

Oakland University Chronicles

Interview with
A. Michael Deller
and
Alfred Monetta

Transcript of Oral History Interview

Interview date: February 17, 1998

Interviewer: Paul Tombouliau



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Oakland University Chronicles

ANTHONY MICHAEL DELLER

Date of birth: July 8, 1941

EDUCATION

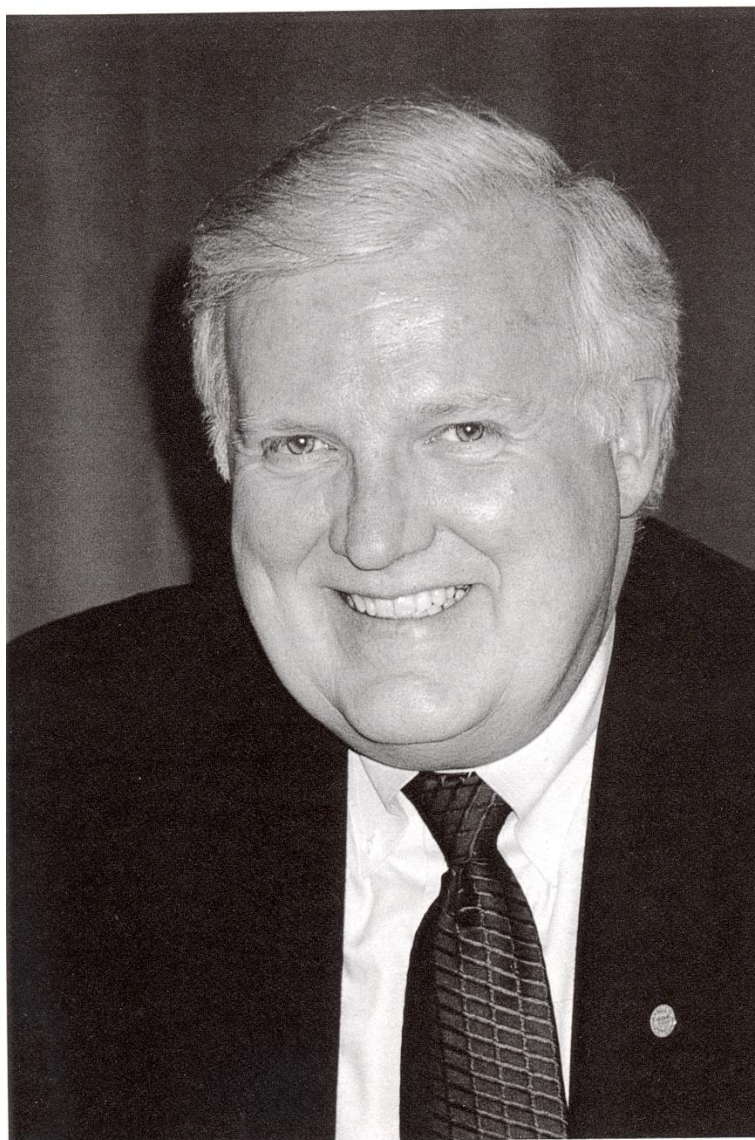
	Birmingham High School (Now Seaholm High School) Birmingham, Michigan	Graduated 1959
B.A.	Oakland University Major: Russian Language-Secondary Education	1959 • 1963
M.L.S.	University of Michigan	1968

SINCE GRADUATING FROM OAKLAND UNIVERSITY

1963 • 1965	Teacher Long Beach, California
1965 • 1966	Teacher, St. Mary of Redford Detroit, Michigan
8-66 • 4-69	Librarian Detroit Public Library
5-69 • 4-78	Librarian Bloomfield Township Public Library
5-78 • 9-79	Coordinator, Program Services Detroit Public Library
9-79 • 2-86	Librarian Madison Heights Public Library

CURRENT OCCUPATION

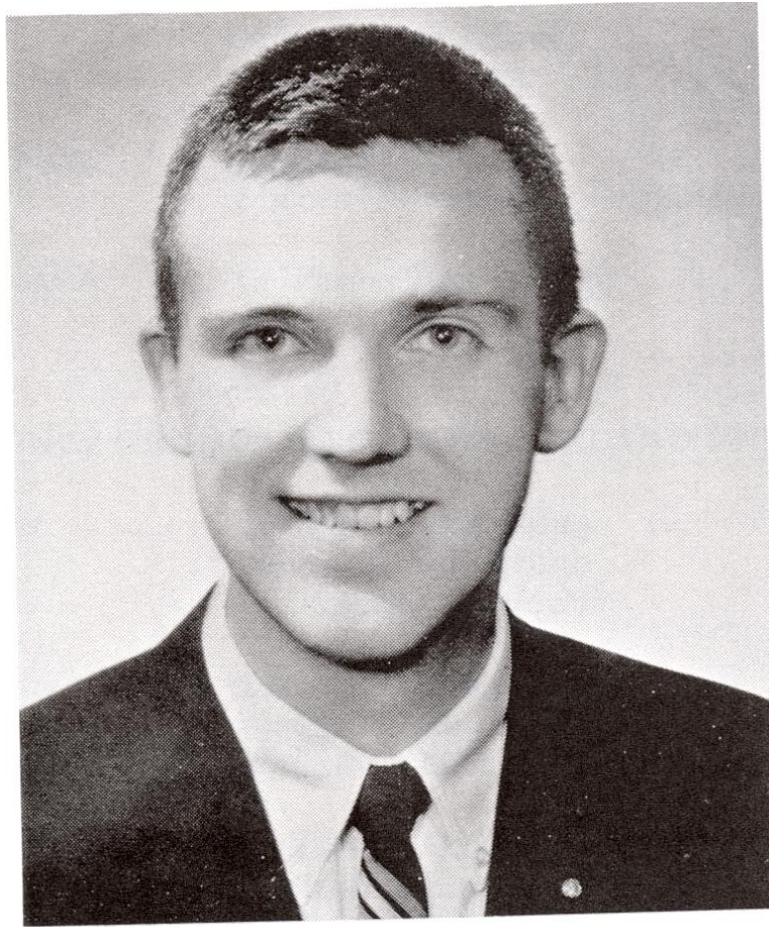
3-86 • present	City Librarian (Director) Livonia Public Library Livonia, Michigan
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Photograph of A. Michael Deller

February 17, 1998

Photographer: Alice Tombouliau



Anthony Michael Deller
Secondary Education
April

Photograph of A. Michael Deller

MSUO Yearbook 1963

Oakland University Chronicles
ALFRED JOSEPH MONETTA JR.

