

Oral History Interview with David Murphy
Conducted by Daniel Gervais, 2013
Transcribed by Alison Froese-Stoddard

DG: Ok, on the air. I guess the first thing I'd just ask is your full name, please.

DM: I'm Dr. David J. Murphy.

DG: And what is your date and place of birth?

DM: Portland, Maine. December 20th, 1943.

DG: Can you tell me a little bit about your background? Where you grew up, and if you moved around a lot?

DM: No, actually, we were brought up in what they called "the projects" now; it was a housing development that was put up for Second World War vets, and if you made over \$2000 a year, you were disqualified for this because you were too rich. So it was very - I wouldn't say impoverished, but it was certainly a needy area, and it was a community centre that took care of a lot of people's needs when they didn't have food, and took care of us. It was a great place because everybody was the same. You know, no one had anything more than the next person. So it was homogeneous in that way, that we were all poor, so we didn't realize we were poor until we went outside the projects.

DG: Right, wow. Could you tell me a little more about your educational background, like high school?

DM: Yeah, I was probably held back a little bit from the projects' schools, in that they weren't up to what the city standards would be. But I was very lucky that I was always interested in education, and interested in reading, and was gifted a little bit with more brains than the average guy. We always sent more kids to reform school than we did to high school. Luckily we moved out of there when I was in junior high and put into a parochial school for grade seven and eight, and found the changeover was a little bit difficult. Then, I was always an altar boy active with the Catholic Church, and my parents pushed me a little bit towards the Catholic boys' school in Portland, Maine. And that was a Jesuit run- Bishop Shepherd's high school. So you had an entrance exam, and somehow I passed that, which is really quite amazing in itself, because my educational background was bad. And one thing that happened - they had levels: A, B, C, and D. A was the best students, B was the second best, C was still college-bound people, and D were just regular... what you would call.... just...

DG: Everyday people.

DM: Yeah. And they really didn't care too much for that group – Jesuits were rather elitist. So somehow I passed and got into section B. My first set of marks, it was Parent's night and my mother went, and the priest said, well congratulations, you've got first class honours. Well, I had no idea what first class honours were. None. Absolutely none. I found out it meant all As. So we took seven courses every year, for four years, including one in religion, theology. So six other courses. Every day you had half sheets of paper, and every course you took a quiz on the homework from the night before. So if you were diligent - and I was. I would say in high school I studied two, two and a half hours every night, because I had catching up to do. If it wasn't for Latin, I don't know where I would have been, because I didn't know the difference between a noun and a verb and a gerund, and all that, but everybody started from zero in Latin! With Latin, it conjugated a sentence for you, it gave me all the background I didn't have in my educational background, and it really stimulated me. I loved it. We did Caesar's Gaelic Wars, Cicero, although Cicero was a little dry. All kinds of things, and Ovid, and all kinds of history which I enjoyed.

[brief interruption]

So I got through there, and the Jesuits – actually, after my first year I was in Section A, they moved me up because my marks were good. The funniest thing was how elitist the Jesuits were. Father Gray was the principal of the school, and they would take everybody in, and we were all boys, so ties, shoes, the works. You couldn't cut it with running shoes, you know, they'd send you home. So we go in. They were very disciplined – you'd stand up, and he'd read out the marks. If you were a good student, it was great, you stood up, and he'd say, "Mr Murphy, you have five As and two Bs. That's very good, thank you." And then you'd have somebody like, "Jackie Collins. You have four Ds and two Es. Have you considered the public school system?" Oh yeah, these guys were serious. And everybody would chuckle, and the gentleman would be, "this is not funny". (laughs) I thought it was funny, I got five As and two Bs!

We went through it when, high school I took football, volleyball and baseball, and so it was a good, rounded group. I was in oratorical contests with everyone, I was the male lead in the play for three years – I mean we had all males, but some people had to dress up as females! Those were all musicals. And very full – I had a full, great high school experience. I got injured between my third and fourth, junior and senior year, and my senior year I actually didn't participate too much in athletics, and that cost me some pretty big time scholarships for football down in the States. But I ended up coming here and my life is very full up here, and it was a worthwhile thing. I try to tell all the student athletes, "Don't burn any bridges and keep your eyes and mind open, and good things will happen." That's exactly what happened to me. Coming here in '62, and it was a totally different university back then.

DG: Well yeah, I'd like to find out some more about that, how it was a different university. So first, what is your current position at Saint Mary's?

