

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

Canfield Fair History

Canfield Fair Board

O. H. 199

ROBERT ROSE

Interviewed by

Carrie A. Stanton

on

May 17, 1983

ROBERT A. ROSE

Robert A. Rose was born on April 21, 1926, the son of Florence M. and Thad C. Rose, and has lived all of his life in Canfield, Ohio. He and his wife, Ruth, have two children.

Mr. Rose is a banker and worked for Farmers National Bank from 1949 to 1961 and for the Farmers Saving and Loan from 1961 to the present time.

He is an active member of the Canfield Fair Board and is in charge of the "bank" at the Fair as well as the Grandstand entertainment.

Mr. Rose is a member of several organizations-- the Rotary, American Legion, Shrine, Elks, Saxon and the First Presbyterian Church of Canfield.

His special interests include golf and antique cars.

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INTERVIEWEE: ROBERT ROSE

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SUBJECT: Canfield Fair, Canfield Fair Board, treasury of Canfield Fair, Grandstand entertainment, harness racing, Western Reserve Village, duties of Fair Board

DATE: May 17, 1983

S: This is an interview with Robert Rose for the Youngstown State University Canfield Fair Project by Carrie Stanton at the Administration Building at the Fairgrounds on May 17, 1983 at approximately 10:00 a.m.

We usually start with your family background, your personal background, where you were born kind of thing....

R: Well, I was, of course, born in Canfield and lived in Canfield all my life. I spent all of my teenage life about 500 yards from the fairground. I worked on the gates at the fairground when I was fourteen years old. I was probably one of the youngest that ever sold tickets at the fair, when there were only a couple of gates to admission into the fair. My father was connected with the bank here in town and they used to pick the money up at the gates back years ago and take the money to the town bank. That was before we had a bank on the grounds. And I used to ride to the fair with them as a youngster and have always enjoyed the fair. And when the opportunity arose in 1954, I became a director. I was probably one of the youngest directors ever to come on the board. I was only 28 years old at the time.

S: Yes, someone did tell me that you were the youngest.

R: And today, with Mr. Schaeffer and myself, we comprise

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the oldest in service on the Board, 29 years. So, I've been around a while and I've seen a lot of good men come and a lot of good men go. It's a job of dedication and there's very little compensation to it. It has been fun and I've enjoyed every minute of it, both on the state and local level. I'm treasurer of the state's Fair Manager's Association now, and I've enjoyed every minute of it.

S: Good.

R: You meet some fine, fine people in fair work.

S: You spent your early years in Canfield?

R: Yes, all my life I've been in Canfield.

S: Did you go school around here?

R: Yes, Canfield High School. Later I went to the service and after service I went to college, Ohio State and Youngstown University. Then I got married like everybody else and went to work. I've worked at the Farmer's National Bank here in town and also the Farmer's Saving and Loan Company, now for First Federal. We've just merged with First Federal.

S: Oh, did you?

R: At the end of the year. So, we are now First Federal. And I've been in the banking business practically all my life.

S: Isn't there a Farmer's National?

R: Yes, Farmer's National, but Farmer's Saving merged with First Federal in December. I was elected treasurer of the Fair Board when Mr. Kilcawley died in 1959. A great man and a dedicated man to the fair. He's one reason why we have a bank on the fairgrounds. He thought we should have a bank here. I have been treasurer since 1959, except for a short time, the two years when I was president, 1964 and 1965.

S: When did they start the bank at the fair?

R: That would have been about 1957, in that general area.

S: What did they do before that?

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R: Well, they used to pick the money up at the gate and take it right to the bank downtown. Farmer's National always handled it. So, they'd go around to the gates, periodically, pick the money up and take it downtown and count it.

S: Did they ever have any problems then?

R: Never had any. We always had a scare that somebody would have a tip that they were going to be robbed but in handling a lot of money, we never had really any problems at all. We always had police escorts. So, there was a very smooth operation. It's much smoother today because we do have the bank on the grounds and the armored car picking up at the gates.

S: It works better that way?

R: Right.