Date of birth: January 20, 1941

EDUCATION

	Milford High School Milford, Michigan	Graduated 1959
B.A.	Oakland University Major: Mathematics- Secondary Education	1959 • 1963
M.A.	California State College at Los Angeles	1968

SINCE GRADUATING FROM OAKLAND UNIVERSITY

5 years	Teacher: Mathematics Belvedere Junior High Los Angeles, California
25 years	Teacher: Mathematics, computer science Waterford Mott High School Waterford, Michigan
8 years	Instructor: Computer science Oakland Community College Oakland County, Michigan

CURRENT OCCUPATION

Retired from public school teaching in 1994

Travel agent, *Your Guy for Travel*

Facilitator/trainer for school improvement projects
under Michigan Department of Education grants



Photograph of Alfred Monetta

February 17, 1998

Photographer: Alice Tombouliau



Alfred Joseph Monetta, Jr.
Secondary Education
April

Photograph of Alfred Monetta

MSUO Yearbook 1963

Oakland University Chronicles
Interview with A. MICHAEL DELLER and ALFRED MONETTA
February 17, 1998

PAUL TOMBOULIAN: This is one of the interviews in the Oakland University Chronicles project, supported in this second year by a special university allocation. Today is February 17, 1998 and we are speaking from Varner Hall on the Oakland University campus. The goal of the project is to collect oral histories dealing with the beginnings of Oakland University, especially the time prior to the graduation of the first class. Our focus is the first few years and the pioneers who started the new university.

My name is Paul Tomboulia, and I have been a professor of chemistry at Oakland University since 1959. My guests today are Michael Deller and Al Monetta, who both entered what was then MSUO in the fall of 1959 as members of the Charter Class. They both pursued the teacher training curriculum at Oakland University and graduated in April of 1963 at the first graduation. Al Monetta, on my left, retired in 1994 after 30 years as a math and computer science teacher, and currently resides in Ortonville, Michigan. Next to Al is Michael Deller, who is currently the director of public libraries in Livonia, Michigan.

Gentlemen, thanks for coming.

ALFRED MONETTA: It's good to be here.

MICHAEL DELLER: Thank you for inviting us.

PAUL TOMBOULIAN: Let's begin with Michael. Perhaps you could tell us how you first heard about MSUO and why you chose to come.

MICHAEL DELLER: First of all, I think that my family and I were both very conscious of the fact that there wasn't a whole lot of money to send me to college, especially if I was going to be living on campus. We read regularly the paper published in Birmingham, the *Eccentric*. We also read the *Daily Tribune*, because my father worked in Royal Oak, and we were reading about the new university that was starting up. So I went to a program that was being held at

the Ferndale Public Library, and it turned out that Roy Alexander was the representative for the university. He made a presentation describing what they hoped for, and the fact that everybody would be the first students admitted to this university, or college, and it sounded interesting. Especially the part about not having any gym requirement, because I was very uncoordinated and I had terrors of having to do something along those lines—that was a real attractive thing. Plus they were talking about how scholarships were going to be available.

PAUL TOMBOULIAN: About what time was this?

MICHAEL DELLER: This probably would have been in the spring of '59, sort of March or April. So I went and I applied. They had applications that they were handing out, so I filled one out and sent it in. I found out probably in late July or early August that I would be admitted. There was an announcement that there was an exam that one could take for a scholarship. When I got to the designated spot I found out that I was taking the exam in some sort of a farm building. It was like a chicken coop or something—but a very elegant one, nicely tiled and everything—that I was taking the exam in. Then I found out that I would get a tuition scholarship, and they said as long as I maintained my grades I would have it for four years. So that sort of cinched the deal, plus the fact that I'd be able to drive to school, and that would help cut some of the expenses.

PAUL TOMBOULIAN: How far a drive was that?

MICHAEL DELLER: When I applied I thought I was going to be driving from Birmingham to Rochester, but as it turned out my father's job changed and he moved to Detroit, so I ended up with a much longer drive than I had expected. But it was still doable.

PAUL TOMBOULIAN: Al, what were your experiences in the same area?

ALFRED MONETTA: I think I first heard about the university at the time when some folks came out to the school. I think it was probably Herb Stoutenburg that came out to the high school and talked about it as part of a college program.

PAUL TOMBOULIAN: What high school?

ALFRED MONETTA: It was out at Milford High School. So I didn't live too far from Rochester at the time, and living at home sounded very good to me, because I knew it would be very difficult for my family to be able to afford to send me to school. Hopefully I would be able to get some kind of a scholarship, and I took the same exam that Michael did, in the same chicken coop. It was always interesting to get directions to come to the campus, because none of us knew quite what was where, and we'd never really been on the Meadow Brook campus, or the Meadow Brook area at all.

After taking that exam I was awarded a \$500 scholarship, and that was really special because it not only paid for much of the tuition, but it paid for books, it paid for activities—I even had enough money left that I could afford to buy some gas with it. So that was a very, very good scholarship, and there weren't a lot of scholarships that were available that first year that were the \$500 scholarships. I think there were about 10 or 12 of us. The one that I got was from what was then Community National Bank, and I got to meet some of the people from the bank at different times as well. So it made it very interesting because you got a real tie to the community, and it's surprising how many community folks were involved.

PAUL TOMBOULIAN: Were there materials, recruiting materials, like catalogues, brochures, documents—do you recall any of those?

ALFRED MONETTA: I don't remember really seeing any materials. I guess we were all going on faith that there really would be a university here. Of course the MSU name had something to do with it, I'm sure. There were a lot of articles in the newspaper about what was being projected, what was being looked at here. In fact I got my application in so early that I became student number 69.

PAUL TOMBOULIAN: Sixty-nine, and what number were you, Michael?

MICHAEL DELLER: Well, I took a lot longer to apply, so I was 421.

PAUL TOMBOULIAN: What time of year was that?

MICHAEL DELLER: I probably would have applied sometime in April or May, because I'm sure that the program I went to was probably in March. There were some things that had to be far enough along at high school in order for us to submit documentation as to our grades and that sort of thing.

It was interesting in that there were no upperclassmen. When we got here we were the only class there was. Because of the fact that some of us, like Al and I, were scholarship students, the university—the college then—had a group of names that they felt they could call on to do things. So we were usually among the first to be asked, "Can you help at registration? Can you take the tour groups around?" Mrs. [Matilda] Wilson, during the first year or two, would bring her Women's National Farm and Garden Association members for tours of the campus. There were other groups who were just curious about what is this new college, what does it look like? Of course, at the time we started it was three buildings and the farm buildings.

ALFRED MONETTA: And the farm animals were still there.

PAUL TOMBOULIAN: You gave tours. And you talked about things that you'd been told to talk about?

MICHAEL DELLER: Right. We were sort of primed a little bit, but again they just assumed that because we were scholarship students, that we had enough chutzpah, or whatever, to meet groups and to talk. It was really as simple as saying, "This is the lecture hall. This is where we have this class and that class."

ALFRED MONETTA: The rooms didn't have a lot of history yet.

MICHAEL DELLER: No, it was such a new thing that we just had to talk about what the history of Meadow Brook was, in some cases. People wanted to know, "Have you met Mrs. Wilson?" and, "What she was like?" So we got to talk about that a little bit. She had made a point of meeting us and being visible for the first class.

ALFRED MONETTA: I think folks also were interested in the types of classes we were taking, because the curriculum itself was supposed to be very different. What was it that Dr. Hoopes said at that first [convocation] we had?

MICHAEL DELLER: We're told he denies [he said it then], but we chuckle about it now, because he talked about us being individuals with sharp abrasive edges. And during graduation in 1963 all of a sudden we had become well-rounded individuals. Some of us thought, "Hmm, there's been a change of plan here."