DM: Right now I'm the Director of Athletics and Recreation.

DG: Ok, how did you initially arrive at Saint Mary's? Was it in 1962?

DM: Yeah, and that's a funny story in itself. How I actually ended up here was interesting, because Coach Loney from St. FX somehow knew I was available, even though I hadn't played my senior year, and I got a letter from him to go to St. FX. And that's where most of the... from Cheverus high school, we sent a lot of kids to St. FX. They were the ones who didn't have a whole lot of money, and it was a good bargain, and then the other kids from Division A would go to Boston College, Holy Cross, which were you know, Jesuit schools - Georgetown... And some actually defied the Jesuits and went to Harvard and Dartmouth - they weren't happy about that (laughs) because they weren't Catholic schools. So we had a pretty good school right in our backyard.

So... I guess I'm going to go to St. FX. So I ran into my cousin, who for some reason ended up and he graduated from Saint Mary's in 1960. So I'm getting ready, and I said to him, "I got this letter from Coach Loney, and I'm thinking about it" and he said, "Oh, don't go to St. FX!" I said, "Why not?" and he says X is in Antigonish, which is a really small town. Imagine, this was 1962. There's no bars there, they have one restaurant where you have to buy food to get a beer. He says they got one nursing school, and they have to be in the residence by 11:00...

DG: Curfew.

DM: He says yeah, you go to Halifax, there's all kinds of bars, a big city, there's all kinds of activities to do... So I tell everybody, I made the academic choice, and chose the Jesuits!

DG: Right! Exactly!

DM: So to get here, there was a guy ahead of me at Cheverus, I knew he played football at St. FX, Jimmy Hamilton. And I said, how do you get to school? Oh, he says, everybody goes by train. I said, really, ok. And not having a lot of money, and I wasn't going to fly, that's for sure, so ok. So I said, how do we do that? He says, my parents will come down, and we'll pick you up, and I'll show you how to do it. I said great. So he picks me up... I should have known. He picks me up around 11:00 at night, so I throw my stuff in his car with his parents, and we go to Mattawamkeag, Maine. I defy you to look at a map of Maine, and try to find where Mattawamkeag is, it's in the middle of nowhere. We drove for four or five hours, and it was like an old cowboy thing, the old station. You get there, pretty much nothing's open, other than you went in and bought a ticket, that was the only thing open. There was no food, no nothing - just a platform. And we waited for the train to come, which came at 4:00 in the morning.

So we get on the train, and I was going, this is kind of cool. Stayed up all night, crossed the border at McAdam, New Brunswick, and that was my first border crossing. That was interesting in itself, getting all the documentation that they needed, which was pretty much nothing back in those days. Those days a driver's license was pretty much all that you needed. So we went on, and we went to Saint John, New Brunswick. We had to change trains, and when we walked on the train, some girl whistled at me and I thought, I think I'm in the right place. (laughs)

DG: Yeah, that's a good first interaction!

DM: And then at Truro, because Jimmy went north to Antigonish, and I came down here and showed up at what is now the McNally building, which wasn't completed at that time. They were still doing stone work on the North side of the building, there was all this scaffolding stuff up. Actually, when you come up that rounded driveway, you look and wow, this is really nice. I wonder what the rest of the campus looks like. Well, that was it! (laughs) That was the whole campus! So the South side, on the basement was the high school, and the Jesuits lived up above, and then the middle part were the classrooms, and then on the North side were the residences, and on the bottom were the physics and chemistry labs. So that was pretty much it. I went out to practice and I went out and looked, and it was not a whole bunch of people there, I figured they must be out on another field, but Coach Hayes was there, and he was a big man, and he leans in and says, "who the f- are you!" (laughs) Anyway, we worked that out.

DG: Definitely! Wow. I can only imagine the campus then. I mean, it's undergone construction since I've been here. SO it's just been growing and growing, I guess.

DM: It was all fields this way. Just all fields up to the stone fence that went around the property in the back.

DG: And what was your impression of arriving, and the people too. I guess now it would be akin to driving in from the airport, once you leave the airport it's just rocks and trees and skies and sea until you get into the main area. Did it seem like, I wonder what the rest of the campus looks like, but there wasn't any left...