When I first came on the board, a fellow by the name of Moherman from North Jackson was on the board, and I don't know whether he retired or died. But anyway, they gave me the police department. I had the police department from 1955 to 1957, for a couple years. And at that time we only had, oh, I'd say, a dozen police at the most on the grounds. Today, I know there's probably five times that many. I had two crews, a night crew and a day crew. And it was a very simple operation compared to the problems we have today and with the people we have today. Then in 1957, Mr. Millikin died. He was a director, Bert Millikin and he had charge of harness racing. When he passed away, I thought I'd take the harness racing if they so desired. So, they gave me the harness racing. And I had the harness racing up until 1968, for ten years. I've had grandstand attractions ever since. This is my ~~fifteenth~~ year in grandstand attractions.

S: Can we go back to the harness racing?

R: Go ahead.

S: I don't know much about harness racing. Do they pay?

R: Yes. We have pari-mutual wagering. You work on a percentage with the mutual handler. Usually it's a 50/50 or 40/60, whatever you come up with in your contract with your mutual man. After the pay offs

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and so forth, you work on that percentage. It's about, I think at the time they were working on 17 percent. So if you split that fifty, fifty, you'd be getting about 8 percent. You don't make a lot of money on harness racing at fairs, but it's a necessary thing. If you want a completely rounded fair, you have to have a little bit of everything. And of course, we think we do here at Canfield. And it has proven over the years that people enjoy it, just like the horse pulling and so forth. It's a combination of things that we have here that make a good rounded fair.

S: So the harness racing is a success here?

R: It breaks even, let's put it that way. You don't make a lot of money on it because the purses you have to pay and so forth. Mr. Brown handles that department now and has since I gave it up.

S: We were talking about grandstands?

R: Yes, we're in the process right now. Usually, by June 1, we like to have everything set to go. In fact, as of this morning, I'm ready to go on my advertising for the fair attractions this year. And we'll start selling grandstand tickets. We, at the Canfield Fair, have not gone to the one price that a lot of fairs have over the state and over the country. That's one price you pay at the gate and you get everything. I feel that if we are going to give them something worthwhile, why give it away? The grandstand shows cost a lot of money. Our budget this year is going to be in the neighborhood of \$150,000. So we've got to pay for it some way. So we do sell tickets to the shows. And we think we've got a good line-up again this year. We hope we can sell a lot of tickets.

S: You say you would have to charge quite a bit more at the gate, I would think, if they wouldn't charge for the grandstand?

R: Yes, they have to off-set it someplace. And I'm a firm believer that we stick to what has been a success for us. And why change when you are a success.

S: Have they ever thought of going to just the one price?

R: No, we never have.

ROSE

S: Isn't Trumbull County?

R: Trumbull is.

S: And the Ohio State Fair?

R: Ohio State is. And of course, this was one of Mr. Rhodes' favorite programs the pay one price. I don't know whether they would go back or not. It's pretty hard to go back after you've gone to one price. So we figure we're going to stay the way we have.

S: Have they always done it this way?

R: We have, yes. The state, in the last two or three years, they've just going to one price. And of course, Trumbull has just had it the last couple of years, too.

S: So, usually by this time of the year you have the grandstand shows?

R: We hope to have it all lined up by the first of June so we have a couple of months to sell tickets. And we hope to have it about sold out by show time or by fair time. It's nice to have that money in the bank in case you get bad weather.

S: How long have they been doing that, selling the tickets ahead of time?

R: Oh, for approximately fifteen years.

S: Oh, have they?

R: Yes. We used to have a lot of thrill shows here and we still do end up Monday night with a thrill show. This is a thrill show community or area. And it seems as though you go into some areas that the thrill shows will sell and some won't. But in this particular area, people love thrill shows. This used to be a great auto racing community also. So you have to kind of weigh the community and see what it is. It's good country music area also, with Ponderosa Park out here. So, we buy a lot of country shows, and they make you money. You have to go with something that makes you money.

S: Did you ever have trouble with people not fulfilling their contracts?

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R: Oh, we've had cancellations, yes. When you are dealing with artists, you'll run into that. It's always in their contract that if they should get sick or are making a movie or something like that, they can cancel on you. We've had them cancel practically the last minute. That sends you into quite a problem because we work on Labor Day weekend. And of course, that's one of the most popular weekends for artists. They're out travelling and it's hard to pick up somebody.

