

SYDNEY AND FRANCES LEWIS

July 8, 1996

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Mame Warren,
Interviewer

Warren: This is Mame Warren. Today is the 8th of July 1996. I'm in Lexington, Virginia, with Sydney and Frances Lewis.

I did a little bit of homework here and looked at the *Calyx*, and I see that you were on the basketball team for four years.

Sydney Lewis: Yes, true.

Warren: Is he a basketball star?

Sydney Lewis: Not quite.

Warren: What kind of team was it back when you were here?

Sydney Lewis: My first year, we were Southern Conference champions. I don't think Southern Conference exists anymore. We were a fair-to-middling team after that, but we had a very good team my freshman year, my first year.

Warren: So what happens when you're the Southern Conference champions?

Sydney Lewis: You're just the Southern Conference champions, that's all. The next year we went to Madison Square Garden and played and got our brains beat out, and after that, there was nothing eventful. Of course, we were participants in the Southern—the Southern Conference, I forget how many teams there were, but I think maybe the first eight teams in the league always went to the conference itself, where the

championship was settled, and we went every year I was on the team. We got as far as the conference championship, but we didn't win again.

Warren: Who was the coach then?

Sydney Lewis: Cy Young.

Warren: Cy Young.

Sydney Lewis: Cy Young, and after Cy was a coach named Cookie Cunningham.

Warren: Never heard of Cookie Cunningham.

Sydney Lewis: Oh, yeah.

Warren: So who was the better coach?

Sydney Lewis: Well, Cy was a tradition here. Cookie Cunningham was a better coach.

Warren: Do you want to expand upon that a little bit?

Sydney Lewis: No. I mean, he was a more modern person. This was at the end of Cy's affiliation with W&L, really, and he was ready to retire. I'm just trying to think. I think Cookie came my sophomore year, but I played with Cy only one year.

Warren: And that was the championship season.

Sydney Lewis: Yeah.

Warren: Well, that was a good year for him to go out, as the coach of the championship.

Sydney Lewis: Yeah, he was quite a—I mean, Cy's name is still bandied about around here, I suppose, isn't it?

Warren: Of course.

Sydney Lewis: Yeah.

Warren: I can just imagine this trip to Madison Square Garden must have some stories connected with it. Can you remember back? How did you get up there?

Sydney Lewis: Well, there's some stories connected to it which I'd rather not tell, okay. No, I think we went up by, I guess I don't even remember. I think we drove up. I think we went up in maybe three or four automobiles. I just don't recall now.

Frances Lewis: Where did you stay?

Sydney Lewis: I think we stayed at the Hotel New Yorker, which no longer exists, because it was close to Madison Square Garden. I think the Hotel New Yorker was on about 34th Street and the Garden was somewhere around 35th, 36th, something like that. But we were there, went up one day and came back the next day.

Warren: Well, you couldn't have gotten in too much trouble in that amount of time.

Sydney Lewis: We played Long Island University, who beat us pretty badly. There was some, what shall I say, some internal controversy, not public controversy, but there was some internal controversy because Long Island University's star player was a black man, and Washington and Lee just didn't play teams that had black basketball players. No other Southern school did, either. We weren't unique. So that was a real problem for the team, or ostensibly it was.

But otherwise, it was a very nice trip. I like New York. In fact, we live there half the year. But playing basketball at Washington and Lee was a good experience and some great friendships were developed.

Frances Lewis: Dear.

Sydney Lewis: What?

Frances Lewis: I think the most interesting story that you told me was being stopped in the middle of an exam.

Sydney Lewis: Oh, yes, it's interesting, but that was locally connected with basketball. Maybe you didn't know him, because he's dead now. Did you know Dr. Laughlin?

Warren: No.

Sydney Lewis: From the law school.

Warren: But please tell me. I know who he is.

Sydney Lewis: Because I was just trying to find out if his wife was here, his widow was still living here, and she is, but she's in Colorado this week.

He came down my second year in law school. Well, my first year. That year I decided that I wasn't going to play basketball, because it would be too much of a burden. I was just going to study law and be a good lawyer some day. That was Dr. Laughlin's first year. I think he was sort of stunned by everything that was going on at Washington and Lee. He was a wonderful man, but he just couldn't figure out some of the things that were going on.

I remember the first exam we took, and a few of us left during the exam period and went down and shot pool, and he couldn't understand what was going on. He'd never been anyplace where students could get up from taking an exam and do whatever they wanted to, you know what I mean. I don't think he really knew what the Honor System here was all about. I mean, he did, but it still was amazing to him.