DM: One great thing about athletics in school and sports – once I got out there and met the guys, and we started practicing and getting into a routine, it really didn't matter. You get over it, and your residence room, set it up - but I didn't have anything to set up. I came with one suitcase, so.. Yeah, It was pretty easy, put your stuff in a locker, and your days went. You had three practices a day, and you were tired, you slept, and you got up, and mingled with the guys... In fact, the Brian brothers from Dartmouth, they invited us to where they lived, and we said great – and we walked. Holy Geez, that was something..

DG: Sounds like a wild goose chase. Ok, a lot of the people you were practicing with, were they from around here, or were they from all over, or...

DM: It was kind of an interesting thing – you'd never get away with it now. When they have football practice now, it's pretty solid, you know? We had some older guys that were actually working and taking classes here. The eligibility rules in those days were far different than they are now. Yeah, the first practice I was at, and it was mostly a conditioning one, I think there were only 12 or 14 guys. I couldn't believe that that was it. But then all the other guys, there were a lot of American kids that started coming in. A lot of American kids. Mostly from Catholic schools, down in New England would send their kids up here. Also St. Barnes Catholic School run by the Christian Brothers in Newfoundland sent a lot of their kids. The mixture of students then was far different than it is now. There were the dayhops, which were the local Haligonian kids who came to school here, there were a tremendous amount of US students from New England, and... Trinidad for some reason? We had quite a few soccer players from Trinidad. And then the Newfoundlanders made up a huge amount of the other group here, and it's a shame that Memorial [University] became so famous because we lost that connection, but boy, they were colourful. They were great guys to hang out with.

DG: That must have been some interaction with New Englanders and Newfoundlanders. (laughs) Great, that's great. So, in 1964 you were quarterback with Steve Armitage, am I saying that right? You led the team to an Atlantic Bowl victory against the McMaster Marauders, is that right?

DM: That's right.

DG: Can you tell me a bit about being a student athlete at that time? What was it like playing for the Huskies?

DM: It was totally different than today. In the book, I think I brought that up – *The Pursuit of Excellence* – We were students first and athletes second. And there was no question about that. The Jesuits made sure that that's the way it was. It would be unheard of today – we took six courses your first year – full year courses – six courses your second year, and then five and five and you graduate and get out. And there was no BS, I mean, if you didn't pass, you didn't play. So you had to go to class. I remember, I was bilingual in German at the time, I had taken it in high school, when I got here instead of putting me in German 1, they put me in German 2, and there were only three of us in that class. So, I mean, you couldn't miss class! (laughs) Unless it was all three of us!

DG: They'd notice!

DM: They took attendance, they made sure you were here. I remember... I majored in Chemistry, Chem 1, and I'd missed a couple of labs – not because of football, I'd just

missed the labs! And then the Professor Sabeau came out, put his hand on my shoulder, and said, “Mr. Murphy, if you want to finish this course, you miss one more class and you’re out of here.” And I go – Oh, Ok! And they would, they’d kick you out. I needed it. I wanted to go to Med School, and that’s... I had to do it. The academic requirements were far more stringent, and the accountability was far more stringent than it is today.

DG: Would you say they saw athletics as very important, but the student obviously coming before athlete... Like, where was the balance struck, do you think, in terms of being a sports school at the time? Because I know, in the United States, it can be very, very driven in the sports side?

DM: Well, I think ... For one thing, you had a very different person coming to Saint Mary’s at that time. All of us – I wouldn’t say all of us, but the great majority of us, were blue collar family kids, where this was the first university experience in that family. You know, our parents didn’t go to university, I had a cousin that went, but that was about it. I had a couple of cousins who were my age who were all going in this together. So the expectations were that you would graduate from university. So the expectations that your family had for you were that you go to school, and you pass. It wasn’t a question of doing well, because they didn’t know what “well” was – they didn’t know if you had a B or a C or an A – you were passing, and you’d get through. So it was quite an interesting time. So your coaches – Coach Hayes, he was demanding as heck, you know. And probably Coach Baldwin in basketball not as much, but then you had Coach Goodwin who came at the end who was on the same wavelength as Coach Hayes, and they were good men. They expected the most they could get out of you. I remember one time running sprints out there, and Hayes telling us, you know, he says, “the [hoss?] is more noble than you guys, because the [hoss] will run until his heart explodes, and he dies, and You! You guys will pass out first!” Swear to god...

DG: (laughs) So that’s the level..