S: What do you do?

R: Well, you get in touch with your agent or your agent gets in touch with you. Just like we had Willie Nelson cancel on us and there were only a few people out there that could take Willie's place. We wanted Waylon Jennings, because we knew that he was the same type of singer and could fill the bill. We had a lot of tickets sold. We had about \$80,000 worth of tickets sold for Willie. So, we bent over backwards and had to even fly him in from Fort Lauderdale, Florida by special plane in order for him to perform and return because he had a date down there. There's a lot of finagling that has to be done. You're at their mercy, because they can almost ask anything and you've got to pay it. We lost money on that show, because of that. So, it's not easy when they cancel on you. You always keep your finger crossed that they're not going to get sick or something happens.

S: Was it last year that Marie Osmond...?

R: Yes, she got sick. And year before, Willie Nelson got sick. And back a few years ago, B. J. Thomas had a problem. All they need to get is a doctor to write a little note saying that they are ill and can't perform. And what are you going to do? So, they can get out of their contract very easily if they want to.

S: Do you have to deal with these people personally?

R: No, I don't. We deal through an agent. We deal with Kleins Attractions out of Chicago. Of course, I'm on the phone, not constantly but periodically and we discuss who's available and what's the price going to be and et cetera and try to come up with something that is going to sell tickets. And that's the name of the game, is to fill the grandstand. We don't particularly want to make money on the shows. What I do is, scale the house. I know what the show is

going to cost. So, I figure out how many seats we have. And scale the house accordingly, about a three quarter house, so that if we get a full house, we make a few dollars, and if we get a three-quarter, we break even. And it has worked pretty well. As I say, we don't want to make money on it. We just want to break even, because they are paying to get into the front gate also. So, I figured that is helping out. And it has worked very well over the years.

S: I understand that they ask for some strange things in their contracts.

R: Oh, yes.

S: Do you remember any strange ones?

R: Well, for one thing, whether you condone it or not, most of them like to drink. And they will specify the brand and the amount and so forth that you have to have there for them. Also, some of them here back a few years ago, Johnny Cash in his contract, we had to serve him dinner. They even got down to the fact that it had to be linen napkins, crystal and et cetera. And that's pretty hard to do at a fairgrounds in the middle of the racetrack. But we put it on for him and ever since then, the contracts seem to specify this dinner bit, and they'll name the type of, as I say, beverage that they want. And you have to have it there. It's a must, because anytime that they put something in a contract and you renege on it, they can walk off that stage and you still have to pay them. And you haven't fulfilled your contract. So, it's almost a must that you fulfill that contract just as it states.

I remember back, this is years ago. You probably remember Peggy King. She was with George Gobel back years ago. And we had Peggy King here. And I put her on after a monkey act and she was very upset. In fact, she almost walked off the stage because she did not want to follow a monkey act. Well, at that time Gobel was bickering whether he was going to give her a new contract for the next year. And of course, she was upset over that plus this monkey thing. She was hard to handle. And most of them are hard to handle. The artist is not necessarily hard to handle, but it's their agents. Agents are tough. They look out after their star. And so a lot of them are tough to handle.

We are fortunate here that we have a very good sound system. We spent a lot of money on sound. And

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we have good facilities, a good stage, good lighting, and everything. But over the country, they run into a lot of areas that don't have these facilities. And consequently they are on edge all the time of what they are going to run into. They don't know whether Canfield has this or that, so it's quite an experience.

S: Do you get mostly people that are on a fair circuit that will go to the Ohio State Fair and fly up here and then go somewhere else?

R: Yes, a lot of them. The agent, if he knows that I'm interested, for instance, in Willie Nelson or Englebert Humperdinck, who we are going to have this year, he'll try to line up Syracuse, New York or Michigan, or the Ohio State Fair, and put a circuit together so that these artists are not jumping around. And he can buy them better if he can line up four or five stops.

S: Is it cheaper that way for you too?