My freshman year in law school, I was taking one of his exams, an exam in tort, and that was his second year of teaching at W&L. I looked up during the exam period, and there was someone at the door waving to me, saying, "Sydney, Sydney." It was the basketball coach, Cookie Cunningham. He waved to me, and I got up and walked over to see him. He said, "We're playing the University of Richmond tonight. I've got several men who are injured, and Sward [phonetic] is very small. I'm wondering if you can't suit up for the game and come."

I said, "Look, I haven't had a basketball in my hand for a year, almost."

He said, "I know you might not play. But if I need a fifth player on the court, I need to have somebody."

I said, "Well, I've got this exam to take. I've only been in here a couple of hours. If I'm going to do anything, I've got to go home and get some rest," etc., etc. And I said, "I have to speak to Dr. Laughlin about it, Mr. Laughlin about it."

He said, "Well, come on, let's go down and speak to him."

So I went down with the coach, with Cookie, and we talked to him and told him what I wanted to do, that I wanted to leave class, I was going to my fraternity house

and rest up, have lunch and rest after lunch, and then early in the evening I was going to have a dinner around five o'clock, and then I'd go over to the gym and get ready for the game that night, which I did. Then I told him, when the game was over, I'm sure I would feel up to it because I really didn't expect to play too much, because even if I were put in the game, I was not in condition to play very much, and I said, "I'll come back after the game and I'll finish my exam."

That's when he said, "Are you serious?"

I said, "Yes, I'm serious."

Well anyway, to make a long story short, I went to the game, put on my basketball suit, went out to the game, sat on the bench the whole game, never got into the game. When the game was over, I got up and went back to the locker room and got dressed, went over to Tucker Hall then, which is on the front campus, and finished my exam, and I got home about eleven-thirty that night.

Warren: That's a great story.

Sydney Lewis: Isn't that a wonderful story?

Frances Lewis: Only at Washington and Lee.

Sydney Lewis: Whenever I would see Mr. Laughlin when I'd come back to school occasionally, I'd sit down and chat with him a little bit about it, and he'd shake his head. He said, "I didn't believe it, but it happened." But that's what Washington and Lee is all about.

Warren: You know, I'm glad you brought up the whole concept of the Honor System, because that's something I want to talk to everybody about. What does the Honor System mean to you? Was it something new to you when you came here?

Sydney Lewis: Oh, sure. I mean, it was new as a student, yes. I think the Honor System, when you first come here, you think of the Honor System in regard to your grades and your classes, but that isn't what it's all about. The Honor System is how you live here. I mean, Frances knows this. Every summer, when we got out for summer, I

would leave my books all over the campus, didn't remember where I left them. When I came back in the fall, they were right where I'd left them. I mean, it's that sort of thing. That's sort of minor, but you could trust everybody and everybody could trust you. That was the real message of the Honor System. It was trust, in that sort of world, which isn't a real world, mind you. That doesn't exist outside of Lexington, Virginia, and some other places that might have a good Honor System as good as we have. That's not the real world, but it's a good world to be able to live in a part of your life, anyway, because you just know that there are no hidden – what's the word I'm looking for? But anyway, there's nothing hidden behind people's front. What you see is what they are, and that's a good feeling.

Warren: How did you pick Washington and Lee in the first place? What brought you here?

Sydney Lewis: By accident.

Warren: Well, tell me about this terrible accident.

Sydney Lewis: I'm talking about basketball again. I had a good friend in Richmond. We played high school basketball together. He had a brother who was here, who was a freshman when I graduated high school, and he was graduating the next year. He said, "You go on up to W&L this year, and then next year when I graduate, I'll come to W&L." And I did.

Actually, before that I had been thinking about Vanderbilt. I don't know why. Maybe some of the things I'd read about Vanderbilt impressed me, I don't know. But when my friend told me this, I was sort of impressed by what he had to say. Well anyway, to make a long story short, he left high school and went to Woodbury Academy for a year, graduated, and then went to the University of Virginia. [Laughter]

Warren: And he became one of those damn Wahoos.

Sydney Lewis: Yeah, that's exactly right. We still are friends. I didn't see him this summer yet, but he has home down in Virginia Beach nearby us. He stopped by, but evidently I was resting and I didn't see him. But he's from Richmond, a very fine man.

But it was purely an accident. When I came up here, I didn't know anybody up here except Billy Wiltshire, his brother. Billy Wiltshire had a girlfriend in Richmond, and I was the best thing that ever happened to Billy Wiltshire, because he had an automobile and every day of his life he would drive to Richmond. It was just amazing. He would call me because he wanted company, and I went back quite often with him. I never should have, but I did. And so I was a real lifesaver for him, because he didn't have to drive alone back and forth to Richmond. We used to drive down after school in the afternoons and come back late that night.