DM: The level that they expected. And they got it out of us. And again, we didn’t know any better. We just all went out, and we competed to the best of our abilities. I was one of the very few that did weight – a few of us, we did weight training, but that was unheard of at that time. Even the pros, they didn’t do it. So, I think the extra time that you had, between your athletics and your studies, were put in differently than they are now. I mean, kids today work out, they’re at the gym at 6:30 in the morning, you see a lot of the athletes in then, and during the day, doing their weight training, doing film studies and stuff. You know, I was a quarterback, so I did film studies. But no one else did.

DG: Yeah. Well, it’s not surprising when you hear that they instilled the determination and the grit, too. You know, it’s not surprising when another great fellow there declared that they

were going to go to the moon by 1969! I'm not surprised he did, because, you know? It was just, you go all the way or you don't go at all.

DM: That's right. We didn't have limits. Because we didn't know limits. And that was not a bad thing. You try everything, and you keep on going and doing it to the best of your ability, and no says, no you can't do that. Everybody was trying to encourage you – Yes, you can!

DG: Wow. On the front page of the SMU Journal, on the 21st of November, 1964, it reads, "The Huskies are preparing a two-way attack, hoping to rip apart the Marauders on the ground and in the air." So what I wanted to ask you, how has the mindset of the teams and the fans changed over the years that you've seen? You mentioned that it was always packed for the games.

DM: The whole city has changed. Basically, university sport was a major event in the city. So when we were playing football on a Friday night, there was nothing else going on on a Friday night. There was no Mooseheads, there was pretty much nothing else going on. And the city kind of embraced athletics as well, and they would come out. And the student body – it was unheard of that someone wouldn't go to the football game or the hockey game, or the basketball game, so basically, our venues were almost always full. So you were playing in front of packed houses all the time, people took an interest in who you were, they followed the team. We also had two Navy teams that we played against, the Shearwater Flyers and the Stadacona Sailors. And that was always interesting, because you're playing against people who are 28 to 30, some were 22 – but there were no teenagers on those teams. So it was quite a different venue, and of course, they bring their fans, they bring the Navy, you know! (laughs) You get quite a few people showing up for those games, it was...

DG: It amps it up a bit.

DM: Yeah, it did. It put the competition up at a very high level.

DG: Enough so that you wanted to rip apart your opponents in the air and on the ground...

DM: Yeah, well... That must have been Pat Hickey wrote... That was something that he - he was from Long Island, New York. So that would come up with words like "rip them apart" but as individuals we would have to compete at the highest level that we could, and yeah, we were very physical. The game was probably more physical in the sense that there was no protecting the quarterback, you know, late hits all the time. It was unreal. In fact, playing in '63, my second year, playing against the Stad Sailors, I wore athletic glasses because I couldn't afford to put contacts in, and there was a third short, and I had the ball in both hands so I wouldn't fumble it, I would just pick up the first down. And all

of a sudden, this hand comes underneath my helmet, with the fingernails, grabs and takes out and breaks my glasses in half...

DG: Really?! Wow! And you were in charge of the disciplinary committee too, later on, on the Atlantic University Sport Discipline, so I imagine you always go back to that!

DM: Yeah, if I would have known who did it...

DG: Wow. Yeah, that is unreal.

DM: The games were quite colourful.

DG: That's an incredible amount of pressure, really. Because you know you had to be A-1 academically, but then not only are you playing against some tough, tough competition, but you've got the roar of the crowd there. And it seems like it would be the perfect combination to either chisel you into a fine instrument of athletic and academic ability, or you could crack under all that pressure.

DM: I think the expectations in those years was so different. I don't think anybody cracked. It's like any sport, you'll get people who will freeze up a little bit at any one time, but because of those reasons, we really enjoyed it. I mean, I can honestly say I loved to go to practice, I loved to play games, I loved the whole thing about being part of a team, and being around some guys who you respected and liked... You didn't feel any pressure. A coach could put some pressure on you once in a while. I remember one of his great half times, and again this was against Stadacona... The only teams we had to compete against was St. FX and Stad. The rest, we just ran roughshod over the rest of them, and won by some pretty big scores. But we came out, and I remember that the first pass I threw that day was an interception, and I came to the sidelines, Hayes was all over it, and Oh man, I didn't do it on purpose, you know? It wasn't my expectation either, you know? But Coach Hayes came down on me for it. So we came in and we got down to 14 points, and then luckily I threw a touchdown just before half time, and it was tied, 14-14. So we go into the locker room, and we think that's not bad, and the oranges are there... He comes storming in, drops a couple of F-bombs, things like that, and he kicks the medical kit, which was right in the middle, and upturns everything in it and yells about how bad we're playing and everything like that. And everybody though, that's the best half-time speech we ever saw. We went out and we kinda kicked butt in the second half.