R: Yes, we get a little better deal on a contract. So, you have to take a lot of these things into consideration. And people ask me why don't we get so and so. Well, we're dealing with just about, well, Labor Day, and two or three days there that the artist has to be available those two, or three days. I can't put him on, like Ponderosa can get, say, Alabama and put them on in June. I have to have them available like on Saturday, Sunday, and Monday on Labor Day weekend. So consequently, it's tough to get the artist that you might want because he can be booked someplace else or doing a movie or something like that. So, that makes it a little tough.

S: Since you were handling this, you've always had agents?

R: Yes. We've always booked through an agent. It's very, very time consuming. And of course, the agent puts the show together as far as the emcee goes, the band, the lighting, and everything to see that it comes off like it should. So, we've always worked more or less through an agent. And there's a lot of work on his part. We furnish the stage, but they bring in the backdrops and so forth and more or less make a production out of it.

S: Did you have anything to do with the Pioneer Village or Western Reserve Village as it's called now?

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R: Oh, yes. We had to change the name because someone out in Des Moines, Iowa, was going to sue us because he had the name Pioneer Village franchised. Yes, back in 1964, when I was president of the Fair Board, I had in my mind that I wanted to create a village on the grounds, like a pioneer village. At that particular time there was a building that became available in the city of Canfield, called the Elisha Whittlesey Law Record Office. The Women's Club of Canfield owned the building. It had been given to them. And they were going to move it into the center of the park, and some of the townspeople were against it being in the center of the park and so forth. So they offered it to us at the fairgrounds. A group of us on the board decided that it would be a great idea. I came up with this sketch of this little village that we could build down here on the southwest corner of the grounds. So, we contacted Mr. Klempay of Canfield here to move it. And he moved it down in 1964. This was the start of our pioneer village, Western Reserve Village. From there, one of the directors came in and said, "I know where there's a log cabin down by Salem." So he and I went down and looked at it. We had Klempay move it in. That same year, the Erie Railroad gave up their station here in Canfield and it became available for a dollar.

S: A dollar? (laughter)

R: A dollar. So, we acquired all three of those buildings in one year. And the first year, it was a real mess down there, because we moved them in in a hurry and they weren't on their foundations yet ~~on anything~~. But it was the start of a very successful and a very beautiful village. We have at the present time ten buildings on that ~~ground~~ down there. And with an investment of way over a hundred thousand dollars, we have at least sixty thousand dollars in landscaping. But it has been a labor of love. About, I think it was around 1965, Gib James came on the board. And Gib and I have worked together on that village down there ever since. It's our baby, I guess you'd call it. And all of the buildings there have some historic value. There's no reproductions at all. We hire some girls to man them during the fair in costumes. It has worked out beautifully.

About the time we were putting this village all together, they dismantled the old Mahoning County Home, up on Herbert Road. And so we got a lot of material from there. Some brick, for the walks down there, and some stone, and woodwork and so forth. We were also lucky in having a contractor here in

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town by the name of Buzz Rice. And he and his assistant worked ~~two~~ or three summers down there and did the necessary carpentry work to put all this together. And it has really been a fun thing and it's a real asset to the Canfield Fair.

And then in 1976, we built the carriage museum. Back in about, it must have been around 1964 or 1965 also, I knew that there were four carriages available. The Mahoning Valley Sanitary District had four carriages that they had acquired from an old barn that stood out on the sanitary district. So, I wrote a letter to Mr. Kidston, who at the time, was with the Dollar Bank and also on the board of the Mahoning Valley Sanitary District, asking them to donate them to the fair and which he took up with the board and they did. So we acquired four beautiful carriages at that time. And we built that into a collection of 22 carriages. We have the Cochran Collection from Youngstown and George Bishop had four or five carriages that he gave us. And so, we have, as I say, built that into 22 carriages.

We used to house them in a tent back then. And in 1976, of course, we built that carriage museum, which is a lovely building also. A few years ago we restored all of them. We had a fellow up in the Amish country, Ken Kepner, take a couple up at a time to do them. And we spent around \$12,000 to restore them. He has done a magnificent job on them. We just were well pleased with our show down there. It's very interesting. And a lot of people go through there every year. It's a great building for our carriage museum. And someday ~~maybe~~, we hope to put an extension on it or something and have a few antique cars and maybe an old firetruck or something in there.

