

## Interview with Brother Emery Mollenhauer

LaSalle University, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

April 3, 2007 and April 5, 2007

Interview conducted by Matt Deininger for History 650, Spring 2007

### Introduction

Brother Emery Mollenhauer, a product of West Philadelphia, grew up in a good home where his father worked as an interior designer furnishing department stores and manufacturing curtains for the theater while his mother was a house wife. Brother Emery graduated number one in his class from Most Blessed Sacrament grade school. He attended West Catholic High School for boys under the direction of the Christian Brothers. By the time of graduation, Brother Emery was ranked third in his class and decided to become a Christian Brother. Entering the Brotherhood sent Brother Emery from Philadelphia to Maryland, Washington D.C, Pittsburgh, Rome, and eventually home again where he joined LaSalle University in 1960 as a faculty member in the English Department. After three months, Brother Emery was made Director of Summer Sessions for the 1960 – 61 academic year before eventually receiving the appointment to Dean of the Evening Division. As Dean, Brother Emery enjoyed the freedom associated with the position, admitted women in 1968, and increased enrollment beyond 3000 students, which helped create a friendly rivalry with the Day Division. In 1969, Brother Emery was appointed Academic Vice-President and assumed the responsibilities of second-in-command associated with a title change to Provost. Also during this time, Brother Emery served as Corporation Vice-President. Brother Emery's thirty years of service came to an end in 1990 when he resigned, went on sabbatical, and returned to full time tenure in the English Department, which remains true today. Brother Emery has guided and witnessed the growth of LaSalle from college to university; his story provides significant insight to the history of LaSalle.

### Table of Contents, Summary:

Session 1: Tuesday, April 3, 2007 – Biographical information, family, life as a Christian Brother, career prior to arrival at LaSalle College, arrival at LaSalle College, and physical campus upon arrival.

Session 2: Thursday, April 5, 2007 – Begins with a description of the neighborhood surrounding LaSalle, makeup of the student body upon arrival, entrance of women, milestones and responsibilities as Dean of the Evening Division, Appointment to Academic Vice President and the title change to Provost, Responsibilities of Academic V.P./Provost, challenges faced as an administrator, Role as Corporate Vice President, campus climate during Vietnam and the Civil Rights Movement, development of the Graduate Programs, shift from a college to a university, various accomplishments, and personal reflections.

### Index

Session 1: Tuesday, April 3, 2007, 1:26:09

0:00:00 – Permission to record, thank you for participating

0:00:28 – Basic Biographical and Family Information – Secular name (Charles Joseph Mollenhauer), date and place of birth, Parents' names and heritage, residence in Philadelphia

0:02:05 – Brother Emery begins an informal overview of his education and career – entered Christian Brothers after high school, education at Most Blessed Sacrament Grade School – captain of safety, West Catholic High School editor of school paper.

0:02:36 - Entrance into Christian Brotherhood, Went to Avondale and four year Scholasticate in Washington D.C - received a Bachelor's Degree graduating Magna Cum Laude with Phi Beta Kappa in English from Catholic University of America

0:02:52 – Beginning of the 50s – 1959 Taught high school in Pittsburgh, chair of English Department while earning his Master's and Doctorate at the University of Pittsburgh,

0:03:10 - 1959 – 1960 year in Rome – Second Novitiate at mother house, no longer exists

0:03:24 - 1960 sent to LaSalle College, sub-director of scholasticate in Elkins Park, taught full time beginning in 1960 (18 hours)

0:04:11 - Appointed Director of Summer School for the 1960-61 academic year.

0:04:19 - March 1961, teaching for less than a year when he received a note to become Dean of the Evening Division, commented on process of appointment by Brother John (Brother William Quinn), admitted women to the Evening Division in 1967 – Sr. Catherine Fitzgerald was the first student. Also brought in a Liberal Arts program to the Evening Division because it did not exist, the evening division was mainly technologically oriented, women historically admitted in isolated cases for Graduate Religion programs, by last two years as Dean, increased Evening Division enrollment to over 3000 students.

0:7:37 - May 1969 sit-in because of reserve officer training corp. requirement for freshmen and sophomores, served as main negotiator for the sit-in, historical two or three weeks, description of students thoughts and activities, description of the culture of the times

0:10:04 - June 11, 1969 – Became Academic Vice President, appointed by President Brother Daniel Burke, enjoyed it very much,

0:10:52 – Appointed Provost in 1977 – a change in title, second in command after the President and in charge of the campus when the President was not there on campus.

