

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

History of Youngstown College

Teaching Experience

O. H. 2

NELLIE DEHNBOSTEL

Interviewed

by

William Manser

on

March 25, 1974

Sp. Coll  
Oral  
History  
2

NELLIE DEHNBOSTEL

Nellie Gwynne Dehnbostel was born in Steubenville, Ohio on January 16, 1899. She is the daughter of Joseph and Nellie May Gwynne. Mrs. Dehnbostel attended high school in Warren and in 1922 received her degree in music from the then Dana Musical Institute. In 1939, she graduated Magna Cum Laude from Kent State University with a Bachelor of Arts degree and in 1940 received her Bachelor of Science in Education Summa Cum Laude. She finished her education with a Master of Arts in 1942 from Kent.

Mrs. Dehnbostel joined the faculty of the Dana Musical Institute in 1922 and stayed on there until 1931. She rejoined the Dana School of Music faculty in 1941, which by that time had become a part of Youngstown University. She stayed with Dana until her retirement from teaching on July 1, 1969.

Mrs. Dehnbostel belongs to several professional organizations including the American Society of Parasitologists, the American Society of Mammalogists, the New York Academy of Science, the American Guild of Organists, the American Historical Association, and the College Music Society. She is a member of Christ Episcopal Church and presently resides at 771 Willard NE in Warren, Ohio. She is the widow of Raymond H. Dehnbostel who passed away on January 14, 1967.

Donna DeBlasio  
June 23, 1977

WILLIAM F. MAAG LIBRARY  
YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

History of Youngstown College

INTERVIEWEE: NELLIE DEHNBOSTEL

INTERVIEWER: William Manser

SUBJECT: History of Youngstown College

DATE: March 25, 1974

M: This is an interview with Mrs. Nellie Dehnbostel for the Youngstown State University Oral History Project by William Manser at Youngstown State University on March 25, 1974, at 8:45 a.m.

M: Mrs. Dehnbostel, what are some changes that have occurred since you first came to Youngstown that have impressed you the most?

D: I was impressed with the true music training that we had here. They weren't interested in public school music; that hadn't developed yet. So, in 1869, Mr. William Dana founded the school [of music]. Now his father, Junius Dana, was a very prominent man in Warren, and he was very much against musicians. In those days, musicians were considered in the same category as drunkards. They were thought of as no account. Mr. Dana's father was the president and an officer of the bank and he didn't want his son to be a musician, but William Dana decided he wanted to be one, anyway. So he started.

He got a room in one of the buildings down in Warren above the bank where his father was connected and he started his music school. His idea was that if you were going to be a musician, you should have a private lesson every day in every subject, not just once a week like conservatories offered in those days. Because of his idea, the Dana School of Music was called the "Music School Where Everyone Took a Lesson Every Day."

Well, Mr. Dana's father, Junius, was quite a strong man and he said he'd let his son live at his house, but he said, "You can eat at my table, you can sleep in your bed, but do not speak to me." He wouldn't speak to or converse with his son at all. So, one day, the music school was having a rehearsal of "The Messiah" and they were singing the Hallelujah chorus. Mr. Dana saw his father standing in the back and he said, "Offer this man a book. Maybe he'd like to listen." And from that day on, his father changed and supported the music school. He was a cellist himself. He liked music, but he just didn't believe in it as a profession.

They say that you can whistle "Ta-ta-ta-ta-tata" anyplace in the world and you'll have an answer from a Dana student. That's the way the Dana whistle came about. Mr. Dana's father was playing the cello in one of Haydn's symphonies, but one day he was absent during a rehearsal. When it was time for the cello part, Mr. Dana's father wasn't there so one of the students whistled the part: "Ta-ta-ta-ta-tata." And from that day on, it became the sign for the music students to whistle to each other.

Well, the school developed. They had people from all over the world. We had students from the Phillipines, China, England, and all over the United States. It was a well-known school and in fact, when Dean Aurand was working on his master's [degree] up in the University of Michigan, he was told that Dana, Oberlin, and Cincinnati were three of the oldest music schools in the country. Now, as I said, the music school was primarily for professional training.

I first went to the music school just before the armistice was signed in 1918 and, at that time, enrollments were way down. There were hardly any men at all, just young boys. At that time, they were selling liberty bonds to make money for the war. The Dana students used to go to the theaters in between shows. They would sing "Laddie in Khaki" and "It's a Long, Long Trail A-Winding." Those were some of the old songs that were popular during World War I. It seems to me, since I started in music, we've had one war after another. It's always been war. Well, the enrollment was way down and things were pretty bad economically. Then the depression came on and that was rather a bad thing

too, because people were out of money. The banks closed up and we just didn't have much enrollment.

In about 1931, the idea of having public school music developed; the conservatories had to connect themselves with some academic institution to get English and the other subjects. Up to that time, music schools didn't have to have any English or history or anything. So, a lot of schools, like those in Cincinnati, were affiliated with the University of Cincinnati. Oberlin had its own, but we had to get some academic work.

The first persons we had were from Hiram College. Hiram sent over to us some of their people. They had a branch in Warren and it was developing very well, but President Fall of Hiram decided that the branch was going to become bigger than the campus school at Hiram and he discontinued it. Well, that meant that we had to get somebody else to furnish our academic work. So, then, we got Kent State. They had some people who came over and offered courses in English, History, and classes like that. But finally, things were sort of bad because we didn't have the affiliation we should and that was one of the reasons why we had to come down to Youngstown in 1941. That brings us up to about 1941, when we had to come down here to get affiliated with a school. Now, does that give you a little idea of what we had to go through when we were in the old school?

