

Southern Voices Oral History Project
Florida Southern College



Robert "Bud" Caldwell, Class of 1942

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[Beginning of recording too noisy to transcribe]

... and then ah ... my second, my third year I started blowing the bugle as a, as a junior. And did that until I graduated in 1942.

So, what brought you here, and I'm really curious so you came that summer to make the blocks? Is that what you were doing? Is that what your task was? To make the concrete or did you actually make the ... pour it into the forms?

We poured it into the forms and then they set up them out ... to cure.

Right.

Then I left in order to go back home. But I drove back and forth ...

Right.

... the next two years. I delivered the *Tampa Morning Tribune* ...

Oh my goodness ... so you were a newspaper ...

... for two years. To about 150 different people every morning. And ah, someone would come up and knock on our door at 3:30 in the morning. And I got up and delivered papers came back and ah, slept for about an hour and a half. Then drove over here to the college and I did that for my first two years here. Then I moved here. Into that house across from ... on McDonald Street. Her [points to wife, Mrs. Caldwell] middle ... her name was um ... Mildred MacDonald. [laughs] Nothing to do with the Street.

Uh huh ...

But ah she has Parkinson's ... and ah, so she gets around and ... can visit with people, but ah, its tiresome for her to travel.

*Do you remember how much you were paid that summer? Was it by the day? Was it by the hour?
Or was it just ...*

It was credit for college. I have no idea. What it, what it amounted to at that time. I know that when I graduated, my father had to bring a check for \$300 to Ed Spivey for me to get my diploma.

Wow

So that was part of my year. I don't know how much of it

I bit for re

Well, at that time there was between seven and 800 students here. And ah ... you got to where you knew a lot of the students. A lot of the fellas that found their girlfriends ... found them here. I had already dy-6(h)a8(f)ndgiall8(1)3(3)0a8(f)024tt(5)2004h(3)65(0)F0606w 020(7)T0(8)230990.697(0)T(1)C(0)00

When I, when I got the job of, of being bugle boy, I did not work on any more construction. But during those two years the row of buildings that le

one or two here in the Lakeland-Bartow area. We built 37 of those in the time I was involved with it. And we instituted technical associate in science degree programs in the community college. Now those are not transferable, but could, parts of it could be. If the teachers wanted it or the students wanted it. And I worked with the NASA people going to the various industries in Florida. We took a survey of, 5,000 business and industries in Florida. The first few months I was there, I knew ... I'd met the, computer science director for the department of education and we designed a one-page letter, and a computer card they called them in those days ... punch hole cards ...

Y

... and that one down, below there ... I don't remember what the name of it is now. But that was classrooms and dining.

There's [Joseph-]Reynolds and, Spivey was a dorm? Well, because the industrial arts building is built then after you are here. So what else did you take in Industrial arts? If you did drafting, what else, what other courses did you take?

We took ah foundry, we took, carpentry, types of things, But mainly, we, I was interested in the drafting and design and, we didn't have computers.

No, no, CAD. But I was wondering you know, if, when Frank Lloyd Wright was here why I don't know if we never had any architectural courses or did they have architectural courses? Just straight drafting?

Ah huh.

Well, how did you come by to be the campus bugler?

Well, actually there was one before me, uh, I was thinking about it this morning, and I knew that he was graduating. And so I went to Dr. Spivey and asked if I could do that. Because I played trumpet in a band, and ah I could do that, and ah, he let me do it.

What were your responsibilities?

I had to blow *Reveille* at 6:30 on either side of, end of these two, Joseph-Reynolds and Allan Spivey Hall. And then I know it went a7a[66]j n91(w)06)4(0301Pp9a7T04C50 T(ei)h5y1DC 7T1 1 TnefvAé b5u c(1 Tn(u)€ aendah

Lots of different things ...

And, my trumpet, my bugle was new. And one of the slides was easy to use. It worked so well I put some jazz in it too. You could tell the difference.

Well, that would be first lieutenants, the first level. [First level of being an officer in the Army is actually second lieutenant; first lieutenant is the second level] Of course a lot of them went right over as soon as they graduated from flight school; they were ahead of me in some cases.

Did you play the bugle in the service at all?

No I didn't do that, I did play in a, in a band. One time I was on an aircraft carrier for two years and we were in the sixth fleet in the Mediterranean in 19 ...

What carrier? ...

... '47 and '48. It was the *USS Philippine Sea*, was the name of it. And it was the flag ship of the Sixth Fleet. There were, I guess, a couple of cruisers and 10 or 12 destroyers. Estoy en: g Tc -011 0 u7f (p8(n)96)A-6h)16d287 (d)1

For my, my, what do you call them scholarship money. Or something ...

Right, your work study basically, that was your job was ...

But my father, must have given some each year, because in order to get my diploma, I had to get him to put down three hundred dollars, for me to graduate,

Seems like quite a lot.

Spivey, Spivey was right there with me.

What do you remember about your graduation ceremony; where was it?

It was in Annie Pfeiffer Chapel. Yeah, I got my degree, diploma whatever you, and instead of sitting down I went outside got on my bicycle and went out to the airport for my flight check.

Wow, that was back to back, wasn't it.

Yeah because after that it would have been some time before I could get another flight, FAA man over here. And so I did that.

But you did attend the graduation?