0:11:13 - Describes the early 1970s as turbulent times with a feisty faculty, revised curriculum, became more democratic, expansion of committees,

0:12:20 – Many committees, Spring of 1970 chaired Committee on Decision Making Processes which wanted to make sure the President was a brother, also served on the Committee for Going Coeducational Permanently, construction of first ladies' room in College Hall, commentary on going coed, survival, discussion about adequacy of hairdryers in the dorms

0:14:33 - Backtracked to discuss College Council (today's University Council), Presidents (References Brother Daniel Bernian and Brother Daniel Burke) and an anecdote about discussions over requiring coats and ties for entertainment

0:15:28 – Curriculum changes in the 1970s – added a number of majors, Master's Programs, religion, Spanish, Education, MBA added in the 1980s

0:15:54 - Comments on change of Deans, Provost, chain of command

0:17:20 - Commented on the evolution of programs

0:17:27 – Comment on Committee for Promotion and Tenure, importance of strengthening the quality of the faculty at LaSalle, difficulties of job

0:18:05 – Mentions LaSalle in Europe in Switzerland – dropped as a Brothers' school

0:18:21 – Difficult issue of becoming a University around 1984, everyone else was doing it, some opposition, LaSalle's Charter

0:19:50 – New Library – John Connelly, \$11 million cost, constructed 1986-88, references Jean Haley, connection to MBA accreditation

0:21:09 – Phi Beta Kappa evaluation – library was not completed and no language requirement part of the downfall

0:22:00 – Impending resignation in 1990, referenced Brother Patrick Ellis

0:22:20 – Participation on evaluation teams for accreditation of other universities

0:22:48 – Sabbatical year in the early 1990s, semester in Manhattan College and then at St. Mary's College in California.

0:23:14 – Back teaching full time, happy at an unlisted number age to be teaching full time

0:23:43 – Transition and segue back to biographical information

0:24:02 – Discussion of growing up in West Philadelphia, no sense of the Depression, references Dr. Seydow, influence of Brothers in high school, no laymen teachers in high school,

0:25:35 - Discusses siblings Marian Aynak who died last year and Joan Santangelo, comments on women and work

0:26:50 – Discusses residence growing up at 5729 Springfield Avenue, 19143; Living in the Depression, described the house, family cat “Tiny”, relationship with parents, references a picture of his father on the wall, absence of family stories, father’s career as an interior decorator, mother was a housewife, father graduated from Central High School (looks for his name in high school record book), brief background on Central High School

0:31:41 – Discusses Father’s religion, importance of faith in the family, Most Blessed Sacrament Parish (66<sup>th</sup> Street and Chester Avenue), names pastors Higgins (while in grade school) and Daily (while in high school), comments on culture then compared to culture today; comments on the power of the pastor and influence of nuns, location two and a half blocks from home

0:35:05 – Comments on line of questioning, relation to the archives, building the biography of the man

0:35:30 – Discusses influential teachers (the nuns), references Brother Gerald Berkman, role and influence of the Brothers

0:36:56 – Discusses West Catholic High School, founding by the Brothers of Mary, location, merger with West Catholic High School for Girls, now at 45<sup>th</sup> and Chestnut Streets, brothers still teach there

0:38:42 – Discusses academic performance in eighth grade and high school, extracurricular activities – school publications, moderator of publications in Pittsburgh, favorite subjects

0:40:11 – Discusses special memories from West Catholic High School, comments on walking to school

0:41:16 – Graduation from West Catholic in 1944, decision to become a Brother after high school, entrance into the Christian Brotherhood, experience at Catholic University of America, “Why English?” desire and interest to teach – Brothers were founded as a teaching order, admiration and respect for the Brothers who taught at West Catholic

0:43:36 – Discusses perception of “who are the Christian Brothers?” as a young man; the example of the Christian Brothers was an influence, no teaching like an example, their example was an influence

0:44:50 – Discusses the process of receiving a religious name; how name changed from Edmund Francis to Francis Emery, later changed to Emery C. Mollenhauer

0:48:39 - Discusses the process of becoming a Christian Brother, referenced Brother Charles Henry, comments on assignments to locations

0:51:15 – Discusses Christian Brothers’ philosophy on education; characteristics of Christian Brothers; comments on Catholic priests compared to Christian Brothers; community living

including Friday night exercise of having faults presented in front of the Brothers; comments on the term Christian

0:55:58- Discusses the vows taken by the Christian Brothers; importance of the vow of association

0:58:23 – Discusses assignment and experience in Rome; sent for preparation for a position in the institute, use of French; international flavor of the Brothers; advantage of being an international order

1:01:56 – Discusses the example his students will hopefully leave LaSalle with; considers himself strict, demanding; grade inflation; current crop of students; legacy as a teacher – demanding, always prepared, a solid course

1:04:54 – Discusses how being a Christian Brother impacts duties as an administrator - being a Brother helped; referenced Brother Patrick Ellis's leave and term as acting President in 1988; interaction with non-Catholics, talks about St. Mary's College in Maryland, comments on different ways he has been addressed: father, professor, mister, and brother

1:09:57 – Discusses number of years as a brother; comments on fiftieth anniversary celebration, referenced Brother Daniel Burke and Brother Joe Bender as also celebrating their fiftieth anniversaries as Brothers, nice event for the family

1:11:38 – Discusses reaction of family to the decision of becoming a Brother; comments on not seeing family for some time; anecdote about choosing to become a Brother verses not becoming a priest

1:13:07 – Discusses the state of the Brotherhood today; impact of today's culture – lack of commitments

1:15:24 – Discusses experience in Pittsburgh, duties, arrival; referenced Brother Victor; referenced Mayor Lawrence subjects taught; referenced Brother Edward Patrick Sheekey