The school was very well known. It had a very good reputation and, as I said, was one of the oldest [music schools]. The Dana School is older than Julliard, older than the Eastman School of Music. These are just youngsters compared to Dana. And of the hundred and some years that Dana has existed, I have spent around fifty years in connection with it. So, this has been quite an important part of my life and I have seen a lot of changes in it.

One of the important things that had to be changed in 1941 was our academic affiliation. Now, when we came down to Youngstown in 1941, that was just about the time we got into the World War. In the fall of 1941, Mr. Dana was supposed to be the head of the music school, but he passed away just before the school was moved down here. He died suddenly so Dr. Henry Stearns was made head. He had been in

charge of the music department here at Youngstown College, as it was called then. He was in charge of the music department, so they made him head that year. But the following year, Arnold Hoffman became head.

After Pearl Harbor, the military took over the building. Dr. Jones had bought for the music school, the building where the music school is now on Wick Avenue and we were there one year. I used to have my classes there and everything. I taught theory and harmony and so on. When the military took over, the building became a link training school for the Air Force. They had those link trainers in the rooms up there at the music school and the upper floors were used as a dormitory and it was also out of bounds to anybody [else], so we had to have all of our classes down in Jones Hall. It wasn't called Jones Hall in those days, it was just called the "main building". So I taught down there until after the war. And of course, I think one of the outstanding persons who did the most for this school from the time we came down here to the time it became a state university was Dr. Howard Jones.

Now, as I said, in 1941 or 1942, when the war started, you could walk through the halls and hardly meet a person. The enrollment was way down. Everybody was in the Army and there were just a few girls around. But we never missed a pay. Dr. Jones really had a problem. He had to raise all that money to get the school going and that was one of his big problems. But in spite of that, he had taken over the music school, which would be an added economic problem.

In 1944, before the war ended, Dr. Jones started the School of Engineering. Now that was another big adventure. But, of course, during the war, industry was making money. I guess that's about the only place where they made money during the war. And so, industry financed the beginning of the engineering school, which was a big step. We used to have those classes in what was called old West Hall, down in the basement, where the old snack bar used to be. That was the first engineering school. I have a page from the Vindicator Rotogravure section, showing all of this and I am at the oscilloscope with Miss Guarniere, one of our faculty members. The engineering school really got started in 1944.

That was a big undertaking for Dr. Jones. Then not only did he do that, but he also raised a lot of money for the Youngstown Educational Foundation. When we became a state school, that money went into the Youngstown Educational Foundation which is really a very important thing. Dr. Jones had some buildings built. We had the new library, the science building, then later on they added this Ward Beecher wing. The last building before we became a state school was the engineering building. So, you see, Dr. Jones acquired other properties, Linder House and Dana Recital Hall for the music school, and we added on to the auditorium.

That's another thing, we were always building something. If it wasn't a drill, it was some other kind of machine going to interfere with your classes. That's what it was like when they added on the auditorium. There was really a lot of noise. I'd hear all this noise because I had my class right up above it all, but that's the way it was then. Nowadays, we have to tramp through the mud.

Dr. Jones probably did the most for this institution, as you can see, or we wouldn't have the institution that we have today if he had just let things go during the war. Now, what other things would you like to have me give you?

- M: Since we were talking a little about Dana, what attitude or what reaction was there on the part of the Warren community when they realized that Dana was going to move from their community down to Youngstown?
- D: Well, most of the people were pretty much put out. They were very sorry to see Dana leave. I think that was a very important thing because Warren was the original capital of the Western Reserve when it was taken over from the Connecticut Land Company. They had a lot of people there that were very much interested in history and they were sorry to see Dana leave. But, you see, Hiram had given up and we hadn't any way of getting the support from the academic program there, so we just had to have some other means.
- M: Well, how did the general students and faculty at Dana feel about becoming affiliated with Youngstown?

D: Well, I'll say this. We didn't always get our pay before we moved down here, as I told you, things were economically rather bad. The enrollment had dropped at the music school because we didn't have the academic subjects. We couldn't offer the public school music. Also, there were few people who went in for professional stuff because at that time, they used to have theater orchestras in every theater up in Warren. They were big orchestras. Music, at that time, was really booming. The big theaters in Chicago and all of the big cities had enormous organs that featured the music they had. They'd have big orchestras, too. Then, the talkies came along and that put an end to a lot of the professional playing because the talkies had their music all tuned in with their pictures and there was no demand for the orchestras, and organs, and things like that served as attractions in the theaters. So it had to go then to public school music. And that was the important thing in bringing the institution down here. We had to have that academic work.

M: So there was a change in the curriculum, too, at that time.

D: Oh, yes. Yes, there was because you had to have all these academic subjects and you had to have the practice teaching that's needed for teaching in the schools. We used to do some of that in the public schools around the area and they still do it today. The practice teaching is still done in the schools in the area.

M: How close a relationship with the public schools did Dana have before that time?

D: Well, they tried to have and they did have some courses in the normal school which is like a lot of those county normal schools where, back in those days, they offered practice teaching. Mr. Dana was president of the school board in Warren so there wasn't any problem there, but you had to have more than just that. You had to have the other academic subjects, and teachers for these subjects and that would have cost a lot of money, so we had to have some financial backing.

M: How much change was there in the kinds of music being taught at Dana at that time?



D: Well, the emphasis for professional work, of course, is on performance. We used to have a very fine orchestra. I played in the orchestra for many years; we had a very fine band. We used to have guest conductors of various kinds like Henry Hadley and some others to act as visiting directors.