Oh yes, yes, I, I didn't want to miss that.

You were here leading up to the war years, so I'm just trying to figure out how different the campus was. It seemed like whenever you came here and you know we're exiting the depression and we're going into the war. Could you tell a difference between your first couple of years and your last couple of years here?

Well my first couple of years, it was '38 and '39 and some of '40 I guess. And ah, well it was, no, there was no, no supposition that we would be involved in the war at that time. But we did begin to get, when they began to giving ships to Great Britain, why we knew that things were involving us and this country. They gave them 40 World War One destroyers, for instance, to kind of guard the straights over there. And try and find German submarines that were bothering at the time.

And then in, Pearl Harbor [December 7, 1941] why everything kind of

night. That kids could study. And ah, there were changes like that. So called small changes, but they felt very important changes.

So it was a little testy there for a while right?

Then the Army came in, and they set up weaponry all over the place. To shoot rockets over to Cuba. And we set up our requirements for our weapons and our trucks, and our additional people. Then one day he calls me up and says where is that plan? Get it going. And that's when it started and then Kennedy turned those ships around.

Well, you were right on the leading edge of that. Well, I don't want to keep you too much longer. But I wanted to find out some additional information about the bugle. Where did you get it from?

... must have been. You know that guy that I said lived up the road, here.

The teacher?

He got it for us and it cost 10 dollars.

Ten dollars, what was your teacher's name do you remember? Your trumpet teacher?

Mr. Dan Swift.

So you think your dad bought it from him.

Mm-huh.

Was it a special occasion? Was it bought for your job?

For the job. If had a bugle Dr. Spivey, I could do this job.

Well did he say you had to go get a bugle?

He's the guy that said, "I thought I would never see you again when I left the children's home."

What a coincidence, I'm sure that was kind of, um, strange for him to all of the sudden kind of hear you. So you never lived on campus though right?

No, right across the street.

Just across the street, was that ... ?

That might have belonged, I don't know if that belonged to the college or not. But they put us working boys in that building. You could wait on tables, we had two of, three of my classmates, worked in the Juke, which is now the religious building [Jackson Religion Building now Fannin

That's the round building in those times wasn't it?

This went into the old library. Just to give you kind of an idea, that they were fabricated here on campus.

[end of tape, turned to other side]

... skating rink?

They built a skating rink, for us to skate on, and when the time came for the chapel to get seats. They made the industrial arts people, get in tools and equipment and made it in that skating rink.

... And I don't know if there were any

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[pause in taping, then tape recorder was turned back on]

There were some people who tried to get rid of Dr. Spivey one time I know. The bandshell had been built, and we had no meeting place for the whole class. So they built kind of an arbor out front, you know kind of like brush arbor. And I know I went to that place one day, when, when one of the deans really went after Dr. Spivey's job, and it was kind of hanging around sort of thing. But it didn't make it, fortunately.

No because he stayed around here 'til the '50s. So he stayed here for a few more years.

And, he [Dr. Spivey] was, he was a money man. I mean, if you owed him a nickel he went after it. And ah, it was interesting but there was a time when all of us wondered if we would be going to school this week.

Really?

Because this person, I think he was one of the deans here, I cannot remember.

Are you going to leave the bugle here with us now?

You can have it.

How about the pictures?

Yes.

[pause in taping, then tape recorder was turned back on]

... it's in publication I'm sure.

Okay so the forms, went bad? Or just the ... [looking at the sand samples]

The mixture that he gave us to mix these things with was a mixture that absorbed moisture. It was of coquina rock, which comes from the Atlantic Ocean, and then it was from a larger grain than we normally use here in Florida than we normally use in concrete work. They use a really small grain so that water doesn't go into it. And that's when after 40 or so years, some of these things got moisture in them, particularly those Esplanade things. And they began to crumble, because the interior metal began to rust. And they had to do a lot of restoration unfortunately. But it was the mix that he gave us that was not good for a moisturized area.

Was this Frank Lloyd Wright's problem, or was it his engineer here on campus?

No it was his [Frank Lloyd Wright].

Let me grab something else. Look at these. This says it was the coquina used in making Frank Lloyd Wright building blocks. And then this is what they used in the restoration which I guess was a similar type coquina. And then this is, they used Davenport sand to make the white ...

Sand was the difference in the original blocks.

So they had sand in them?

But it was large grain sand.

Okay, this, this isn't really fine. It seems kind of chunky.

Well I'm sure they changed it; Schweizer was his student, at one time.

Nils Schweizer?

And I'm sure in the restoration, they made a change. Because he knew what was wrong.

He's the one that ended up designing a couple more buildings here on campus, like the big library next door.

It's interesting that in Tallahassee, that about two weeks ago, in the Tallahassee *Democrat* I believe there was mention of a Frank Lloyd Wright farm there called the Spring House.

Spring House, it's in terrible shape.

Yeah they're trying to get money to restore it. And ah, I did not know it was there. Because these people that ah, they were the first big bankers in Tallahassee, and they built it. But I don't know what, course they left it.

Supposedly it is built on a sinkhole. They didn't know at that time to check on it.

He [Frank Lloyd Wright] always built where it was near water.

So that would make sense.

'Course his home, up there in Wisconsin, had a river running through it. ... Not a river but creek, running water all the time.

Fallingwater is a signature of Wright's.

[END]