ALFRED MONETTA: I guess we made history.

PAUL TOMBOULIAN: That's why you're here [at this interview]. Tell us about that first fall. You got admitted, and then you came to campus for a tour? How did things develop—did you visit the place before it opened?

ALFRED MONETTA: I did, I was here probably in August. Mrs. Wilson invited all of the people that got the \$500 scholarships—the Foundation Scholarships, I think they might have been called at that time. She had us at a dinner or lunch at the Bloomfield Country Club, which was very elegant and certainly someplace I had never been. After that, people seemed to be interested in having us tour the campus, and we thought it was a great idea because we'd not really even seen those new buildings. I remember driving in, and parking in the parking lot, which at that time was still dirt—it hadn't been paved yet. And walking through the area that would eventually become paved, but then was covered with boards and planks—walking into North Foundation and South Foundation Hall, and getting a little glimpse of what those buildings would look like, but at that time they certainly were not finished. This was in August, and even though we were coming in another month, there was still a lot to be done.

One of the highlights was that we drove over to Meadow Brook Hall afterwards, and Mrs. Wilson gave us a tour of Meadow Brook. She and Mr. Wilson were both there with us; as I remember, Roy Alexander and Herb Stoutenburg were there, as well as Dr. Varner, Chancellor Varner at the time. The highlight for me was seeing not only the house she lived in and the elegance that was there, but in addition she took us down to the basement and showed us her china, and showed us her linens. It was certainly a tour of

Meadow Brook I don't think many people got, even when they were doing tours later on. It was kind of interesting, having a personal tour.

PAUL TOMBOULIAN: It sounds like this was sort of an adventure for both of you, doing something different, but you didn't have anxieties or concerns about this being a new place.

MICHAEL DELLER: I think that in any new venture you have, you're apprehensive perhaps. But we were thrown into so many things with, "Well here it is, guys." Like registration: I mean, they told us, "All right, we need people to work at registration." We'd never even been to a college registration; we had nothing to gauge it against. So they said, "This is what you're going to do, and this is how we're going to handle it—and go!"

That's what we did, and it all happened. We think we [students] did the first one because we have pictures—it's funny how your memory plays games. There were some of us who sat outside that first registration day to look at cards, and make sure people had their packets and everything that they needed. Then they went to register for their classes from that point. Then later, because of the weather concerns, we did it in the basement of the student center, which at the time was just a big open cavern. It wasn't used for anything, except storage of things if they didn't know where else to put them.

PAUL TOMBOULIAN: Now when you say later, you mean the next quarter?

ALFRED MONETTA: We probably couldn't have been in the student center that first time in September, because much of the student center wasn't finished. They were still making all kinds of noise as we were sitting there through that convocation in September. What do you remember about that convocation?

MICHAEL DELLER: I remember that the opening of what we realized later—when we came back—was the food service line, came out into the dining area, and they used the dining area for the convocation. To disguise or to mask what was not yet finished, they put what was like snow fencing over the entrance to the food service line. Well, there were people working behind there. I happened to sitting close to that opening, in the row I was in, and I heard this

fellow in the back say, "It's all right, Joe. They said we can work." All of a sudden I heard this banging, and then all of a sudden there was silence, because they'd obviously gotten the word from the podium that, "No, it wasn't all right." But they were still very much working, as Al says, on that building, trying to get it finished and get it ready.

PAUL TOMBOULIAN: Did anything that people said make an impression on you?

ALFRED MONETTA: I can't remember a lot that they said that day.

PAUL TOMBOULIAN: But you were excited to be here? Or how do you characterize your first feelings?

MICHAEL DELLER: For me it was the first academic procession that I had seen and had observed, so that was impressive—to see the faculty coming in their academic regalia, and the Chancellor wearing his during the time that he made his opening remarks, and that sort of thing. It was just a neat experience to know this was beginning, and it was all new.

PAUL TOMBOULIAN: Did your parents come?

ALFRED MONETTA: I don't think parents were invited. I think it was just for students, but there were over 500 of us, so that room would have been pretty full with just students.

MICHAEL DELLER: Oh, yes, it was packed.

ALFRED MONETTA: This was an event that seems like it started off the school year, and was the activity just before we started classes. It set a tone for what we were to expect.

PAUL TOMBOULIAN: What classes did you take that first semester, and how was it decided that you would take them?

ALFRED MONETTA: Those weren't semesters, those were quarters.

PAUL TOMBOULIAN: Quarters—thank you.

ALFRED MONETTA: We didn't change to what we called trimesters until [two] years later, and there was a lot of debate about that, of course, at the time. That first quarter, I remember taking a chemistry class with you, and a math class. I started out, of course, with calculus, because there weren't choices such as at some other colleges and universities. Many students [elsewhere] started out with a little lower level classes, but here we started right out in calculus.

That math class was with Jim McKay, and I had him for a math class of some kind every semester, every quarter that I was here; that made it interesting. It was really good, because then you got to know the folks that you were working with. And not only was he [always] up front in the classroom, but the students sitting at our desks were many of the same people, and we got to know each other pretty well. That was a real advantage of coming to a school like this, that was so small. I also took an English class, and of course Western civilization, in which it seemed like we read every book that existed, but they were put into just three volumes. So that was a really good experience. I think it helped me look at things in a different way, but it certainly was an extensive load of classes for a new freshman.

PAUL TOMBOULIAN: Was this part of a curriculum choice that was made because you had selected a particular subject area?

ALFRED MONETTA: Two of the courses were [for my major]: chemistry and calculus. That was because I was interested in becoming a teacher, and interested in math. Math education was what I would eventually major in.

PAUL TOMBOULIAN: Math education?

ALFRED MONETTA: Math and education. I think it was probably called secondary education with a mathematics major. Otherwise there weren't a lot of choices in classes: we all had to take Western civilization; we all had to take

English; we all had to take eventually some social studies classes. I don't think I took those the first year, but I think Michael did.

PAUL TOMBOULIAN: Michael, what did you take that first fall?

MICHAEL DELLER: I took my first classes in Russian. I took an ill-fated economics class and Western civilization. I can't remember, but I probably had to take English at that point. I don't know that the concept of testing out of something had been conceived of at that point.

ALFRED MONETTA: Oh, I'm sure it wasn't.

MICHAEL DELLER: For coming straight out of high school into this atmosphere, [MSUO] had advertised and promoted the fact that a very high percentage of the faculty were going to have their doctorates, that was the big thing for the school at that point. We were impressed simply because we knew that it required a real commitment of time and effort to get a doctorate. The fact that it was such a high percentage was sort of unusual—that a freshman class [especially] would have that much contact with professors of that caliber.

I don't think many of us, either faculty or students, had conceived of how difficult that would be on both sides. Especially for me in economics; it was just awful! It was a bad experience in terms of trying to grapple with concepts that were foreign to me. I could learn the vocabulary, but the concepts that were [supposed] to be taught were being taught by someone who had been used to teaching graduate classes, and presumed a lot more background than what we brought to the subject. It was such a bad experience for all of the students in that particular subject that we were given the opportunity at the end of the semester to do it over, and have the first quarter's grade [replaced] if we did better. I remember my mother having heard about how awful I felt about this particular class, and I was taking a bath when the mail came. She said, "I think this is your report card; dare I read it to you through the door? Will you drown yourself?" I said, "Just read it to me." I was so ecstatic that I'd gotten a C in economics. It meant I didn't have to do it over. But it was one of my lowest grades ever, at MSUO.