DG: He put the fire in there...

DM: Oh, did he ever. We were more afraid of him than we were of anybody else. Oh yeah, you did not want to cross Coach Hayes.

DG: Well that's one of the great things, it would seem, about pushing yourself and getting the desire to push yourself, having passionate people around you, when you're in the

institution to challenge you to push yourself, because once you're in the real world, the so-called real world, nothing can seem as scary, or as much pressure...I've been through it now, I can keep going.

DM: It was a lot of that, I think. The interesting thing is that when I look at all these people I played with and they all graduated, at least the ones that stayed, some had gone for other reasons, some had went to bigger schools, American schools, and they played football down there, in the NCAA. Others just got homesick and stayed home, for girl reasons, or whatever. But the guys who stayed, they always did really well. And when I say really well - again, we came from a blue collar background, and really well meant being a school teacher, and we certainly got a lot of guys that got their education, and taught school. A lot of guys went into business and whatever as well. I would say, they all graduated, and they all provided well for their families.

DG: Oh sure, absolutely. Um, what was it like, winning the big game for the university? Like, how did the University celebrate, did the team celebrate? Do you remember?

DM: (laughs)

DG: What can be said about it?

DM: Well, what can be said about it. The team celebration was wonderful, we went together, played well, beat an Upper Canada team, and we were very proud of ourselves. Obviously there were adult beverages involved afterwards, but the school was good. We received blazers, because back then, at this University, from high school to here, I went 8 straight years wearing a sport coat. Actually I went 12 years, because in professional school you had to do the same thing as well. But yeah, it was wonderful. John Maccacino (?), he was one of the local businessmen, and his wife was actually the president's secretary. And Coach Hayes bought these blazers, and it had a little football and SMU on the pocket. I still have mine.

DG: Oh, that's excellent. When you come from essentially nothing in terms of things handed to you, you know, trophies, championships, all those things you guys had to work for. And then to have that at the end is really nice. I was wondering if the University had done anything, because they make a big fuss now.

DM: You know, the Jesuits were funny. They appreciated what we did and everything, but there were expectations. When you went out, they expected you to win, and expected you to do well, both in the class room, and Father Collier was the priest that accompanied the teams when you went on the road and that, you always had a priest. Father Hennessey kind of took over that position in later years, but Father Collier was the one who started it.

DG: Um, how did the coaching style, at the time you were involved with them, for the different sports, change from today's team leaders and coaches, in your experience as director?

DM: In my time, everything was done in units. And there was no individual training. So if you were lucky enough to have some skilled people, then you did well, then you bring in the grit and all the things that go with it; the desire and determination. There were only two coaches at the time, and you look now – there's eleven or twelve – and I'm talking football – eleven or twelve people. They break things down more now, they do more individual training. There we just had a bunch of plays and you run them, and you run them and you run them...until they're perfect. That's how it was when I was playing – and basically, I was the offensive coordinator. Luckily, I had a good head on my shoulders and I understood the game. I actually studied it. One of the coaches gave me a book one time on offensive... actually, it was on defensive football because I needed to understand what the defences were doing, and the night before a game I would know what defence was probably up to - I'd diagram plays, what would work against this and this... And I had the vision, so when I went to the line of scrimmage, I could see that.

And we were way, way ahead of the curve in the way we did things. We had to know how to huddle. I called the game, totally, without a huddle. And the ones who'd get really ticked off were the referees because no one had ever seen this before. That you don't go back and call a huddle. No, we went right up to the line, and it really confused the defence. And the minute you'd have two dummy plays, and then the real one. And you'd have code, and everybody had to know it – that was unheard of back in the '60s. No one did that. I ended up with a migraine at the end of the day, but basically, that's what we did. We ran a wishbone with Oklahoma and Nebraska, that's what we ran from a full house backfield with options, you know, a whole...offense was ? So we were quite advanced.

The other thing that we did, we had some pretty good guys. Now, the guys are huge, but when you think, our tacklers were 275 lbs, a 300lb defensive guy, our back field – I was quarterback at 6'2", 205 lbs, which a lot of people would have had guys like that on the line. Paul Puma was 215, Burgess was 225, Teddy Purnell, who was just lightning fast was 195 – so, I mean, we were not small. We were a pretty good size team.