S: That's nice.

R: Gib and I are now working on a project to bring a steam engine in. The board has okayed it. It's just a question of getting it here now. It weighs ninety tons. It's sitting on a siding at the Ohio Edison Plant in Niles. And as I say, we're talking to Conrail about moving it down here for us. And then Mr. Klempay is going to move it on to the grounds. I think it will be something that kids in the future will enjoy looking in and enjoy having their picture taken up in the cab. We'll put it along with a caboose in front of the station down there. It's a big, old iron horse, as you can

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understand with ninety tons. But here again, it costs a lot of money to do these things. We figure it's going to cost about \$25,000 to get this in and get it in some restorable condition.

This is a big operation. It takes a lot of money to run it, when you figure you've got all the buildings we have here on the grounds.

S: It must be quite expensive just to move the buildings when you move them?

R: Yes, well, it's getting more expensive. When we first started back in the sixties, we figured about \$4,000 a building.

S: Don't they have to move all the wires in the road?

R: It depends on the height of the building, yes. We tried and we could have had it, the old St. James Church in Boardman.

S: Oh, could you have?

R: Oh, yes. We were the first to look at it. And Gib and I went over there and this is back years ago when it stood up there on Route Seven in front of the Mall. And we had a price from Mr. Klempay of \$25,000 to move it. But it was so high that without cutting it into two or something, we would have to move a lot of wires. And we had a price from the telephone company and Ohio Edison of another \$25,000 just to move the wires. So, we would have had an investment of about \$50,000 in that church. It would have been gorgeous to have down there in our village and we would have loved to have it, but it just became a cost item that we couldn't afford.

S: Do you keep the village open during the year?

R: It's open whenever anybody wants to tour it, yes. At the moment, starting at about the last of April and the first part of May, a lot of school groups go through. And Mr. Bare from the fairground here will take an appointment and take them through, but other than that, unless it's a special occasion, by appointment only we open it.

S: You don't advertise at the Fair?

R: No, we don't.

S: It seems a shame that it just sits there.

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- R: Yes, it is, but there again, to man it, it would probably take a lot of money. And there's a lot of upkeep to it. There's a lot of painting and there's a lot of upkeep to it. And I just hope that in future years, the boards will continue to keep it up, because it's something that is an asset and will be more of an asset in later years.
- S: Do you ever have trouble with vandals down there?
- R: Very little. It seems to go in streaks. We'll have a few windows broken now and then, but it's very little that we've had stolen. I think I can count the items on one hand that we've had stolen. It's amazing that we don't have more. The latest thing that we had stolen, we had one of these old hitching posts given us by Josephine Kyle, one of the old steel or whatever it was hitching posts, and we had it planted in the ground and somebody just backed in and hooked on to it and pulled it right out and took it. But, we're very lucky, we have had very little vandalism.
- S: Do you have plans to get more buildings?
- R: We would like to. We're kind of restricted on space down there. But someday we would like to maybe get a barber shop or something small. I don't think we can ever get as large a building as that St. James Church was in there now. I know we couldn't.
- S: I was driving past West Lake crossing the other day and you know, they still have the "monkeys nest" there.
- R: Oh, is that right?
- S: Yes. That would be great to get.
- R: Talking about driving past, I was on my way to Columbus one day and I happened to stop at a light in North Jackson. I looked to the right and there was a building there that would make a beautiful country store. And that's how I got the country store. I approached the lodge out there that owned it, and we got it very reasonable. It was an old country store years ago. And I think Gib and I probably had more fun putting that store together. We moved that in the first of August and I can't remember the year, but by the end of August, fair time, we had that fully stocked.
- S: Where did you get the stock?

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R: It just happened about that time---our timing was very good on most the buildings down there---that the Manchester Company, the hardware store in Canfield went out of business and also the Jones Hardware in Jackson went out of business about the same year. So, we went in and they sold everything at an auction. And we bought counters and we bought different things that could outfit a hardware store or an old country store. The old ladders that they used to crawl up to get stuff off the shelves, we got those out of Manchester's Hardware down there and a lot of the shelving and so forth. We were very, very fortunate.