PAUL TOMBOULIAN: You enjoyed your Russian, though?

MICHAEL DELLER: Oh, yes, I loved it. The faculty were neat. At that time it was Helen Kovach and Mrs. [Nadine] Popluiko, who were the two faculty members. I had thought when I entered college, that I'd be going into teaching English.

[Sentence order in following paragraph adapted for clarity.]

Since I'd had French, I thought I could take French and I'd know something. Well, guess what, you didn't offer [second-year French] my first year. When I found that out, and because the school was going to have a two-year requirement for foreign language, I thought, "I've got to get started right away or I'm going to lose time. I don't want to fall back and then try and make things up, waiting for French." So I took Russian.

Mrs. Kovach and Mrs. Popluiko were two very personable individuals, and lots of fun. They believed things about language teaching that probably weren't the norm. They thought that you should eat the language, that you should dance the language, and sing the language. Sort of an immersion concept. So they did things throughout the year that conveyed that. They cooked for us, we had Russian food; they would teach us how to dance, and they had songs so that we would know that. [It was] partly because they recognized that some of us wanted to be teachers, and they felt that we needed to have some of the substance of life, as well as the language, in order to teach.

PAUL TOMBOULIAN: You both lived at home.

MICHAEL DELLER: To start with.

PAUL TOMBOULIAN: You commuted every day.

MICHAEL DELLER: Every day.

PAUL TOMBOULIAN: Probably on weekends or sometimes at breaks you'd have dialogues and communications with high school buddies, colleagues. Did you sense that your experience was different from theirs?

ALFRED MONETTA: I sensed that in some ways they were having a lot more fun. They lived in the dorms, they lived at school. [They had] a lot more activity going on that was outside the classroom, that we weren't really a part of, and I kind of wanted to be a part of that. But it wasn't really an option. I couldn't afford at the time to move onto [the MSUO] campus, and I don't think there were a whole lot of places to stay, as it was. As I remember that first year, there were some students that came from out of state so there had to be a place for them to live. [Some] of them started [in a later year] in a camp in the Oxford area. Some of them lived in one of the farm houses that was right on the campus. They lived several places.

MICHAEL DELLER: When you compared notes with other people, I think part of your listening was keyed to things that you knew either were or were not true about your own setting. Some of the things that Oakland had said about itself—such things as they weren't going to encourage fraternities and sororities, or certain other things that they said, "We're going to be different because..."—when you listened to your friends who'd gone to U of M or MSU or Western or wherever, you were filtering some of that in terms of, "Well, yes, they're doing this or they're doing that, but we're not, because we're the new 'Harvard of the West,' or whatever."

ALFRED MONETTA: We didn't have to take the phys ed classes.

MICHAEL DELLER: That's right, no phys ed. Klutzes like me really appreciated that, but it was a matter of what you could afford. What I could afford was this [MSUO], and I recognized that and it was different. I also recognized that a lot of my friends whose parents did have the means to send them off to other schools had made a choice, and it was fine. Yeah, it was different, but for me it was all right. I was pretty busy driving back and forth between Detroit and Rochester. Then I had a job on campus, because I needed to be able to pay for my books and other things that I needed on campus. So even if I wasn't in class and even if I wasn't studying, I had the time on campus where I needed to do my part-time job.

PAUL TOMBOULIAN: There were some social events, though, on campus. There were dinners or balls or something. What do you remember of those?

ALFRED MONETTA: That first year I remember a picnic. The very, very first year; it was probably in October just after we had started classes. There was another school that had started at the same time we did. I don't remember...

MICHAEL DELLER: Michigan Christian Community College, or something like that.

ALFRED MONETTA: They're still there, I think. [Now changed to Rochester College.]

All of us were invited by the Village of Rochester to a picnic in one of their parks. I remember that as being a way that we got to meet some of our folks, and talk to the people that we had been in class with. The professors and everyone were invited to that, and that was one event I remember that first year.

I don't think there were a lot of other events, except that there were some dances and of course they were held in the same room as the convocation, the same room as the cafeteria. That was the only room that was large enough on campus to do anything. I remember people like Karl Haas coming in from WJR and doing an evening of entertainment with a string quartet, and things like that. So there were some activities on campus and I think a lot of us went to those, and attended those, simply because those were the cultural kind of things our professors encouraged us to do, as well as because those were the only things that were really going on, except the activities that the students might be doing on their own.

PAUL TOMBOULIAN: Did you go to Meadow Brook Hall in that period?

ALFRED MONETTA: I remember being at Meadow Brook, I think it was sometime in the fall, for probably a dance—some kind of reception. I don't remember if it was a dance or not, but it was early that year and I think it was something that Mr. and Mrs. Wilson did every year after they did it for us.

PAUL TOMBOULIAN: Do you remember more about that, Michael?

MICHAEL DELLER: I know that we had opportunities to go to Meadow Brook Hall, and some of the opportunities were to help Mrs. Wilson stage some of the events that were fundraisers. She needed valet parking, and we were the valets.

ALFRED MONETTA: I remember doing that as well. That was fun, we got to drive—

PAUL TOMBOULIAN: Fundraising for what?

MICHAEL DELLER: For scholarships for the students on campus. She was very committed. She and Mr. Wilson had made the big commitment of funds to get the college started, but I think there was an ongoing commitment that she felt towards helping raise scholarship funds. At first the two of them and then, after Mr. Wilson died, Mrs. Wilson on her own realized that they had contacts, people that they knew who wanted to see Meadow Brook Hall and might pay for that opportunity to go to a dinner or a dance that was a fundraiser.

They were kidding around at one point. I had a Renault that I drove to college back and forth, and it was not your standard American shift. This one person whom I didn't know, actually arrived in a Rolls Royce. The young man who was at the head of the line to be the next valet to park, got in the car and looked at it and couldn't figure out how to do it. Everybody turned around and said, "Mike drives a foreign car, let him do it." So that was my only time to ever drive a Rolls Royce, to drive it through the little gate there at the side of Meadow Brook Hall back into the back field to park. Then when whoever owned it came back out to claim it at the end of the evening, I was the designated person to go get it and bring it back out. But you know, there were things like that.

A lot of socializing took place at the lunch hour. For that first year the only place to get food was in the student center. There were no fast-food places that close to the campus, such that people were going to duck off campus to get McDonald's or something. So you met a lot of people there [in the student center]. For me—because I had graduated from Birmingham High School and most of the people there had chosen other schools, they weren't choosing

MSUO—so not many of my classmates were on campus for me to hang around with. Due to the fact that I'd then moved to Detroit and had this distance to drive, the time I had to meet people was in class and at lunch. I sort of fell in with the Milford-Walled Lake group, simply by choice of where there was an open seat, maybe the first week when we were in class. It turned out to be some of the people that I've had a long-time connection with ever since.