DG: Awesome. You graduated in 1966...

DM: I did.

DG: What were your thoughts at that time? Did you feel like you would be reunited with the University someday, or did you feel like there would always be a special connection at least?

DM: Always a special connection. Always. From the first day I stepped on campus, I loved the place. And I always felt that I was always treated fairly, and I must say that I probably shouldn't have been treated as fairly as I was! I was a bit of a rebel, Father Hennessey and I did butt heads more frequently than I should have. That was my immaturity. I did not handle that well. But no, I always knew that I was wrong, and I'd take the consequences for my actions, for sure. And he was very quick to hand out the consequences! But no, I always knew I loved this place.

DG: During your initial time here, there were significant changes and developments. I'd like to ask if you can remember, or if you can comment on any particular one. For example in 1963 the high school closed. Do you have any memories of that?

DM: Yes. It's funny, because when I got here, I didn't realize that the guys – because we'd all congregate in the bottom floor of McNally. There was a grill there, you could get hamburgers there it would take you six days to chew. And the bookstore was behind it, and Frank Waldron ran the book store, and then he went down the stairs, and here was the gym. Actually, here was the gym and upstairs was the church, as you can see the windows are still church type windows. So probably the biggest room in the whole building was the church – Canadian Martyrs. We would just kind of mingle with those high school kids, they were all dayhops. Some of them would come on from.. oh, I can't remember the name, but a lot of these people would come right from the high school and there was integration so that all the guys that would integrate from the high school would know all the guys in the high school, and we never treated them any differently. So when it closed in '63, most of the ones who were there in '63 just became Saint Mary's students. You know, university students. So there wasn't a big change at all.

DG: In 1964, SMU withdrew from the Halifax School of Journalism, and that school closed in 1965. Was that important to your group at the time?

DM: Pat and Dean, the guys who were doing the journal – I think they felt it a little bit. None of the people that I knew of were into becoming journalists, I mean they did this, and they loved it, but they were English majors, most of the time. They weren't journalists or journalism majors. Interesting that Pat did, and still does write for the Montreal Gazette.

DG: Oh, does he?

DM: Yeah he's still doing the sports beat. From the time he left here, to the present time, he's pretty much retired, but still does the odd article for them. Yeah.

DG: Wow, that's fantastic. And in 1965, the Burke Library opened.

DM: Yeah, that was a big thing. That was huge.

DG: A new facility on campus.

DM: And it was a great place to study, you know. Before, you had your room, and if guys were making noise and that, that was very difficult. It was a big assembly room up on the 3rd floor of McNally. But again, that's where the TV set was, I think it was a 21 inch black and white. That's where we'd congregate and watch Bonanza on Sunday night, and a couple of other shows. To find a real quiet place to study was not easy. The library was a huge boon to people who were academically inclined.

DG: And in 1965 the alumni arena was opened to students, I guess.

DM: Yeah, two things there. Paul Puma and I used to run Sunday night skating. I'd be on the door; he'd be on the ice.

DG: Was this open to everyone in the city?

DM: Oh yeah. And in between my last exam and graduation, I worked over there painting all the stands, the seating.

DG: Wow. So that would have been exciting at the time too.

DM: Oh, it was wonderful. Because in the meantime we had dropped hockey, and it was only because we didn't have a place that... I used to see the hockey players, they'd be getting on the bus at 7, 7:30 at night going over to Shearwater to practice, and then coming back. It was just untenable. You just couldn't keep that type of schedule for these guys. I mean, it was wonderful that Shearwater gave us the ice, and of course, that would have been the connection with Coach Hayes, Athletic Director Hayes, his Navy contacts. But yeah, they had it rough. So with the advent of the rink coming, then the hockey team came back.

DG: Ok, excellent. And in 1966, there was Radio Saint Mary's, but there was also the Student's association was incorporated. Do you remember a lot of attention paid by you or your peers to unions and that sort of stuff?

DM: You always were associated with... you couldn't NOT be associated with the student union, and all the things you have. It was just too small at the time – we were under 500 male students at the time. So I mean, you pretty much knew everybody. Sometimes you might not know the guys in Engineering, because it was a Two year, and they'd go to TUNS after that, and the courses wouldn't overlap too much with you, but yeah, you pretty much knew everybody in the school. One of the things I remember back then was Tom Haney was head of the schools security – students' security. And they had a mock parliament, and they had a palace revolt, or they were going to take over parliament. That was pretty good. It was a couple of days of turmoil.