We always had a Wednesday night concert and that was broadcast through the station down in Youngstown. You see, they had a line up to our music school. Every Wednesday night the people in Warren used to support those concerts. There would be standing room only out in the hall to hear those concerts and they were broadcast.

The emphasis then, changed to the public school stuff. You'd have all of the methods, the practice teaching, the academic subjects, and there was less time to spend on your instrument. If you're a pianist, you'd have a lesson every day. You were expected to practice four hours on the piano. Well, if you had to do all of the other subjects besides, you couldn't practice four hours, too. Here is a change from the professional type of training to the public school requirements that one has today. Of course, we still have people that go for a master of music.

When we came down here in 1941, we had no orchestra, no band. There weren't many boys and girls to play in them, just a few. The room was small so we had to give up a lot of those activities. We didn't have concerts and weren't able to give opera. But now, the music school has really come back to this and I feel that they really do a wonderful job with their concerts, their ensembles, and all of their activities. So that period when we first came down was sort of bad, because it was wartime.

M: What kind of reaction has there been in the professional music world to this shift in emphasis on music teaching from just concentrating on one instrument to concentrating on a broader field of study?

D: Well, of course, the older people think it's very bad. But still, I think they are getting back to concentrating on one instrument. Now, if you look at our music school, they have some wonderful concerts and they have some fine faculty members that are performers. Even though they've had to give the

public school music, because that is the field where most of the people will be employed, nevertheless, they're getting back to more attention to the professional part, too. Recently, we had the fine arts degree passed. This degree will carry over, not only into music, where a person wants to specialize more in the professional part, but it will carry over into art. It will enable graduates to be artists, not just teachers in the public schools and it will carry over into speech and drama in the same way. So that degree, you see, will help in the professional way for all of those arts as well as the Dana School.

- M: Since Mr. Dana was involved in the Warren school board, did he have any influence or did he use any of his influence to help push along this tendency for affiliation with public school teaching?
- D: Well, I think he did with the prexy and another person that I mentioned who helped is Mr. George Bretz. Mr. Bretz is now a retired music teacher. He taught down here for the college before we came down. And he also was influential with Mr. Dana, in getting President Jones to take over the music school.
- M: Who was more willing, at that time, to have Dana come down to Youngstown, President Jones or Mr. Dana?
- D: Well, I think they both were.
- M: They both were equally willing?
- D: You see, Mrs. Jones, the President's wife, is quite a lover of music, and I think she rather wanted the music school, too.
- M: In what way was Mr. Bretz most effective in bringing the school down here?
- D: Well, I suppose he was effective in just presenting the facts to President Jones and making him see that an old school like that had a reputation. It was pretty old when we came down here. It was begun in 1869.
- M: Was the Youngstown community, at large, aware that they were getting a school with such an illustrious background to come into the city?

D: That's pretty hard to say. I've never been acquainted with the people in Youngstown, although we always had a lot of students that came from here. They used to commute on the old Erie train until we moved down here. And then during the first few years, when the war came on, I had to commute on the Erie to get down here and that train, the eight o'clock train, used to be an hour late. I had a nine o'clock class and I'd just get into the station and dash up in a taxi to get to class on time. That train was always filled with the military because it was the New York to Chicago train. It was an hour late and because there'd be a lot of servicemen on it, you had to stand up. It was really something.

The Youngstown people--there are a lot of graduates of the school from Youngstown--probably realized the importance of the school. They still continued to come and we have an enrollment with a lot of Youngstown people in it.

M: Do you think they played much of a role in helping to bring Dana to Youngstown?

D: No, I don't think so. I think it was entirely due to Dr. Jones and Mr. Dana with George Bretz helping out.

M: How did the students here at Youngstown react to having Dana come to the College?

D: Well, because the war was on there weren't many students to complain about anything. I guess those who wanted to study music accepted Dana and were glad it came down, so they wouldn't have to ride the old Erie train. They could get lessons right at home.

M: Did many of them show much interest in studying music?

D: Oh, yes. Those that were able to, showed interest. You know, after the war, the enrollment really increased. The music school is one of the areas today in which enrollment is not down like it is in liberal arts and some of the other areas at the university here.

M: At about the time that the curriculum was changing at the Dana school and before, what were the particularly strong points of Dana's curriculum? What were the strong teaching points?

D: We had some very fine teachers. The students were well trained in music. They had very good classes in ear training, harmony, orchestration, composition, and things like that. We used to always have a program in which the students would perform their compositions and some of them were very good. When they were graduated from the music school, they had to play a concerto with orchestral accompaniment or sing an aria if they were a vocal student.

I started playing Mozart and Rubenstein concertos with the orchestra when I was a sophomore. The year I graduated I played the Tchaikovsky B flat [concerto] and that was one of the first appearances of it around this area. It had been performed in other areas, but I think I was the first one to perform it in this area. Then later on, it became quite a favorite with people.

M: So Dana brought new things to the area. What was the general local reaction to this?

D: Well, I'm not really familiar with these Youngstown people.

M: In Warren, too.

D: Of course, they were sorry that the music school had to move from Warren, but nevertheless, I think they were quite pleased that it was a part of the college and would not have to be given up. They had to do something. So I think they were pleased about it, but they've always been sort of sorry we had to move down here.

M: Well, how much support from the Warren community in general, and the business community in particular, did the Dana school get while it was in Warren?

D: Oh, you know how it is. They say a prophet is not always accepted in his own country. The Warren community liked the school, but they did not always want to back it financially. They did help to a certain extent, but if they had really gotten back of it, I think it would have made the difference.