PAUL TOMBOULIAN: What other campus activities did you both pursue when you were here? You said you had a job, Michael. Al, did you also have a job?

ALFRED MONETTA: Yes, I also had a job. I don't think I started working, though, until the second year. Since I had a good scholarship that paid for a lot of things, I didn't really need to work the first year, but I felt like I needed to the second year, to help with car expenses and things like that. So I did work on campus as well. I remember one of the jobs that I had was delivering the mail from building to building, and picking up the mail, and running the postage meter, making sure it got to the Rochester Post Office. So that was one job that I had. From that I got to meet a lot of people, not just the students, but a lot of the secretaries in the offices, and a lot of the professors because I would be in and out of offices. That gave me a little different view of the campus as well, because I got to know people in a little bit different way.

But as Michael was saying, we really did most of our socializing with everyone at the Oakland Center at noon or after class. There were some students that did so much socializing—I remember there being an ongoing pinochle game that started very early in the morning, and went most of the day. I was always surprised at some of the students that didn't get to class because they couldn't leave their pinochle game.

PAUL TOMBOULIAN: Let's talk about that a little bit. Some of your colleagues, cohorts, who came here, didn't survive. What did you think about that? What did you feel about that? Did you sense that that was the way it always was?

ALFRED MONETTA: I think we were told during that first convocation that we should look to our left, and look to our right, and probably two out of three

people would be gone by the time we graduated. There were over 500 at that first convocation, but there were slightly over 100 [102 from that original entering class of 570] when we graduated, so that was a very high attrition rate. I don't think it's usually quite that large.

I think people left for a number of reasons. One is the fact that I don't think they really thought the classes were going to be as difficult as they were. I think that the professors—as Michael said, many of them had their doctorates—they looked at the students in a little different way, and expected more of us, what they might have expected of graduate students rather than entering students who had no previous university background. Another reason I think that people left is that they expected more activity. They wanted to play more; they wanted to have more fun, they wanted maybe a different kind of course schedule, so that they could relax a little bit more during their year. So I think those are some of the reasons people might have been gone.

MICHAEL DELLER: I think that there were probably a number of factors that came into play. First of all, there were probably a number of students there who suddenly had the option to go to college—hadn't been planning on it necessarily, but it was close and it had the promise of being college without some of the expenses. They didn't think about what was going to be required of them in the classroom necessarily. So I think there were a lot of people who tried it who might not have tried [otherwise]. And there were some who just were startled that it was going to require work.

Like Al said, I think there were some who wanted it to be dramatically different from high school, and from what they were experiencing. It wasn't dramatically different from high school. You were still going to a class; you still had somebody at the front teaching; you still had, in essence, the "school cafeteria"; and it wasn't a big campus. We only had three buildings, so you didn't have what some of them might have visited and had in their mind's eye as a college campus. It was really small and compact, so that it just wasn't what some of them had expected in that respect.

Some of them just scholastically couldn't handle it—they couldn't. I was fortunate, in that the high school that I had been at had assumed that people would be going on to college. The expectation and the studies had been more demanding than maybe high schools where they didn't expect as high a

percentage of their students to go to college. So there were a number of factors at play there.

PAUL TOMBOULIAN: This was Birmingham High School. Your high school, Al?

ALFRED MONETTA: Milford High School. I was on a college track program so I think it was very similar to that.

I think another reason that people didn't stay is that they wanted to get away from home, they wanted to stay on campus, and there wasn't that much opportunity here for the first two years. There weren't dorms yet. The dorms weren't built, I don't believe, until the third year. At that time I had been able to save enough money and was very fortunate, and I decided that I wanted to move into Fitzgerald House.

PAUL TOMBOULIAN: That was in the third year?

ALFRED MONETTA: That was the third year and that was in the second semester of my third year. I don't think the dorms were even ready until then, as I remember. There were two dorms being built, and at the time when Fitzgerald opened, the second dorm hadn't been finished yet. So in Fitzgerald the men were in one half of it, and the women were in the other half of it. That wasn't what the original intention was. I think we had moved in, and we were the first ones living in the dorm at that time. It was interesting also because the people there that were staying as the resident advisors were a chemistry teacher, Dr. Obear, and his wife, who moved in at the same time that we did. In fact as we were living there, some time during that period their son was born, and I remember that being kind of fun and exciting—having not only the professor living there, but having a new family.

PAUL TOMBOULIAN: During the time that you were going to MSU/Oakland University and before, there must have been a [positive] role of your family, with attitudes and support there. You were living at home for much of that time. What was their background and thinking about your going to college?

ALFRED MONETTA: My family was supportive. My mother was a teacher, and she supported the fact that I wanted to also be a teacher. I was the first one in my family to attend a university or college—being the oldest—so I didn't quite know what to expect. But they were supportive and they knew that without the scholarship I would not have been able to attend, so they helped in any way that they could.

MICHAEL DELLER: It was sort of the same for me in the sense that I was the first one, as it turned out, to graduate from college. My father had come to Detroit with the intent of going to college, and indeed had attended Lawrence Institute of Technology, and had course work completed there. But because of the depression, the funding dried up and he wasn't able to continue. He had to find a job in order to support himself. He met the woman who would become my mother, and she hadn't gone to college. So they thought this was a good idea, and they wanted me to go if I wanted to go. If I could find a way to make that happen, they would provide anything else I would need as long as I could cover the tuition, and was willing to work to pay for some of the other costs, then they would continue the support at home.

So it was sort of a first for us in our family, and when I moved out to the dorms, then everybody wanted to come out and see the dorms, and they wanted to take a tour of the campus and that sort of thing. They really got into what was happening, and at that point, they knew that I was acclimating myself, I was doing well. They were excited about that, and very supportive and excited to be at graduation, when that happened.

PAUL TOMBOULIAN: Let's go back a bit to the curriculum, and talk about your majors and courses you took, and some special experiences you had in the classroom or with courses. For instance, many students today change their major two or three times; was that your experience? Or did you know what you wanted to do when you got there?

ALFRED MONETTA: When I came to MSUO, I knew I wanted to be a teacher and I was sure that it was in math. But it was during the second year that I was here, when John F. Kennedy was president, that I really considered—with my friends, and the things that I had learned in the political science class, and some

of the other things that were going on, on campus (because there were some real political students here)—that maybe political science was what I should be working in, rather than math. I never really changed my major, but I certainly was looking at taking some different classes. So that was kind of interesting.

That political science [interest] also goes along with so much of what was happening at the time, because there was the starting of student government and things like that here on campus, so the political science fit right in with a lot that was going on. I think it was during that year also that we had Samuel Shapiro as the teacher for American government. I remember being in his class, and listening to him talk about when he had just recently been in Havana—because he'd just left, had been in Cuba at different times—and he talked about the situation in terms of what was happening there; and relative to the US government, that we really should be supporting Castro more, because of the good things that he was really doing. That was a very, very volatile situation in the whole community at the time. That was really interesting—so that was a fun experience.

MICHAEL DELLER: We had the Cuban missile crisis while we were here on campus. I remember people in the lounge where the fireplace was, watching the television in the lounge—people crying and being all upset because they were so sure that the bombs were going to start dropping soon, and that sort of thing.