S: And the drug store?

R: Well, we have a drug store more or less in the doctor's office. And that was an old doctor's office, Dr. Patton's Office in North Jackson. That was the latest building that we've moved into the fairground.

S: When you moved that, you just left everything in it?

R: Well, there wasn't too much in it. We had to, of course, buy these things that are in it. And the schoolhouse came from out here on Knauf Road, where Leffingwell Hills Country Club now stands. It was an old, one-room schoolhouse. The wainscoting was still there. We had to get the desks back and put them in but other than that, why, most of these buildings are just as they were years ago. All of them are just as they were years ago. I has been a fun thing to put together.

S: What else have you done? I know you've done more than that. Did you start the talent show?

R: I didn't start it, but I do handle it right now. I take care of the talent show down here.

S: That must be a real job getting everything together.

R: I use mostly these baton and talent classes or schools or whatever you want to call them. They put on the shows. I get about, I think there's eight of them all together. And we divide the days up. They draw for their day and it's up to whatever they want to put on. They put on a good show down there. And they usually go for three or four hours. And it's something. As I said earlier, "You have to have a little bit of everything." The parents, of course, enjoy it. Some of the parents are a little tough to get along with---if their youngster doesn't win something, they get mad. It's one of those things

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you have to have. And we're glad we have it. It creates an interest and the kids enjoy performing at the fair. They look forward to it.

S: Who started that, Mr. Schaeffer?

R: The talent?

S: Yes.

R: No, I think that dates back, maybe before Homer and my times. Billy Erhardt had charge of it, not as a director, but Billy kind of ran it years ago for the Fair Board.

S: We were talking the other day about him. Is he still alive?

R: I think he is.

S: He doesn't live around here anymore?

R: He lives out in California. Diane, his daughter moved to California and I think he and his wife followed her.

S: I know they used to live in Poland.

R: She tried to break into the show business. And I guess she did some small-time stuff out there. But I have enjoyed my 29 years so far. So gosh, I can remember back when we bought eighty acres from the Wetmore Farm, south of the fairgrounds, where we park cars now. And if we hadn't bought that eighty acres, it was amazing some of the directors had to be sold on that. They didn't think we needed that eighty acres. I think we paid \$600 an acre for it and Mr. Wetmore carried us on a time note so that we didn't have to pay all at once. When I came on the board, I think we only had a little over a hundred acres. And we've grown to about 353 acres, or something like that now. It's getting to be a mammoth fairground. We're very lucky we're not hemmed in. A lot of fairgrounds find themselves hemmed in the city and they just can't expand. We're very fortunate.

S: Like Trumbull County.

R: Right. Also, when I came on the board in the fifties, we had less than twenty buildings. And of course, now, we have over seventy buildings. And here again,

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you run into a maintenance problem. It takes a lot of money each year for the upkeep of the buildings, roads and everything.

S: When do you think the fair started getting bigger?

R: Back in the fifties. I think, when we had some younger fair board directors come on with a little more energetic maybe, Mr. Blunt and myself and Homer at the time. Homer has been a real asset as a director. And we've pushed to expand and grown and so forth. We've been very lucky. A lot of fairs over the country, especially over the last few years, have run into trouble financially. We've been fortunate. We've always had a rain account in case of bad weather. We've kept a little back. When you're dealing with five days and if you have five days of rain, why it can be disastrous, because you still have that expenditure and nothing coming in the front gate if you have bad weather. We've always been very fortunate to have conservative directors, yet, directors that would look to the future and expand.

S: You've always finished in the black, never in the red?

R: We've lost money a few years, yes, but not that much. I can remember back some of the directors we had, like Mr. Bishop. George Bishop, you'd be at a meeting and you'd be talking about doing this and that or something and then George would wait until the last few minutes and then he'd throw in his two cents worth. And it would change your mind just like that. He had a way about it. He was a very, very good director. When he spoke everybody listened. He was like E. F. Hutton. (Laughter) And of course, Mr. Kilcawley was a very good director and Mr. Millikin--- and these names were on the board when I came on--- and Mr. Burton, Vernon Crouse, who had charge of the horse pull back then and a fine director, Mr. Heintzelman, in charge of concessions back then and of course, everybody back then remembers Mr. Zieger, who was secretary and he was almost Mr. Canfield Fair. So, I've seen some very, very dedicated and good men come and go and it has been a privilege and an honor for me to serve as a director. And as I said earlier, I've enjoyed every bit of it.