M: How much was the school in need of financial backing?

D: Well, as I said before, we'd go months without any salary before we moved down here and after I moved

here, I never missed a salary check. The old prexy saw to it that people were paid.

- M: I believe that Dana has had some sort of political connections. I think William Dana ran for Congress once and they wanted him to run for mayor at another time.
- D: He might have. He was a great person to go around and talk. He was a very good talker and he was always taking off on tours, either concert or speaking tours. Maybe he did run for Congress. We didn't worry much about his political affairs though, in those days.
- M: Do you think his political affairs gave him connections with the Warren community that might have given him support for Dana?
- D: Well, yes, it gave him a little support but I don't really know. No, I don't think it had too great a bearing on the support.
- M: Well, as far as the teaching areas and the music education areas in Warren that the Dana school was strong in, I think at one time, they were known for their military band.
- D: Oh, yes, they always had a handsome band and we would have guest conductors like Goldman and other people come for special concerts.
- M: Why do you think Dana was particularly strong in this area?
- D: Again, it's a professional area. Dana had bands in those days like Krill's Band, Goldman's Band, and Sousa's Band. In fact, my theory teacher played horn with Sousa's Band in the summer season. You know, he would go and play and had even toured with Sousa quite a bit. And they were just interested in that sort of thing in those days.
- M: What areas of music education were the most prestigious at Dana at that time?
- D: Well, I think you'll find that we have a lot of our students now teaching in all of the public schools around here. You can hardly mention one that I haven't had as a student since I've been here so

many years. I think they know music as well as many other things. So many times you'll find that in some of the other schools they weren't too well trained in the performance of music itself. I think our students were able to perform and to teach music; both are very important. We had some very fine faculty members, too, that were good teachers.

M: What areas of music education ranked relatively low in prestige at that time?

D: I can't think of any specific area, no specific area.

M: What areas were most popular with the students?

D: The students, I think, liked the instrumental pretty well, but of course, one has to have both. They have to take all kinds of methods now, even though they may be majoring in instrumental music. They have to have some voice, and so on, to do some of that work.

M: How satisfied, in general, were the Dana students with the curriculum as it was then? Was there any degree of dissatisfaction?

D: No, no, I don't think they were dissatisfied as long as what we had to offer them at the time was sufficient, but they just had to have the other academic subjects and that was the big problem. That's where we were forced to get other work.

M: What changes in the biology department have most impressed you since you have been associated with it?

D: Well, let's get back to that first period during the war. When I came down here in 1941, Willard Webster was the only biology teacher. Dr. Semans, who had been head of the department, had gone into the Department of Agriculture to do quarantine work during the war. So, Willard was the only one teaching any biology. We also had a man named Dr. Waldron, who taught general sciences, as it was called in those days. The education students had to take a certain amount of science to be public school teachers, but Dr. Waldron had to go into training Navy men and couldn't teach it. I had just finished work on my master's degree in biology and chemistry at Kent State in 1942. That was the year we had to start on our war activities. So, they asked me then

if I would teach the general sciences because the prexy knew that I had gotten my degree in science. So, Willard and I used to do all of the science teaching.

Then after the war, Dr. Worley came back. Dr. Claire Worley had been in the Department of Agriculture. He'd been sent down to Haiti to do some work down there. So, after the war, he came back and became head of the department. Gradually it started to build up. Dr. Worley passed away very suddenly and Dr. Charles Evans and even Willard Webster had charge of the department as acting chairman for several years until Dr. Kelly was appointed. Finally, today we have Dr. Van Zandt as chairman.

When we first started, we had the biology majors who were majoring in biology mainly to teach in the public schools. We had some pre-med students and some pre-dentistry students. Now today, the enrollment of our majors is 350. But of that number, probably many of those are in the nursing program, they're pre-dental or pre-medical students, and you can't really say that they're all just majors like they used to be. There's more of the pre-professional training and the two-year nursing program that requires a lot of work from our department. So there's been a trend from just straight majors in biology to professional and pre-professional training. So, as Dr. Van Zandt said to me the other day, "You just can't say how many of those 350 are just straight majors, majoring in biology because some of the students are in the professional stuff."

Now the nurses' training in the city of Youngstown has been given up at North Side Hospital and in hospitals in Youngstown, so that accounts for a large number of our students. You see, we have so many. As you noticed in the Vindicator yesterday, 108 graduating in nursing. That's a large number. Our biology teachers have to furnish all of that anatomy and microbiology for those nurses, besides all of the other professional subjects.

Now, we also have one change in the biology department. We have a curriculum in what is called pre-forestry. That's starting to build up; it was begun several years ago. Dike Beede was the one that advocated pre-forestry. He had talked to [people at] Duke University. They have a forestry school down

there and it was through Dike that we started this pre-forestry curriculum. I was on the curriculum committee when we began it several years ago. It's been an important thing, so we'll probably build it up, because a lot of people are going into forestry today.

Now, there is another new project. Dr. Van Zandt is on this board for the new medical school. If we get a medical school, that will mean another area in which the biology department will have to furnish some of the classes.