But I think all of us, if we didn't change our major, we at least changed the thrust of what we were doing. I came thinking I was going to be an English teacher, because I enjoyed writing and English. But by the end of my second year, I had decided that teaching Russian would be a lot more fun. Maybe it was because the two professors I had were a lot of fun. We were being told that this is the coming thing, and the high schools were going to be teaching Russian, and they were going to be looking for teachers. So I got serious about majoring in Russian, along with my secondary education classes that those of us who wanted to teach were probably taking, if that was the area we wanted to be in.

So I did that, but some of the things that I did here on campus sort of foreshadowed what was going to be happening later. One of the jobs that I had the longest was working at the library: working at the circulation desk, shelving things, and all of the things that students were expected or allowed to do in the library at that time. When I realized later after graduation that indeed foreign

languages were being phased out of high school curriculums, not being phased in, I had to make some choices. One of the choices was: if I went back for graduate studies, what was I going to try and get a degree in? Is it going to be on the lines of reading improvement, or is it going to be something different?

That was when I found out that I really liked what I'd been doing in the library, and I liked what I saw the librarians doing here on campus. So when I came back to campus to the placement office to get some guidance, one of the things that sort of jumped out at me was the opportunity to work at the Detroit Public Library while you were working on your graduate degree in library science. So Oakland in a sense gave me the experience to draw on, to say, "Yes, that would be okay." And also provided the little nudge: "Here's the way to do it." It was an excellent change for me—it worked.

PAUL TOMBOULIAN: Let's go back to the foreign language element because that's a strong thread in the early curricular directions, having two years of a foreign language. Michael, you were very comfortable with that. I think there's a linguistic ability you have that's perhaps a little better than average. Was everybody like that, how did they interact with the language?

ALFRED MONETTA: I don't think everyone was that happy with it. I had several friends that were not able to graduate for at least two years beyond the normal date when they would have graduated in '63, simply because they never could pass two years of the foreign language requirement. I think that's another reason why some people left the campus during the first year or two: because they realized they would never be able to really do well in foreign language and pass that.

I did not have to take two years of foreign language. The requirements for graduation at that time were so rigid that as a math major and as an education major, I only had three courses that I could take that were not major or minor courses; there were only three times that I could have taken [elective] courses. Therefore for the engineers and for the math majors in education, we only had to take one year of a foreign language, and that foreign language was a reading German class. We didn't have to do the conversational things like Michael talked about. I think that really helped a lot of us because we were able to just do that one year of a foreign language. I know that there's been a lot of

talk in high schools, particularly recently, as to whether foreign language should be even taught in high school any more. But we had no thought about that at the time when we were here at MSUO—that was the requirement, and we didn't know any different. We couldn't challenge that, we wouldn't have challenged anything that was happening.

PAUL TOMBOULIAN: Why not?

ALFRED MONETTA: Why not? I think it was because it was our first college experience, our first university experience. We had been told that we were the "Harvard of the Midwest," that things were going to be very different here, and with those high expectations, we thought we would do as much as we could to live up to those expectations.

MICHAEL DELLER: That particular combination in the sciences was the only flex for the language requirement. Everybody else had to sort of "toe the line" for foreign language. For those of us who were majors, that was no big deal. But for the rest of the students it could be a challenge. As I experienced teaching language myself later, I realized from things that I was reading and from the experience in the classroom, there were people for whom learning their first language was a challenge. To try and learn a second language was beyond the ken of belief for them. You couldn't say it was because they were poor students, it was just that this was not something they were equipped to do. Much probably in the same way as if you take me much beyond the basic addition, subtraction, multiplication and division, I get into water that's too deep for me, because I just can't handle it. The same is true for a foreign language—I mean there are people who just can't do it.

PAUL TOMBOULIAN: Yet somehow, through the approaches that were used to set up the original curriculum and courses, certain things came down as prescriptions and requirements.

MICHAEL DELLER: I think it wasn't so much that people felt that they were looking at what [students] were capable of doing, I think it was sort of building on an idealized sense of what the well-educated, cultured person should be

when they finish college. I think the sense was that a person ready for the world was going to have the ability to converse in more than one language. That was sort of an idealized sense, as I look back on it, of what the person with sharp abrasive edges or a well-rounded individual—whichever you chose to do—was going to have when they finished college.

I think even now a person who presents themselves as being educated, that people sort of sense that they're better educated or they're more educated if they're conversant in more than one language. It was intriguing when I applied for a job at the United Nations to find out that having mastered two languages wasn't enough. They expected, three, four, maybe five languages—and it's true, there are people who can do that. You do have a great deal of respect for—if nothing else—their mental agility to switch from language to language. But I think it was sort of an idealized sense of what an educated person should be.

PAUL TOMBOULIAN: Were there other elements of that early curriculum that might have struck you, in retrospect, as being idealized? Some things that weren't realistic? Russian, you mentioned, Michael, was somehow supposed to be the up-and-coming language, but clearly something happened and it didn't become that.

MICHAEL DELLER: You have to look again at when the school was opening. Everybody was talking about Sputnik and the Soviet Union being first in space, and "why can't Johnny learn Russian?" All of a sudden, I think people in the United States realized that one of the possible scenarios is that the Russians might come over here and take over, and you can't talk their language. That preyed on some people's minds at that time.

PAUL TOMBOULIAN: [Does] something come to mind, Al, now about [the original curriculum]?

ALFRED MONETTA: I think another course idealized in that same kind of way is the fact that in the math program, we started right out with calculus, as I mentioned earlier. That was not at that time necessarily a beginning class for university students.

PAUL TOMBOULIAN: But you survived.

ALFRED MONETTA: I survived. It was interesting, though, because I never really think I understood what calculus was all about, until I started teaching it 20 years later. But it did give me a very good look at the theory of what math is all about. I think that helped me be a better teacher, even in the junior high and high school courses that we typically teach. Something else with the math curriculum, was that we did so many different courses—looking at theories of algebra, theories of calculus, looking at non-Euclidean geometries, all those kinds of things.

One of the things I liked about that program was the fact that I was with the same professor most of the time—Jim McKay. I think I had him for a class every semester, including the methods class that we did for math. The only other person I can remember having in the classroom was Beauregard Stubblefield. He did some kind of an algebra theory class. But the other classes were all with Jim McKay and many of the students were all math majors or math education majors. Therefore we got to know each other pretty well, and when we were doing things and working together, I think it really helped us a lot. It was very rigorous but it helped us because we were small in terms of the number of students in math, just as probably Michael [experienced], with the number of students that stayed for four years of Russian.

MICHAEL DELLER: Right. I think too, as we got into our junior year, I had a sense that the faculty or the administration—however you want to characterize the other side of the classroom—was concerned about how the product of this school would fare once they got the sheepskin in their hand. I think there was a real sense of, “All right, we’ve done this—we’ve created this program, we’ve educated this group of people—and soon they’re going to be going out looking for jobs,” and that sort of thing, to the point that I think they wanted some reassurance before we ever hit the street and the job market. So that they paid for all of us who were going to be graduating to take the GRE (Graduate Record Examination) so that they would have some sense of how we compared with other universities. That was a good-sized investment at that time in order for them and for us to have some assurance, before we hit the market, that what we possessed as graduates was as good as or better than other students. I think that

the sense they got from that was that it was okay, that the students did well on the exams, or okay.