DG: That's great.

DM: Oh yeah, it was fairly radical, and everybody said, oh my god, you can't take over Parliament, and they said, Yes we are!

DG: And they still say that Saint Mary's was a smaller institution, like everybody wants small class size, and I always find there is a reasonable number of people to have one on one conversations with my professors. But any time there's under a thousand students, and so many instructors, and everybody knowing everything that's going on with both schools. I imagine that at reunions and things like that, you must just share all the memories. Everybody was so close, and close-knit.

Um, you mentioned about being offensive coordinator. In 1973, you were offensive coordinator for the Huskies football team.

DM: Yes, I was.

DG: And they were the first to win a National play-off football championship involving members from the inter-collegiate leagues. Could you share some of your memories of the team at the time? And SMU sports in general from that time?

DM: The major transition, I would say, is that they were no longer student-athletes, they were athlete-students. At least on the football team. There had been a huge change in the recruitment of the student-athlete and there was a little more emphasis on winning football games than... And we did. They were just unbelievable, the caliber of player that we had. The '73 team, I think was as many as 13 who got drafted by the CFL. And one, Kenny Clark, he played in the NFL, he played in the AFL, he played in the CFL – he just had an incredible career as a punter and kicker. Bill Robinson won the year in '73, and then... The interesting thing about the '73 team is that it was the only team in history that won both the Vanier college cup with only four years of eligibility. Everybody else, MacGill, had five years, everybody had five years, except for this conference. And then two years later we went to five years here, but that was the only one with four years of eligibility. So Bill Robertson went to Western the next year and won his second College Bowl as a quarterback at Western. And Mike Currie went on and did the same thing. There were a few other guys who went to other schools.

DG: Wow. So after having won the College Bowl, later renamed Vanier Cup, in 1986, the team was inducted into the Nova Scotia Sport Hall of Fame. Did the University recognize this achievement at the time?

DM: Well, at the time, in '73, I mean, it was unbelievable. We had motorcades bring us back into the city, coming back from Toronto. The Premier had us down and fed us at Parliament House, and the University gave us rings to commemorate the championship, and they treated us quite well. It was a big thing. And that was an amazing year, because in '73 in basketball season, the basketball team won the CIAU National Championship.

The hockey team lost the national championship by one goal to U of T, and we won football. So that's how we became Jock School.

DG: Wow, well, it was well-earned. Geez, '73. It would almost be interesting to just take that year and...

DM: Oh yeah, you have guys like Burgess who played on the basketball team and the football team, so he won two national championships, and was inducted into the Hall of Fame.

DG: Wow, that's amazing. Ok, so moving up a bit, in the 1980s you sit on the Board of Governors?

DM: That is correct.

DG: Um, could you perhaps mention some initiative taken during the time you were there, or what the Board was like?

DM: Well, getting the stadium was part of it, the artificial turf. Well, the stadium was here, but we installed the grass field, and to get the artificial surface on. That happened from an athletic standpoint. Geez, now I'm embarrassed to say that I can't really remember a lot of the other initiatives. I know it was a time of expansion of the Board, and what we always said as well, we're so parochial here. We have to get people from the outside who have not only different ideas, but also people with money who could help with expansions. And of course, the campus was expanding all the time with new residences.

DG: Was everyone agreed that there should be a focus on getting the right services for the teams?

DM: No. I mean, the Board knew the level that athletics, in my experience, didn't really make much of the agenda items.

DG: Currently, you serve as director of athletics and creation. Could you provide some insights on your day to day efforts, or today's SMU sports endeavours that are top priorities for sports?

DM: I think today, today's athletes have changed to the extent that it's money, you know? You have to give scholarships, if you're going to get good players. And if you don't have the money to get good players, you're not going to be playing for many championships. Probably the exception now is women's sports, because for some reason, the women haven't caught up with the men as far as the athletic financial award needs. Or demands, I should say. For the guys, if you don't have the dough, you're not going to bring them in. It's more difficult, so you work as much as you can to help fundraise, and fill the war chest, and then use it appropriately. That's a huge difference from when I played. There were no athletic scholarships; everybody played because they loved the game. In the '70s,

there was some money given out but now it's pretty much you got to have money, or you're not going to compete. Look at Laval, you know, privately owned, huge, huge dollars... So it's difficult that way. I mean, disciplinary problems, you always have those, and you always have administrative things that you have to do.