- M: Mrs. Dehnbostel, in what ways did the biology department adapt itself to the increasing inflow of pre-med students? In what ways did it try to develop a curriculum more suited to their needs?
- D: Well, I think that our faculty has enlarged a great deal from the time when I first came down here. At the present time, we have sixteen full-time faculty members and four part time. Now, we have also another course. We have to furnish a service course for people that need a certain amount of biology as a requirement for their degrees. Those classes are all quite large, but with the size faculty that we have, we have been able to handle it. Also, the nurses' classes are very large because the nurses all have to take anatomy, physiology and microbiology. And so our faculty members have to be trained in that area. Most of them have their doctorates and the rest of them have their master's degrees. The enlarged faculty has helped a lot. If they get the medical school, I don't know if we'll have to add more faculty or how that will be. But the classes for the general students, as I say, run very large and in fact, most of them are closed at the present time. There are very few places.
- M: In what ways, generally, has the faculty changed since 1941 or so?
- D: Well, it's just more in number than anything else. We always had people with training in specific areas in biology. Some are trained in one area and not in another. We have probably more research being carried on now. That's another change. Several of our faculty members are quite interested in research which has developed in these last few years in most schools. Research has been the thing.



M: Well, why do you think there's been such an increase in pre-med students and so forth?

D: Having all of those nurses put in has made a large increase in our enrollment in biology and then there are just more people who are interested in going into medicine. We have medical technologists and all those different people to take care of.

M: At the time that the Dana school was becoming affiliated with Youngstown, Youngstown College was, at that time, becoming accredited by several higher education agencies. Do you think this influenced Dana's decision to move down here?

D: That was one thing. We belonged to the National Association of Schools of Music when I first started teaching. In fact, do you remember Dean Karl Dykema, who was dean of the liberal arts here? Did you know Karl at all?

M: Oh, I know him by his name.

D: Yes. His father, Peter Dykema, was one of the men that developed that Kwalwasser-Dykema test for music ability. He was at Columbia and was on the board of examiners for the National Association of Schools of Music when I first started teaching. In fact, he came into my classes and observed my teaching. Well, we were on their list; we were certified by the association until about 1931 during the depression.

In 1931, they had to cut down their staff at the Dana school. So, for three years I was out in public school music. They were in a bad spot from the Depression. Well, the school went down in enrollment and we had to have academic subjects. We were taken off the NASM list because we didn't have the academic subjects. That was a big factor in coming down here. Well, after we had been down here a few years, when I was acting dean at the Dana School of Music, the NASM examined us again and we were given probationary membership for a couple of years and then given active membership. So that was a very important factor. You had to be on the accreditation list of these schools. That's how it is in every area, whether it's engineering or music or what; you have to be accredited or people just don't think you're doing your work.

M: Did this generate much faculty enthusiasm for the transfer?

D: I think the faculty did want to improve, that is, to get this academic work so we could be back on the accreditation agencies' list, yes.

M: Well, how did the Dana faculty and the students feel about having somebody put in charge of Dana in 1941 who was not associated with it before?

D: Well, they cooperated. They were good faculty members. They weren't like the people today. We didn't have to start any particular association to put us forward or we didn't call any strikes. We cooperated. The word was cooperation in those days. You cooperated to improve things, you just didn't find fault and strike about it.

M: What problems or difficulties did Dr. Stearns have right after the transfer?

D: I don't think we had any trouble. I think everybody was quite pleased. They were getting their pay as I told you, and things were going a lot better than they had been here before with no chance of the academic work.

M: Dr. Stearns had no particular difficulties, then?

D: No. No, we didn't have administrative difficulties in those days. In fact, we didn't have such a large number of administrators that you have today to find fault with. You better not quote me on that. (laughter) That is the point, you understand. No, no, we had a lot of cooperation. You had to have it. Dr. Jones wouldn't have been able to build up this school if he'd had all those problems of dissatisfaction. I think that if you ask almost any of the old timers around here they will say that there was a different feeling then. You were working towards something and not against it. You see, there is a lot of difference.

M: Why do you think there was that attitude then and it isn't there today?

D: People were a little different in those days. You probably are too young to know it, but they were.

M: Why do you think they were different?

D: Well, it was just the attitude of the times. People weren't striking. They didn't have public school teachers striking and even the kids didn't strike out against the teachers. Why, my goodness, even in the public schools, in those days, they wouldn't have thought of hitting a teacher. If the teacher asked you to do something, you did it. There was a different attitude in general with people in those days.

M: How was discipline taken care of at Dana?

D: No trouble. No, they were enthusiastic about their work. They didn't have time to get into a lot of monkey business. We had no streakers and all those kinds of things, but we used to have some pranks. The boys, after hours, when they were up in their dormitory, liked to play pranks on each other. Even I used to play pranks. I'll have to tell you about this one.

I was usually pretty good at behaving. As I said, we cooperated and tried to do what we should. We used to have practice rooms in the buildings at the old music school in Warren. There's a tendency, even with the practice rooms up here, for the boys to drop in and see their girls. Well, that was a problem too. I am told that at one time the old Mr. Dana had stairways on both sides of the building and the girls had to use one stairway and the boys the other. If they were caught in a girl's practice room, they were expelled. Old Mr. William Dana was quite a disciplinarian in that way, as far as the boys and girls were concerned.

Everyone had their practice room and there was one girl that was pretty fond of the boys and she had a lot of friends. But this time, one of my friends who was from Youngstown, Gertrude Gleason, and I, decided we'd have a little fun with this girl. She had been going with a boy that played French horn and there was a carpenter working up on the floor where her practice room was. We had gone up there and we had a sign that said: All Men Welcome. First Come, First Served. And we hung it on her door.