For me, the ultimate test came when I applied for something the federal government was offering for foreign language teachers [under the National Defense Education Act, or NDEA]. The thing was that if you signed up, there was a two-step program for modern language teachers. If you qualified, you went to one campus one summer and you spent four or five weeks. Then if you did okay there, you could qualify for the second level, which sent you to the country where your language was spoken, sort of on the government ticket—it was paid for, for you. The idea was to assure quality foreign language teaching in the high schools.

What astonished or surprised me was that the training that I'd had here put me in the same grouping, in terms of the spoken language, as people who'd been born to the language. I mean, they looked at my scores, they looked at my tests—the oral tests that we had taken, and I had been prepared well enough, at least in the speaking ability, that I was put with somebody who had been born in a family that spoke that language. So I thought very highly of what I had gotten from Oakland.

PAUL TOMBOULIAN: So you worked hard, and given the reports I read in the student newspapers—which we've sort of collected—you've indicated that the [newspaper] descriptions of these [student] experiences were accurate. Here's an early report talking about a "Chance Given to Erase Fs." Does that sound right? "Professor Kluback Writes Fifth Book," and here's an article called "Faculty Row Planned as Exclusive Suburb," by Michael Deller.

MICHAEL DELLER: We did a lot of things because there were only a small group of us to do it. So we worked on the school newspaper, we did the jobs in the mail room, we went to class, we did all of those things. If you were going to have a school paper, you had to have somebody write.

PAUL TOMBOULIAN: It sounds like serious [topics] though.

MICHAEL DELLER: It was fun.

PAUL TOMBOULIAN: There came a time when you actually graduated and came to a graduation [ceremony]. Tell us what were your special events and recollections of April of 1963.

ALFRED MONETTA: I remember first that there was a dinner dance given at Meadow Brook Hall by Mrs. Wilson. Mr. Wilson had died by that time, the year before we graduated. I remember that as a very special event because she had opened the house to us as freshman, but now she was doing it again [as graduating seniors]. It was really nice because we could bring other people if we wanted, not just someone who was with the university, so other people got to get a view of Meadow Brook as well. But it was special also because we seemed to know Mrs. Wilson a little bit better by then. She was always such a personable [presence] on campus, because you would often see her. She would drive around in her little car, her little '57 Dodge; you'd often see her coming back and forth. You'd often see her at activities on campus. So by that evening, you felt very comfortable just talking with her, because you felt like you'd gotten to know her over the years.

One of the special events of that evening was a surprise for us. I think Michael was a part of that.

MICHAEL DELLER: I didn't realize I was a part of it until it happened. We had a committee—we had committees for everything—but one of the committees was to design the school ring. The design we chose was to recognize the initialism "MSUO," so the bezel of the ring was four-sided to allow those four letters. But what we didn't realize was going on—sort of behind the scenes—was that the administration was trying very hard to get authorization for the school's name to change, so that it would step out from the shadow of MSU and become its own creature. We didn't realize that MSUO was going to be something for the history books and no longer the name of the school.

We kept hearing from the company that was making the ring, "We've encountered a delay." They were not going to be able to deliver when they thought, and all of these excuses. We couldn't understand what was going on, what was so special about this ring and all these delays. Well, the delays were because the school didn't want us to get a ring that, on the day we got it, was ancient history. They were trying to get the name change complete, and once

they did that, then the name could be correct on the rings. We didn't know about all that.

So here we are having the dinner dance at Meadow Brook, graduation is the next morning or very shortly after that, and we still didn't have our rings. (By that time we knew about the name change.) So Mrs. Wilson steps up to the microphone in the ballroom at Meadow Brook, and she called Lynne Anderson up because Lynne was student number one. She called up the president of the student body, and then she called me up. We're all standing there, and she says, "All right, Michael, you were the chair of the ring committee and you've probably been wondering where those rings have gone. Well, here's your ring." Then she gave Lynne her ring, and she gave the president of the student body his ring, and we were just sort of aghast. Here they were finally, and they actually had Oakland University on them.

She turned and looked at the rest of the people out on the dance floor and she said, "I'll bet you're feeling really disappointed that you don't have your rings." Then there was the usual "Yeah, right" kind of thing, and she said, "You don't have to worry about that much longer. Go up to my study on the first floor, and I have some people to hand out your rings. Just present your receipt or your name, and you will get your ring if you ordered one." Not only did we get our rings, but we got our deposits back as well—whatever deposit we had put down. For people who hadn't ordered a ring, or a pin—because one of the options was a lapel pin kind of thing—you got a gift certificate so that you could go back to the bookstore and order a ring or a pin or whatever you wanted. She paid for that as her graduation gift to each of the students.

PAUL TOMBOULIAN: And there's something special about those rings.

ALFRED MONETTA: We still wear our rings. I've always worn mine.

MICHAEL DELLER: We both wear them. It's never been off except when it had to be resized.

ALFRED MONETTA: And these are rings that have the diamonds in them.

MICHAEL DELLER: And around the diamond it says "Charter Class."

ALFRED MONETTA: So these are very special rings to us. I think they were special to us not only because we were here, but because she gave them to us. That meant a lot—

MICHAEL DELLER: —to the point that... There was a clutch of us from Oakland University who went out to California to take our first jobs. Al and I both accepted teaching positions in California. There were several who took jobs in the aeronautical industry with Boeing. So there were about seven or eight of us that were out there on the West coast.

PAUL TOMBOULIAN: In the Los Angeles area?

MICHAEL DELLER: Yes, and we found out—I don't know how we found out—but we found out [about Mrs. Wilson's visit].

ALFRED MONETTA: We found out because I used to correspond with Mrs. Wilson. She at one point had said something about liking to know what we were doing, so for the last couple of years [at MSUO] I'd always sent her a Christmas card. While I was out there I would still send her cards and let her know now and then. She mentioned that she was coming out to the West coast, that she was doing something with the garden club. Do you know something about that?

MICHAEL DELLER: Yes, it was the Woman's National Farm and Garden Association, and she was going to be in San Diego. So Al and some of the others arranged to take her to dinner out on the West coast when she got there. I couldn't go because, as luck would have it, it was my first parent-teacher night, and I didn't think my principal would give me a very high rating if I skipped out of the parent-teacher night.

ALFRED MONETTA: So we drove down to the coast and met her at the hotel, took her out to dinner, and had just a very, very wonderful evening. I think when she came back to campus she talked about that for quite a while: how she was real impressed with what had happened, and what a good time she had.

PAUL TOMBOULIAN: It sounds like she was a very special person.

ALFRED MONETTA: She certainly seemed like a very special person. Even though she had a lot of money and lived in two big houses, she was someone who you could talk to easily, and I always enjoyed that.

PAUL TOMBOULIAN: You graduated, there was a ball, there were rings, there was a commencement ceremony. Does anything come to mind about that?

