

ABSTRACT

SCRC Series: Lewis Clarke Oral Histories Project – MC 00191

Field Notes: Geoffrey D. McLean (compiled May 4, 2012)

Interviewee: GEOFFREY DUART (“GEOFF”) MCLEAN

Interviewer: Yona R. Owens

Interview Date: Wednesday, April 4, 2012

Location: Raleigh, North Carolina

Length: Two files, approximately 237 minutes

The interview questions guided McLean through recounting his biography, his days as a student at NCSU SOD, some of the politics involved in licensing landscape architects in N.C., anecdotes about people associated with the architecture and landscape architecture profession, discussions about drawing, and a suggestion about the degree program.

Tape Log

00:00:00	Introduction, family history, growing up in Rocky Mount, progress in school
00:08:00	Arrived in Raleigh 1961, profile of artistic mother, banker father
00:12:00	Exposure to Frank Lloyd Wright designs through mother’s ladies’ magazines
00:15:58	Discussed FLW as a landscape architect, family’s house designed by modernist architect Ryland Edwards, landscape design by Godwin & Bell
00:22:20	Heard about SOD from local graduates, just generally known
00:25:39	Anecdote about Kamphoefner and enrollment in SOD, dean’s litmus test
00:35:24	Started in architecture, discouraged by one professor, encouraged by Clarke, disillusionment with extreme modernist architecture style
00:45:50	Influenced by <i>Brave New World</i> , revealed Eastern N.C. belligerence, changed to landscape architecture
00:55:30	Anecdote about Clarke and first color design for first landscape architecture studio
00:59:24	Anecdote about Clarke’s tech course, described typical design problem, contrasted with engineers
01:01:44	Touched on first steps to licensing, described regional and urban design student project for Cape Fear River Valley
01:05:33	Discussed “from regions to Dixie cups,” more about team work, critique of classmates’ work, developing style, working with regional elements
01:12:00	Generating work, application of SOD skills in real life
01:16:30	Explained types of competitions school entered, reputation enhancement
01:20:30	Professors also practiced, discussed 1965 Capital Area Planning (CAP) Commission plan and politics that blocked implementation
01:32:55	A.G. Odell’s family pedigree, anecdote about summer job at Odell’s,
01:41:10	Drawing courses included all media, more about CAP, Odell politics, critique of Archdale Building in Raleigh, points about Clarke’s dynamic and supporters
01:46:29	End file #1

<u>Tape Log</u>	<u>File #2</u>
00:00:00	Anecdote about Thurlow, anecdote about Pullen Hall fire, anecdote about LaMarr Bunn and Kamphoefner
00:06:40	Anecdote about Thurlow wittisms
00:09:10	Discussed obsession with drawing, anecdote about drawing a Clarke exam
00:13:36	Got draft notice before graduation and course of events, was in Naval Reserve
00:17:30	Not exception to take more than five years to complete courses, opened own practice, finished degree a year later, anecdotes about Leif Valand, Nelson Benzing, Bart Bartholomew, Clarence Steppe, and Quail Corners Shopping Center in Raleigh
00:24:50	Described combined duties on active duty and design work, discharged and formally opened office
00:27:40	Grandfathered under newly passed license law, different roles of Thurlow, Clarke, Bell, and politics of passing title act
00:31:17	Strategy, anecdote about who got first numbers, anecdote about Kamphoefner at legislature, replacing the dean's secretary, anecdote about Claude McKinney
00:38:50	Stayed active in ASLA chapter, Thurlow divided state into regions, sunset law proposal fiasco
00:43:40	Prelude to decision to get P.E. license, course of legislative battle, who was involved
00:47:33	Started needing engineer seal on type project he accepted, anecdote about dam design
00:52:48	Anecdote about Susan Suggs and math for dam specs
00:58:08	Related a series of jobs during school, influenced by West Coast design
00:59:55	Obtaining P.E. license a course at a time over ten year period
01:01:50	Explained intricate storm water control design, anecdote about NCSU engineering professor, described engineering courses
01:10:04	Anecdote about Gilmore Clarke tie-in to Sailors' Snug Harbor in Sea Level, N.C.
01:14:00	Described some park projects in Raleigh, firms that worked on parks, anecdote about Optimist Park
01:20:25	Projects that were design attraction and why, gave examples, use of production renderings, reasons for no more park work
01:24:40	Never got engineering degree, described alternate path to P.E. license, added new client
01:28:57	More about job in Navy, picked up flood study jobs, described Capital Area Soccer Fields design, added to studies for P.E. license, explained convoluted process to use early computing system
01:33:38	Opinion on need for more than one skill, need for more degree hours, B.S. degree alternative, more examples of old SOD curriculum
01:37:30	Reiterated need for drawing, basic design, advantages of B.S. degree in landscape architecture, A&T has undergraduate landscape architecture program, future problems with profession
01:40:04	Reported on recent lecture at COD, reaction to women in landscape architecture, described girls who worked in his office, critique of lecturer's work
01:47:00	History of American landscape architecture needs to include Native Americans, origins of American architectural style

- 01:49:53 Reiterated need for B.S. degree, described courses common to engineering and landscape architecture, dropping undergrad program not a plus to grad program, anecdote about recent undergrad, use of drawings in student publications
- 01:55:12 Important things to know about Lewis Clarke, reason for dropping out of ASLA, anecdote about policy making graduates, engineers and DOT relationship
- 01:59:15 Number of licensed engineers, revelation that landscape architecture is the mother art, reflected on Joe Cox, looking for tie-in between history of agriculture and landscape architecture
- 02:01:55 Getting jobs that pay, problem with country's economics, writing memoir about landscape architecture, differences in professions' political savvy, surveyors have the most influence
- 02:05:00 Wondered when next Clarke will come along, reflected on Clarke's affection for students
- 02:07:58 Closed remarks with end of story about recent undergrad, predicted computer will develop ability to draw more stages of a design and specs
- 02:10:57 End of Interview