Well, Mr. Dana was in New York at the time, and Prof Cook, as we always called him, was in charge of the school. Well, the carpenter saw this man

come up and look at the sign, or he was up there and was looking at the sign, and the carpenter thought he put it up. So this girl, when she found the sign, rushed down to Prof Cook with it and said that this boy, Bill Schonk, her boy friend, had put it up there because she had been going out with another boy and he was doing it to spite her. Well, Prof Cook was one of those old sort of gentlemanly fellows and he called Bill down and was going to expel him but Bill said that he hadn't put it there, he hadn't done it. So finally, when we found out that Bill was going to be expelled, we went down and confessed that we had put it up. So, we used to play pranks, too, and have a little fun now and then.

M: Generally, what kind of relations existed between the faculty and the students at Dana? Was it pretty close?

D: They were very friendly. We had Christmas parties. We'd put on stunts, a thing that we always did. Every class would have a stunt for this party and the faculty would have a stunt. So, one time, when the man I married was in school with me, his class put on a sort of chorus girl show and he was dressed in these short paper skirts. They were dancing around on the stage and his paper skirt fell down and there he was, standing in his shorts. So, we used to have a lot of fun, too. We put on stunts of all kinds and there was a great deal of friendship between the faculty and the students.

M: Was there much overlapping of social life?

D: Well, as I said, the faculty and the students had parties and they'd both be there. And even up till the time we came down here, we had parties and things like that. The faculty was always very friendly and social with the students.

M: The people that were attracted to the faculty at Dana at that time, did they look upon music teaching as their career in life or were they musicians who were simply doing that as a temporary thing?

D: No, I think you might say that their career was to teach. Now, most of them had had professional experience. They had played in orchestras and in various organizations, but they finally decided

on teaching and they were interested in seeing that their students got what was coming to them. That was their emphasis. They wanted to teach and produce good students. But everybody, in those days, had to have some professional background and training.

- M: Did many students at Dana, at that time, aim at teaching as a career?
- D: No. They didn't think of teaching as a career, for the most part. It was performance. As I said, there were orchestras and bands where you could play. That's what they wanted to do, play. Oh, yes, their emphasis was on playing.
- M: I believe that Mr. William Dana was associated with the National Education Association and that he helped start a music teachers' association.
- D: Yes, that's right, he did.
- M: In general, what was the attitude towards teachers' associations among the Dana faculty?
- D: Oh, I think they all belonged to the National Association of Music Teachers. In fact, did you see this diploma? As you can see by that diploma, Mr. William Dana was made a life member of the association that he was the founder of, but he was also a representative of the Royal Academy of Music of England. In fact, when I was in school, they sent him a certificate showing that and I haven't been able to find that certificate anyplace. When we moved down here, a lot of things were brought down. They just brought me that diploma the other day. So, maybe they'll find the other certificate. He was also given a citation at Bologna, Italy, for his work in music. So, William Dana was a nationally and internationally known person.
- M: Did any important changes take place at the Dana school after William Dana was succeeded by his son, Lynn?
- D: Well, of course, his son, Lynn Dana, Sr., became head of the school and he was a very well-known person, too. He was, I think, an officer in the music teachers' national association. We never had summer school until just a few years before we

came down here because in those days, the faculty played in the orchestra at Chatauqua, New York, every summer. The Dana School had charge of that, of the orchestra, and all of our teachers played various instruments in the orchestra at Chatauqua. So, you see, the faculty had professional practice in the summer as well and they gave recitals and things like the faculty do today up at the school.

M: What characterized the faculty's attitude towards Dana's administration?

D: They were well known, most of them, in the music field. Miss Kathryn Guarnieri was a soprano and taught voice. She would give recitals, sung in oratorio, all over the country. She was well known. Mr. Dana went on tours. They all had various recitals and things that they gave all over the country. Oh, yes, they were well known in those days.

M: I believe that William Dana was well known for his prohibition stand and so forth. How did the students react to Mr. Dana's attitude toward prohibition?

D: Well, the students reacted like they always do. Those boys had a fraternity and of course, they had a fraternity house, and they used to have drinks just like anybody else. But Mr. Lynn Dana was not the strict disciplinarian that his father was. That made a difference. He didn't worry about those kinds of things.

We had a place called the Hollyhock Gardens in Warren. Now, you probably don't know that Perry Como sang at Hollyhock Gardens. Well, he used to sing down there when he was just a youngster and that place had people from Pittsburgh and Cleveland and all over. It was a speak-easy and they used to come over there to get their drinks during prohibition and Perry sang there. That was a well-known spot in this whole area. They came from all around. So, they were able to get their drinks all right. Mr. Dana didn't make them quit.

M: How about the faculty? Did they drink?

D: Well, I suppose they had theirs, too if they wanted. They were always pretty law-abiding people, but everybody had their bottles in those days. Well, most of them did, except the WCTUers and we had

a friend that was one of those WCTUers. I used to like to put rum and other things in my cooking and we would invite them to dinner and her husband would look at me and wink. She liked our food pretty well, but she didn't know there was any rum or anything else in it.

M: What changes resulted in the Dana School after the fire of 1937?

D: Well, it went on the same as usual. As soon as we got the fire debris cleared away, we went on with our work and it didn't hold us up in any way. I don't think we missed any classes. We went on as usual.

M: Did the fire destroy anything?

D: It was confined mostly to the auditorium. It did burn up into some of the practice rooms above the auditorium, but aside from that, there wasn't too much damage. We could have our classes and so on. My room was in the front of the building and I could have my classes in spite of the fire. You see, there was a long hall leading back to this auditorium and our classrooms and things were up in the front there, so it didn't hinder us in any way.

M: How were the building facilities at that time? Were they satisfactory?