My wife and I were just laughing about - some of the things I can't talk about - but if people just knew what you did, day to day.... The last thing I said was, the last four weekends I've been in Sackville, NB from Thursday to Sunday night with the hockey and other charity events, and I'm chairing men's basketball, so I stayed in town from Thursday to Saturday last weekend, the past weekend I was there from Thursday to Sunday in Fredericton, and Thursday to Sunday in Regina this weekend. Then we get back, and have to get ready for the super auction, which is a huge money maker for the athletics department, and all money goes to student athletes. And then we have our banquet, the athletic banquet in a month. So it's just... I'm 70 years old. I'm telling you, I'm starting to feel it.

DG: Oh, I wouldn't believe it! So that's quite different, obviously, than what Coach Hayes would have been up to. It's just entirely a different ball game.

DM: Oh, it's just hugely administrative. Then you throw in the recreation side as well. You've got the whole campus, that's 4000 students that come and use the Homburg Centre. And then you're looking at budgets for recreation, intermurals, club teams, how they travel. And we're running camps now - we had a situation where we just hauled three of the instructors out because they may not be in the best standing with the local police department, and we don't want that to ..

DG: There's just so many interests to balance. But keeping the student and their best interests at the forefront of everything.

DM: Yeah, and try to teach them about life lessons. The athletes, it's pretty easy, because we have that big stick; you walk over that line, and there's tremendous consequences. You won't be playing, or you'll be going home, or whatever. And most of them will abide by the rules and the code of conduct that we have. And some of them are kids. I mean, they're teenagers. They're going to make mistakes - I did - and they are too.

DG: One of the things you've done that has not been a mistake at all is because of your leadership and commitment to the student athlete, emphasis on student. There's a tripling of academic All-Canadians during your tenure. So how is Saint Mary's measuring up, in your view, to ensuring a balance of academia and sport? Could you maybe enlighten us about why you place an emphasis on academics?

DM: Oh, my background. I've been Jesuit-taught for eight years, and then my professional background has been a surgeon for 28 years - and all the continuing education you had to

take... I mean, when I graduated, with my surgery, we did everything extra, we cut up the pace for everything. And by the time I finished, we hadn't cut the pace at all, you know. But everything was done intra-orally, there were massive facial changes, the whole way of doing surgery changed. And then you're doing stuff with scopes instead of making big incisions – yeah, the pursuit of academic excellence has always been part of my life, and my mind was always open to new ideas and trying to learn new things. I'm a prolific reader, I love to learn new things, even at my age now. I try to pass it on, and the way to do it first of all, as a coach, when you're recruiting somebody you don't want a one-year wonder. That's not going to work. You have someone you can bring in that has good character, that you can bring along, coach him up. It's a slow process, there's no question. In '73 we brought in a lot of one-year wonders – well, they last two. You can't fail out completely in one year, it usually takes you two years to do it completely. And that's not the type of student athlete we want here. You have less problems outside the campus, and even on campus, and you'll have people you can be really proud of.

We had our academic All-Canadian dinner, I think it was two weeks ago, and it was a really proud night. These kids are outstanding. We have 4 or 5 of them that have a 4.30 GPA, which means they have all A+s on their transcript – there's not anything less than an A+. And I look at that and go, holy smokes. Now, that's commitment. There's a lot of 4s, high 3s. Well, to be an academic all-Canadian you need a 3.6 anyway. Yeah, it's really a wonderful night. They bring their favourite professor, and of course their parents, so it's the highlight of my year, anyway. And you project that out – you say, this is important. We have our awards banquet, and all the guys stand up and we say, you're really special. You're scholar athletes – not just student athletes, but scholar athletes. And try to push everybody, the coaches push athletically, but you make sure we're all on the same page pushing academically as well.

DG: That's fantastic. That's all the questions I had, and thank you so much for agreeing to do this, I really appreciate it.

DM: Oh, it's a pleasure. I love to do it, talk about Saint Mary's.

DG: Well, it's wonderful. For one thing, it sounds like you have quite a balancing act to do as director, and it makes me happy to know how you're thinking about it. It makes me appreciate it as a student here, as you're speaking about the balance of all this stuff, and keeping the prestige of the institution and all that. It's great. And two, positing the idea that there are these trophies, and there are these trophies, and they look best together as opposed to one or the other. Great!