S: Do you think that's why the fair has been such a success? The people?

R: I think so. We've been very fortunate to be able to pick, shall I say, men, for a particular jobs. Everybody has a certain department. And we don't, as other directors, meddle into their department that much. We figure that they know more about it than

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we do and consequently, like the cattleman knows more about cattle than I do and probably anybody else on the board, because we've more or less picked him for that particular job, horse racing and also draft horses, et cetera. And we've been a very good working board together. It's a combination of things that have made the fair as great as it is. And gosh, we're known all over the country. Not bragging in any sense, but you go almost any place and you mention Canfield Fair and they know who you are, especially in the fair and entertainment business. They know who you are. So, we've been active on the international and also state level. One of the directors, Mr. Jordan was president of the state organization. And as I said, Grace was a director of the international at one time. So, we've had a lot of exposure country-wide.

S: When one of you becomes the president of the board, you still take care of your department?

R: Oh, yes.

S: Then what do you do? Do you kind of oversee?

R: Yes. As president, of course, you have charge of conducting the meetings and kind of oversee all of the departments. You sit on every committee.

S: That must be quite a job.

R: Yes, it is. You have it for two years, of course. And that's about as long as you want it, but it is. It's a time consuming job, but when you have dedicated men like we have, it makes life easier for you. I mean, if you know that the fellow is doing a good job in his department, you don't have to meddle into his affairs. You sit in on, as I say, in all committee meetings and so forth.

S: How do you have time for your family?

R: (Laughter) Well, you find time for that. You do it when you are young.

S: That must be quite a job, when you are president.

R: Yes, it is.

S: But it would give you a good overview.

R: It does. It gives you a goodview. And we were fortunate here for years to have Mr. Homer Miller as our

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grounds superintendent. He kept the grounds looking like your front yard every day. And there again, you travel over the countryside and you see some of these fairs. I remember years ago, I travelled up into Barrington, up east. And I was staying in a motel and I said to the owners, "I see you're going to have a fair here." And he said, "Oh, yes, we're having a big fair next week. We have a biggy up here." I said, "I'm very interested in fair work." He said, "Well, the fairgrounds are just outside of town, drive out." So I drove out. And the weeds were about knee high. And they're going to have a fair there next week. (Laughter)

There was no activity at all. And you come down here a month before fair time and you see all kinds of activity. I've never seen the weeds on this ground up to your ankle. And so, we take pride in the fact that we keep everything in apple pie order. It's an asset to the county. I don't think the people in Mahoning County appreciate what they have. It's an asset to the county and I think they should just appreciate it more.

S: When I was driving in, I saw they are adding on to the pumpkin barn.

R: Yes, we're putting a lean-to on to that.

S: What would you put in there, more pumpkins?

R: I think Homer has an idea of filling it with more pumpkins. You know Homer and these pumpkins. (Laughter) Well, he puts on one of the greatest pumpkin shows, I think, around. And so, we're giving him a little more room down there to expand and I'm sure he'll have no problem filling it. Other than that I don't know what other project we're going to get into this year.

S: Something with electric?

R: We're doing some electrical work. For years, we thought we would like to get away from the climbing of the poles for installing electric to the concessions. And we would like to put in an underground system, but it's expensive. So, it will be a box system on the ground. It will be laying on the ground. This seems to be the next best thing to do. So, we're going into some of that this year. And eventually, we hope to have the whole grounds

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that way. So you keep progressing.

S: Anything else you would like to add to this interview?

R: I don't know. I don't believe. I think we've covered a lot of things.

S: Yes, we have.

R: It has been enjoyable, I mean talking about it.

S: Yes, I've enjoyed these interviews so much.

R: I bet you have.

S: I have. Well, thank you very much.

R: Thank you.

END OF INTERVIEW