

Interview with Patrick Garrow  
Nov. 19, 1985  
Jane Webb  
by telephone

address:  
1643 Montcliff Court  
Decatur, Georgia 30033

(Found him through the University of Ga. Department of Anthropology: said he owns his own company, is a private archeological contracting firm which specializes in resource management studies. If you are a company like Ga. Power, etc., and you are going to work on a site, his company will come and work with you.)

I was in the first class to enter CNC and the first class to graduate. We were in the old school building, down town. I was there for two years and I left with an AA.

I boarded with Prof. Usry for over a year and a half. He was a fine old gentleman. He had started in business as a stockboy, I think, and ended as an upper executive in something like Woolsworths, and then he retired and he went back and got an MA in history. He decided that he wanted a small business of his own on the side, to bring in about \$10,000 a year, and so he started an antique shop in Williamsburg. And it grew and grew and became too much for him, so he sold it - it was monopolizing his time and he wanted to study and to teach history. So then he started a coloring book company, a historical coloring book company and it was still functioning when I came to CNC. Whatever he went into made money. He was a wealthy gentleman at his death.

He bought a home in Newport News, in Hidenwood. It was a big house with three or four bedrooms. He lived there alone. He had never married, although he had been engaged once and it didn't work out. He boarded students while he was at William and Mary working on his degree. Then he came to CNC. At CNC he was in history--he WAS the history department--and he offered to board students. I was having trouble with my studies, and he offered to take me in. I paid him room and board. He had not TV and the radio was older than he was. The entire entertainment was a pool table, and he limited you to two games a night. He is the reason I made it through CNC.

My father had died while I was in high school. My mother went back to school and became a practical nurse. She was working. And then she remarried about the time I entered college and the place turned into a zoo. I couldn't study there. But at Prof. Usry's--it was quiet. There were just



remember his name.

Part of the way through the first semester my midterm grades came in. They were miserable. My professors were Barry Wood, Georgia Hunter, Dr. Windsor, Prof. Usry. I knew that my grades were not going to be good. Prof. Usry may have been my advisor--I don't really remember. But I did talk to him about dropping out and that's when he offered to take me in. So I went to live there, and I finished.

Then I went to the University of Georgia and finished my undergraduate work and took a Masters in Anthropology and worked a few hours toward a doctorate. I taught anthropology, history and sociology, first at Augusta College and then at Shorter College and I started modest archeological programs at both schools. After five years at Shorter I began to think that teaching was not exactly what I wanted to do. There was an archeological site that had captured my interest and so I resigned. I worked on that site for 13 months with help from National Geographic and the NEH and help from a lot of volunteers.

When I finished that I went to work for the State of North Carolina in their archeology branch. I worked there until 1976 and then I went to work for a private firm in the Atlanta area as their chief archeologist. I built the biggest program in the country working for them, and then the management changed and my program was shut down. So I decided to leave. A year before I had remarried, and I had my kids living with me, so she (second wife) and I left Soil Systems and we formed our own company.

Christopher Newport was perhaps the most valuable educational experience I had in my entire life. It was far more important to me than what I learned down at the University of Georgia. They taught me the basic skills and attitudes, and they have carried me forward. For me it was the right school at the right time. It was a small school then--I think there were 135 people in my class--and it was tough academically. But the kids were bright and the faculty was bright. Oh, I have fond memories of CNC.

Prof. Usry was a warm person, although I guess only for people who knew him as he very friendly. He maintained a formal facade with most students. He was, however, a really kind hearted person who cared for the students and who was dedicated to us. Without him I would have dropped out, and I would probably have gone into the military or something equally stupid.

There were not many opportunities for a person raised in Newport News with no money behind him in those days. You could go to work and try to define yourself, or you could work in the Shipyard all your life. I actually

left Georgia after the first two quarters and I went to work in the

Shipyard as an electrician's helper, putting in wires on submarines. That experience very quickly taught me the validity of my educational ambitions.

My feelings toward Christopher Newport are very warm. There were ups and downs at CNC, like any other place, but it was a fine place. And Mr. Usry was a fine man.

If you're going to have a twenty-fifth birthday party, I'd like to have an invitation. I'll give you my home address--my company is getting bigger and we are going to move next year, so the home address is safer.