ALFRED MONETTA: Commencement was early because we would have been on trimesters by then. I remember we graduated on April 20th. I still have a copy of the announcement someplace. The first thing I remember about graduation is assembling in South Foundation Hall. We assembled there and got our gowns on, and then we walked through the wind across campus, and we graduated from the gymnasium in the new intramural building that had hardly been opened. In fact there was so much construction going on (just as at convocation), that I remember, in walking across the field to get there, they had put straw out because the grass hadn't grown yet, and they'd spray-painted it green. I remember that.

MICHAEL DELLER: And they used the design of the ring as the backdrop on the curtain behind the speakers, so that design was many times magnified for the rest of the audience to see. It was an exciting day for us. There actually were 145 of us who made it, and I don't know if the 145 counts the August group or not.

PAUL TOMBOULIAN: No, that was just the April group.

MICHAEL DELLER: Was that just the April group? There were some of our friends who had to wait until August to graduate—to complete their credits. In fact, one of the ones who came out to the West coast had to finish in August.

ALFRED MONETTA: I don't remember what anyone said. I just remember it being a very happy experience. I was very glad to have it finished and finally be off on my own.

PAUL TOMBOULIAN: When you were off on your own, and did other things starting in 1963, what additional academic [training] did you do?

ALFRED MONETTA: I had lived at home most of the time except the one semester that I lived in the dorm here, so I knew I wanted to leave home. Therefore when I was interviewing for jobs, I interviewed for anyone that was coming from out of state. By the time I left in May or June, I had [received] contracts to teach in Anchorage, Alaska, and Los Angeles, California, and I accepted the contract in Los Angeles.

While I was there—because California requires almost a fifth year of school—I started working on a masters program. I finished a masters program in secondary education while I was working for five years in a junior high school in the Los Angeles area, in one of the ghettos. Maybe it was a mistake, maybe it wasn't: when I signed the contract they asked me where I wanted to teach in the city, and they gave me this nice map and showed me all the different areas. Not knowing Los Angeles, I said, "You can put me anyplace." So I ended up in the Mexican-American ghetto. There were two Smiths in the school and they were both on the faculty, so it was a very interesting experience. I think that taught me as much as getting my masters degree out there. In addition, since then I've taken almost another year's worth of work at Oakland University, at Michigan State, and at U of M while I was teaching. So those are the things I've done since I left Oakland, in terms of classes.

PAUL TOMBOULIAN: Michael, you went into a different area out of your Russian.

MICHAEL DELLER: Yes. At first, though, the programs that I took as part of the NDEA thing were graduate studies in foreign language. So those first two summers I was doing graduate level studies in Russian. Then I changed, and I got my masters degree in library science from the University of Michigan, and have made my career in public library work. It was a good change; I like it, it's a nice line of work.

PAUL TOMBOULIAN: As we come to the end of our interview, I wonder if you have some reflections on the program that you completed here, in terms of its

goals and designs. We talked a little bit about the fact that some of it was too idealized. If one were doing this again or were reflecting on it, what thoughts might you give to the next generation of curriculum planners?

MICHAEL DELLER: I don't know if there is any magic combination that will do it. I think that what the university gives you is just that, it's what it gives you. What happens afterwards depends so much on what each individual does with that. I think the fact that we were challenged was good for us. Life is not going to be easy, and the challenge was healthy, in that we had to either overcome it, or find a way to deal with it. I think that the number of things that we had to do on campus was healthy: there were expectations and we were never expected to fail. They always expected us to succeed, and so the expectation was healthy for us.

ALFRED MONETTA: The high expectations.

MICHAEL DELLER: Yes, because then you began to develop high expectations for yourself in terms of, "Golly, I did this, I actually did it, and who would have believed that I could have, at that point!" So as long as what the university is looking at is preparing people for what [the university] thinks they need to know, and as long as it's a worthwhile expectation—I don't think that any of the expectations were unfair, except maybe an economics class—but they had the sense that this would be good for us, and ultimately I think it was.

ALFRED MONETTA: I think at the time that we were here, that it was. Now, though, I think things have changed enough, so that much of the curriculum ought to be examined.

MICHAEL DELLER: Oh, yes, I wouldn't for an instant say that what I had then is what I would expect people to have now. I mean, there have been so many changes in society. Yes, we had television, but we didn't have automation and computers to the extent, then, that we do now. We didn't have the multitude of audio and video choices that people have now. That gives you a whole different environment to work in. So I would expect that the university is

looking at that environment, and saying, “What do people need in order to assess that environment—to function in that environment?”

ALFRED MONETTA: Certainly just as with education now, there’s so much more that’s known about brain research, and that’s an area that ought to be looked at. That knowledge did not exist when we were here. So there are things like that, that would certainly make a difference in changing things. But at the time I think the broad background was what was very important. Having to take Western civilization and art class and music class, having to do something with foreign language, those kinds of experiences were very helpful for me as a teacher.

MICHAEL DELLER: One of the books that I still think was helpful in understanding why I shouldn’t be just the humanities kind of person, much as that was my inclination, was the insistence that we read C.P. Snow’s book, *The Two Cultures*. It was meant for both kinds of groups that ultimately were going to be on campus: the people who were interested in liberal arts, the humanist view; and the people who were interested in the sciences, which now would probably include the computer sciences and that sort of thing. The fact that each needed the other—I wouldn’t have accepted that. Especially when I went out into library work and was facing the introduction of computers, my inclination was “that’s not what I’m prepared to deal with, that should be somebody else,” and yet I had to be included in that. It’s a big part of my life now, I have to deal with it.

PAUL TOMBOULIAN: So maybe the topics are not as important as the approaches, in terms of curricular content: skills of looking at life, of solving problems, and thinking about things, rather than specific sacred subject areas—which seemed to be one of the thrusts we got in that early curriculum, where you needed to take a bit of this and a bit of that. But you said earlier, that this was the idealized curriculum, and reflected—at least at that time—some curricular expectations of a group at MSU who said, “This is the idealized education. If we could throw away all the stuff we think is a waste of time, let’s get down to the basics.”

ALFRED MONETTA: That's what it sounds like, and I think it was very good for us.

MICHAEL DELLER: Things like Western civilization: there were really fascinating discussions generated by the things that we were taught, because the faculty had an enthusiasm for what they were doing. So they encouraged that grappling with the concept, with the idea or the philosophy. Just the fact that we had those discussions gave me a framework later when I was meeting problems or situations that were maybe new to me. I probably didn't consciously say to myself, "Well now, Michael, back in Western civ you knew you could do this." I think it was just a thing that happened because I'd had that experience, and so I said, "What if we do it this way? What if we try this way?" It was a good background.

PAUL TOMBOULIAN: Any final thoughts or reflections on your experience, your careers at Oakland? Was it a good experience?

ALFRED MONETTA: I think it was a good experience, and part of the reason again was because of the size, because we got to know people and we got very much in depth on the things that we did.

MICHAEL DELLER: And I'll go with my quote that was back in *Time* magazine many years ago. That is, "It means something to have graduated from Oakland University."

ALFRED MONETTA: —or MSUO, as the case may be.

PAUL TOMBOULIAN: I want to thank both of you very much for participating in this activity.

ALFRED MONETTA: Thank you, Paul.

MICHAEL DELLER: Glad we could do it.

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