well about two hours later he comes down the hall and he said, “I would be honored for you to have my chair.”

Q. Oh Phyllis, that’s great. That is great.

A. And Jim Jones was the man I finished with, was one of the joys of my life, because I could not have worked with a man any easier or meshed with a man any better than I did with Jim Jones, so that the final years were great. Jim and I had been together.

Q. You kind of grew up together.

A. Yes, we did grow up together really, because he came here as a graduate student about the time I came here and I was going to go to graduate school and I did sit in on a couple of classes and I’m not sure he wasn’t in one of those. When I went to the Athletic Department, some of the things that I had to deal with first and foremost were part of his assignment. And so I worked closely with Jim and we learned to respect each other tremendously. One of the things that I will always remember about Jim Jones is in the last two years that we were both there, he’d come down and lean in the door jamb in my office and say, “Phyl, what’s going on. This isn’t the profession you and I got into.”

Q. You saw enormous changes, enormous changes.

A. We did.
Q. You were creating to change and reacting to change at the same time.

A. That’s right.

Q. I think you were a boundary stander between generations and just enormous changes.

A. When I went in I went to Jim on the first of July of 1993 to say, “Exactly one year from today I’m retiring.” I went in and asked him if I could talk to him in private and close the door, because I didn’t want to be a lame duck, so I wanted him to keep it to himself, but I wanted him to have plenty of warning. So I asked him, “May I talk to you in private?” And he said, “Certainly.” I said, “I mean in private. Will you keep it to yourself.” And he squirmed in his chair a little and said, “Yes.” So I said, “I’ll close the door. I’ve come to tell you that I’ve come to a decision that this is going to be my last year. I’m retiring a year from today. And I want to give you that year to think about it.” He said, “I was afraid that’s what you’d come to tell me and I knew that was going to happen one of these days.” And that was the kind of relationship we had, which was really very nice. I don’t know whether he feels that way but I thought it was a wonderful relationship.

Q. I think it is wonderful that at that point in our careers when we can have that kind of peer relationship with somebody and that you’ve traveled the road with. I’ve had the good fortune to have that with one of my bosses. I don’t think young people today have that. I honestly don’t think they have as many opportunities to have long term. They miss something.
A. I think that’s true. One of the things that we covered and didn’t cover at the same
time was, when Title IX became a known factor, how did the students react to
that. Well things just got better for them. They just got better and they didn’t
much care about anything else. And I heard colleagues of mine saying six and
seven and eight years later, “They don’t appreciate the impact of Title IX.” And
I said, “Why should they?”

Q. Exactly.

A. They’re benefiting from it. We need to still make improvements. They don’t
need to know all that history. It makes no difference to them. But it’s there and
historically people, I guess, need to go back to it from time to time.

Q. I think it’s like Civil Rights. If we don’t remind ourselves, the danger is what you
lose by not paying attention to that history.

A. Perhaps we ought to end up with …

Q. Yes, what would you like to end up with here?

A. Well, he’s given me a questionnaire here about my own personal reflections. I
think I’ve at least brushed on many of the changes that I’ve seen take place over
my years of involvement in sports, and basically I would say that most of them
are pretty darn good, for the sake of the students. They’ve been positive changes.
We must be extremely careful not to let it go astray because it could so very
easily. And maybe it will. I don’t know whether we can avoid it or not but we
certainly can try.

Q. What would you say, I am curious, if a young woman came to you said, “I’m
thinking about a career in athletics administration.”
A. I’d say, “Go for it.” She came and asked about it in many ways. If she came and asked about being a participant, I’d say, “Go as far as you can go. Give it everything you’ve got. All the effort you’ve got. Total commitment. Go as far as you can go, knowing that at some point there’s going to have to be a life change. But give yourself the experience of enjoying the effort, to go as far as you can physically can take yourself.” If they came to ask me about going into support area, whether it was into communications or marketing or athletic training or sports medicine, or any of the other things that are encompassed within the athletic program, I would say, “I think this is a golden opportunity there for you. It’s still young enough in the whole development that there are experiences there that can be very, very meaningful and most of those support people, if they choose, can get great satisfaction for what they give to the athletes.” If there were a young woman who wanted to be an administrator, I’d say, “Don’t go into it unless you want to give it hours and hours of your time. But you’ll never have a better experience, and it seems to me if you can be successful at athletic administration, the opportunities are now there to become the Athletic Director at many universities, just as we now have women who are now becoming Presidents of universities. I think you ought to do that. And if somewhere along the line you decide that isn’t what you really want, good. At least you have prepared yourself to go out and become a CEO or a President of some other phase of the society in which we live and can be a success. Go for it, girl, but most of all have fun.”

Q. Great. And what question didn’t I ask that you still want to answer?

A. I think we’ve rambled all over the barn probably.
Q. Phyllis, this has been truly wonderful. I’ve learned a lot and really appreciated you doing this. It has been touching for me. Thank you.

A. I hope I haven’t rambled too much.

Q. No, you haven’t.

A. I have to say to you, that I honestly consider myself one of the luckiest women to have ever come along. I don’t know how I was given such a wonderful gift, to be able to be put in a position, not of my doing, but in some way with a little foot dragging, to be able to try to provide an opportunity for young women. And I think we’ve done a pretty good job of that at Ohio State. I don’t think it’s a matter of wanting to be known as the person, the first this, the first that. In fact, I find that somewhat annoying, but it’s been a wonderful life for me.

Q. I think that’s something that women of our generation, our careers were more organic in the sense that we didn’t predict them, and that they evolved out of our experiences and competencies. We probably didn’t know we had some of those competencies. It’s very different for women today who say, “This is my goal.” Our careers didn’t have that. It wasn’t there.

A. One of the things you ask me and asked me to think about was, had it been my goal to be an athletic administrator?” I would have never even thought of it.

Q. Exactly.

A. Never dreamed it would go that way.