D: Well, they were all right. We had four floors in the building where we were. The Danas lived next door. I should tell you about the original Dana building.

After Mr. Dana's father relented and went to aid the school, he bought a big mansion that was on the corner of Park Avenue and High Street in Warren. It had pillars. There were three of those buildings in Warren that had been built by some of those old founders. There was a Kinsman house and that's up on Mahoning Avenue. Now, you've probably seen that building that has the four big pillars, that's been renewed and renovated as a historical building. Well, the institute building on the corner looked like that. Then there was a Quinby building. The Quinbys were old timers in the Western Reserve and their house, which was like the Kinsman House, was over on West Market Street on the top of the hill.

The man that built the old building where the music school finally came, was in love with a certain girl in Warren whose parents had a lot of money. He wanted to build a house that was as good as that Kinsman House on North Mahoning and so he got the same architect to design the building for him. It was a three-story house and had great big pillars on the corner. And then during the Civil War, it was used as a hotel; it was called The American House, and people used to stay there. Well, then, Mr. Dana's father, Junius, bought it for the music school.

When I was a youngster and first came to Warren, I remember seeing the Dana students. They used to have to wear uniforms in those days. They had a gray uniform that was military in style and it was trimmed in braid and had lyres on the collar. It was a regular military type, only the girls wore skirts instead of pants because pants would have been out in those days. They all had to wear that military coat and everything. Those were worn when I first came to Warren before I ever went to the music school, when I was just a youngster. As I said, Mr. Dana was a very strict disciplinarian in some respects, you see.

That old building was finally torn down and they built a building in back of it in which there are some commercial stores now. Then they built a cottage which was called "Junius Cottage," where the Danas lived. After that they built two other buildings that are still up there on North Park Avenue, one was the school and the next one was a girls' dormitory. In those days, I said they came from all over the country so that was a four-story dormitory for the girls. It was finally taken over by the YWCA. The girls used to live at the YWCA and the building next to it contained the classrooms and the concert hall.

- M: You mentioned earlier that some of the students at Dana were involved in fraternities. What kind of organizations did the students usually belong to besides fraternities?
- D: Well, we had the boys' fraternity and the girls'. Those were the principal ones.



M: Did much of the students' social life at Dana center around these organizations?

D: Not too much. They had their parties, but there were more parties, in general, for the school. You see, in those days, our enrollment would probably be about one hundred students. Now that's a small enrollment so you can have parties. You could have parties for the juniors or the seniors would have their own parties. That was the way the social life went in those days.

M: Well, what general purpose did these organizations fulfill then?

D: Oh, they were just like the general fraternity of today. They had their house and the boys that belonged to it lived there.

M: Were they separated from the other boys?

D: Yes. The fraternity house was up farther. They had a house up on one of the other streets, you know, like students do now.

M: Was there much friction or disagreement between the people who belonged to these clubs and those who didn't?

D: No, there wasn't much friction because there was only one boys' fraternity and most of the boys belonged to it. And most of the girls belonged to the girls'.

M: Was there any particular reason why some of them didn't join?

D: Well, sometimes, it was a matter of finance, but generally, the fraternities were pretty nice to most of the people.

M: Mrs. Dehnbostel, was it difficult for the university to gain support to build its present library?

D: The university in general?

M: Yes, to build the current library, the building that houses the current library.

- D: As I told you, Dr. Jones built up quite a bit of a foundation and all those buildings up to the present time, were financed from money that he had built up--millions of dollars. He worked very hard.
- M: What particular problems did you encounter working on the library committee?
- D: Well, we used to have a lot of meetings and there was always the argument about whether to have an open stack or closed stack library and a few things like that, but it was interesting and we enjoyed seeing the library go up.
- M: How long was the open stack-closed stack question an issue?
- D: Oh, it wasn't too much of an issue. We finally decided on the open stack.
- M: What people were interested in having a closed stack library?
- D: I don't recall that. I think most of them wanted the open stack.
- M: What advantages would there be to having a closed stack library?
- D: I don't know. We didn't worry too much about that. That was one matter that was discussed probably, but we were just anxious to see how the building went along.
- M: What kind of library facilities did the Dana School of Music have when it moved here from Warren?
- D: Well, they had very small facilities. It was very limited in size. Because we didn't need a lot of academic material when we didn't teach those subjects, we didn't have to have too big a library. If you aren't teaching English and all those things, you don't necessarily have to have a big library. It contained mostly music and recordings; we had a lot of recordings when they came in.
- M: Did the Youngstown College library facilities for general academic subjects, such as English and so forth, fulfill Dana's needs in that respect?

D: Yes, we used those facilities. The library, when I first came here, was up on the fourth floor of Jones Hall. Even the college library was very small, but that's one thing we had to build up, you see. Think of having just the fourth floor of Jones Hall for library space. It was nothing compared to what you have now. I think Dr. George Jones, who was head of the library here, has really built up our library. He's been very good in building up our library in general at the university here.

M: Before Dana came here, did the old music department at Youngstown have much in the way of library materials?

D: No. People had their own books in those days. Most of the faculty would have a nice library of their own. But you didn't have that reference work that you have to do today. You see, when you'd practice on your instrument, you always bought your own music. You had all that to buy. The students bought their own books so people in those days, especially in the music school, didn't need a bigger library.

M: Mrs. Dehnbostel, what problems in particular, did the music school have after it became associated with Youngstown?