1:18:15 – Discusses return to Philadelphia; referenced Brother Paul Carrey; experience as a sub-director of the scholasticate at Elkins Park

1:19:18 – Discusses initial reactions upon arrival to LaSalle College; enjoyment of experience as a teacher; comments on becoming Dean and the process of finding a Dean today; Describes the student body upon arrival at LaSalle College; males; feeder schools; more parochial, less multicultural, less geographical distance; physical campus upon arrival, anecdote about naming Olney Hall, dorms, extent of property owned by the college

1:25:38 – wrap up of session one

Session 2: Thursday, April 5, 2007, 01:18:04

0:00:00 – Introduction, Permission to Record, Connection between Session 1 and Session 2.

0:00:25 – Describes the neighborhood upon arrival, relationship between LaSalle and the neighborhood, Urban Studies Center inaugurated by Brother Daniel Burke, commented on local practice of universities taking over neighborhoods (Temple Drexel, Penn), use of facilities by neighborhood residents

0:02:55 – Make-up of the student body upon arrival, age of evening division students; nursing program

0:04:10 – Entry of women into the Evening Division (tried to bring women in as early as 1962), conflict of Brotherhood and teaching women, admission of women for survival of the College, demeanor of women and interaction with men, problems with admitting women, change of classroom atmosphere due to women, comments on academic performance of women

0:08:47 – Milestones while serving as Dean of the Evening Division( liberal arts, increasing enrollment, more students in evening than day, admitting women), Ran student activities, comments on student activities, highest majors during the years were Business Administration in industry (management) and Electronic (Applied) Physics, affiliations with industries

0:11:04 – Liberal Arts subject areas brought into the Evening Division, References Vincent Kling (English Department)

0:12:14 – Comments on the change of curriculum and academic rigor of the Evening Division, Comments on the change of curriculum and rigor of the Day Division (changing number of credits, “turf wars” between departments, requirements that have been eliminated, changes to the core curriculum), comments on which subjects should be returned to the core curriculum, increase of professionalism over the years (professional groups and accreditation), foreign languages, examples of majors where enrollment has dropped

0:19:41 – Comments on biggest challenge faced as Dean of the Evening Division (enrollment), References Brother Daniel Bernian, Comments on changes resulting from Dean of Evening Division becoming Director of Dean Division, References Liz Heenan, Director of Continuing Studies

0:22:18 – Comments on hiring of women faculty members, References Shirley Anne Erickson, Minna Weinstein, Diane Blumenthal,

0:23:44 – Describes circumstances leading to becoming Academic Vice President, References Brother Daniel Burke; title change to Provost; defined the title Provost; Comments on recent administrative changes; Discusses chief responsibilities of Academic Vice President and Provost; Challenges faced as Academic Vice President/Provost (Association to Advance College Schools of Business decision, tenure promotions, retirement of faculty members at the age of 70); lawsuit over retirement (Charles Haplan); keeping faculty happy

0:32:52 – Challenges revolving around women faculty member

0:33:39 – Discusses relationship with faculty while serving as Academic Vice President/Provost

0:35:21 – Discusses role as Corporate Vice President – becoming Corporate Vice President, responsibilities, benefits of being Corporate Vice President

0:37:25 – Discusses direct involvement with expansion of physical campus, references Steve Longo (Math Department) and Jean Haley (Librarian)

0:38:52 – Discusses LaSalle during the Vietnam War, Civil Rights Movement, References Ron Washington (in charge of the African-American Student Union)

0:42:32 – Discusses history of the Graduate Programs, observations about the number of Graduate degrees awarded at graduation; comments on grade inflation; comments on the future path of the Graduate programs;

0:48:14 – Discusses the change from LaSalle College to LaSalle University and the pros and cons for making the change, References Leonard Brownstein

0:51:14 – Discusses the importance of a Catholic (Christian) Education today

0:54:25 – Comments on his past publications; the experience of publishing; editing textbooks; teachers manuals; discusses possible future publications; Anne Tyler

0:57:53 – Discusses his participation on a variety of Boards of Trustees or Advisors;

1:00:00 – Discusses involvement in the Middle States Association; references Minna Weinstein, Bob Kirkwood,

1:01:19 – Comments on the separation of LaSalle College and LaSalle College High School; involvement on the first Board of LaSalle College High School, References Brother Andrew Bartley

1:02:43 – Comments on the enjoyment of being an educator; discusses the changing culture of students

1:04:30 – Discusses where LaSalle students come from today

1:07:24 – Discusses honors and recognitions given to him by the University, References Barbara Millard

1:09:52 – Discusses resignation from Provost and return to faculty; current course responsibilities

1:12:44 – Comments on his possible legacy at LaSalle; Estimated how he will be remembered by the faculty;

1:15:30 – Advice/suggestions for future administrators

1:16:52 – Comments on what LaSalle may look like in the year 2060.

1:17:17 – Comments on fondest memory from all the years at LaSalle – the 1960s

1:17:43 – Wrap up of interview