D: Well, as I told you, after the war when the veterans came back, we really enlarged our enrollment. My husband was in charge of the band then. We had a marching band of over one hundred people. Now that was a big marching band. Of course, the veterans hated to get out and march. They thought they'd had enough marching in all their war years. But we had a good marching band to play at the affairs. Well, things were going along pretty well and we wanted to get back into this National Association of Schools of Music, which we finally did.

When I was acting dean, Mr. Hoffman had been our director. We changed title names time and again around here. He was our director and I was the assistant director. Well, then he took a position down in the Carolinas as head of music in the state down there and I was acting dean. I was director right at that moment, then I was acting director when he left. So, we were going to make an application to the NASM, which we did. And

Dr. Joseph Smith, who was dean of the college, went with President Jones to the meeting where we had put in our application. I didn't go.

One of the conditions of the NASM was to have a man as dean. This was where the idea of Women's Liberation might come in because I've had this problem ever since I have been in things; there has been prejudice against women. So, when they said they would accept us, after the examination, they told President Jones that they wanted a man for director. President Jones was going to let me be the director of the school but they didn't want a woman. They had to get a man. The president didn't like that, but, of course, that was one of the stipulations. So, we were to have to get a dean then. He was to be called dean. So, we interviewed some men and Dean Hugh Miller was the man we selected. The president said that he'd make me assistant dean, but I couldn't be the dean.

Dean Miller was quite a strict disciplinarian and we had a young man in our voice department, Mr. Kenneth Kitchin, who worked to get Dean Miller out. He didn't like Dean Miller. Dean Miller was, as I told you, pretty strict. Some of the faculty got up a petition that Dean Miller be removed, which he was. I know that that was one of our big problems. I had to be acting dean until they decided on another dean. So, finally, President Jones--he was the one who selected people in those days, you didn't have any faculty committees or anything like that--selected someone. He chose Kenneth Kitchin to be the dean and I was assistant dean again.

Dean Kitchin had all the vices you could think of. He was an alcoholic, a homosexual, a dope addict. He was a bachelor; he lived with his adopted mother in one of the houses that the university owned that stood on the place where the science building now is. He used to call up the faculty at three o'clock in the morning and fire them. He was psychotic and I thought he was going to end up at Woodside, which he finally did. They had to fire him.

He gradually got better and the man that directed the symphony before Franz Bibo came, John Krueger, offered to look after him. You know that when they let people out of Woodside, they have to have

somebody to vouch for them. So, the director of the symphony then, said he would look after Dean Kitchin. Well, Kitchin just about lived at Mr. Krueger's house and the poor man [Dean Kitchin] was disturbed. Well, we had to fire him.

Dean Dykema and I had to present the evidence of some of the things that he did to the faculty Senate to show why he had been let out. Oh, he was a terror. He went out west and he disappeared in August of one year and they found his body up in the mountains some place around Los Angeles in about October. They don't know whether he was murdered or whether he committed suicide. That was terrible.

The whole business of how Dean Kitchin used to treat those poor students was terrible. He'd tell a student one thing one day and the next day he would say, "I didn't say that at all." Well, we were losing students. That was a big problem because we'd had a nice enrollment after the war. There he was and the students just weren't coming to school. So we had to fire him. He was a very bad influence.

After we got Dean Aurand, things began to pick up again and it's been very good since. And I think that Acting Dean Byo is doing a very good job, but I hope they'll let him stay as the head of the school because yes, he knows how to run the school. He has a good personality, and I think he gets along well with the faculty and they should leave him where he is.

M: Why was Mr. Kitchin chosen to be dean of the music school?

D: Well, he used to go with the President's daughter. We'll put it that way.

M: At any rate, upon what pretext was the previous dean, Mr. Miller, removed?

D: Well, Mr. Kitchin tried to say that Mr. Miller wasn't running the school the way it should be and, you know, you can always trump up a lot of charges if you're a psychotic personality. I don't think the faculty that signed his petition had any idea that Mr. Kitchin was such a person. And, in fact, this

vocal teacher of Mr. Kitchin, was fired. Dean Kitchin had said that he was going to have him teach next year and the poor man was counting on it, and then all of a sudden, he was fired. That was the way Dean Kitchin worked.

M: Where did this vocal teacher come from?

D: He was at Murray State College and Mr. Kitchin had studied with him and liked him. He came up here, taught a year, and then Mr. Kitchin fired him for no reason at all. He did so many erratic things. His actions just weren't logical. As I told you, he called up Mr. Myerovich, the teacher of violin, and fired him at three in the morning and he fired Madame Cleve who taught voice. We belonged to the AAUP then, the American Association of University Professors, and she took up her grievance with the AAUP in Washington. Of course, she didn't get fired; they saw to that. But that was the way Dean Kitchin worked. For no reason, no logical reason, he'd do things. You couldn't have a person like that in charge of the school.

M: What particular complaint did the people who helped oust Dean Miller have against Dean Miller besides that he was strict?

D: It was more-or-less Kitchin's shenanigans that got him out. You know, how people can do. They start something like that and they can do a lot of damage.

M: What were some of the other problems involved after Dana became associated with the College?

D: I think the Dean problem was the biggest problem that we had. After we got that straightened out, the enrollment increased. We had an excellent faculty. We've enlarged the faculty up there. We give operas, we give concerts, we have good organizations, ensembles of all kinds. So I don't think we have any big problems; there are always little problems.

M: Did Dana have any problems getting support to put on concerts and shows?

D: Well, the university has always been very good about cooperating with the programs that we have.

- M: Did the school of music have difficulty getting the proper books for the library that it needed?
- D: They have a very good record library up there and the library in general ordered all kinds of books for them. No, they're well supported.

END OF INTERVIEW