Warren: Oh, my gosh.

Frances Lewis: How long a drive was it then?

Sydney Lewis: Then it was about three and a half hours.

Warren: On old Route 60?

Sydney Lewis: Yeah, old Route 60.

Frances Lewis: Over the mountain.

Sydney Lewis: Over the mountains, that's right.

Warren: That's quite a drive, up and down and up and down.

Sydney Lewis: We used to go by Amherst. But Billy had a big Packard. Remember the Packard automobile?

Warren: I'm afraid I'm a little young for the Packard.

Sydney Lewis: Well, the Packard automobile was sort of comparable, much more luxurious than, say, the Lincoln or the Cadillac today. He used to love to drive that automobile, and there was nobody on those roads. Heavens knows, today if I was in automobile with somebody who drove the way he drove, as fast as he did, I'd get out at the first red light, because he really did speed.

Frances Lewis: What did the Texans here drive?

Sydney Lewis: They drove Lincoln Continentals. There's a wonderful story about a Texan young man by the name of Bobby Neil [phonetic], who was a Phi Delta Theta, and they tell this story about him. He had two Lincoln Continentals when they first came out, and they were beautiful automobiles, absolutely beautiful automobiles. They used to tell this story that one day Bobby got picked up in Texas for speeding on one of these flat roads. They took him into a magistrate's office, and the magistrate said, "You were going 95 miles an hour in such and such a zone speed limit. I'm going to have to fine you \$100, just got to do it to teach you a lesson."

So Bobby went in his pocket and picked out his money clip and took out two \$100 bills and gave them to the magistrate. The magistrate said, "I said \$100."

He said, "Yes, sir, I know. But I'm coming back through here tomorrow."

They tell that story about him, and he was just like it. He was one who would say that, too, you know.

Washington and Lee, in those days anyway, there were certain traditions that we don't have anymore. In the beginning, I was sort of sorry, because when my son came up here, he was in the class of '66, the traditions had just about ended then, and as most people who were a part of those traditions, you immediately feel a great loss.

Warren: Tell me, what kind of traditions?

Sydney Lewis: Well, traditions, some of which were good and some of which were not so good. You had the tradition of speech, that you said hello to everybody. It didn't make any difference. And if you didn't say hello, you'd find yourself up before the Freshman Assimilation Committee. That was when you first came here, and you would receive punishment by the students.

Frances Lewis: Did you have to know their names?

Sydney Lewis: What's that?

Frances Lewis: Did you have to say "Hello, John," or "Hello—

Sydney Lewis: No. If you didn't know their names, that was okay. But after a while, with a small student body, you get to know everybody's name within thirty days.

And then, of course, you had the beanie for freshmen, the hat the freshmen had. There was a dress code, where you wouldn't walk out the front door without a coat and tie on. I mean, they were outward manifestations, outward traditions that you had.

There used to be, and I'm not sure, I don't think there is anymore, a freshman camp. Is there still a freshman camp?

Warren: They do a freshman orientation, but they don't—

Sydney Lewis: But they do it here.

Warren: Yeah, they do it on campus, I think.

Sydney Lewis: See, we went to freshman camp for a week. I think it was out at— what's the name of that place? But anyway, there was a camp where all freshmen came and spent a week in the rough. It was a terrific week because you got to know everybody before you walked on campus. My class must have been about, let's see, my class must have been about 200, I suppose.

Warren: Who ran that camp?

Sydney Lewis: Washington and Lee.

Warren: But what people?

Sydney Lewis: I'm sure it was Tex Tilson. Do you ever hear Tex's name? He was the football coach here while Cy was the basketball coach. But he ran the camp. There was a camp—I think it's still in existence—that he ran, too, as an aside, which is Camp Virginia. Is that still around here?

Warren: I don't know. For children?

Sydney Lewis: Yes. Oh, yes, for children.

Warren: I've heard of it, but I don't know if it's still—

Sydney Lewis: It was a very fine boys camp, very fine, up at Goshen, and that's where the freshman camp was, as I recall. But it was terrific.

Then, of course, we came back and we spent about a week in Lee Chapel listening to Dr. Gaines, which was terrific, because if you could spend a week listening to Dr. Gaines and you weren't imbued with the spirit of Washington and Lee, you should go home, because he was something else again. He was an orator, so to speak, in the ways of Daniel Webster or somebody like that, because when he got up and spoke, you could hear a pin drop. Of course, that's what Gaines Hall, that's what this building was named after. He was also, how should I say, he was also a preacher man. I think before he became a college educator, I think he was trained as a minister.

Warren: Really?

Sydney Lewis: I believe so. I'm not sure. I don't know why that's in the back of my mind, but he sure in the devil sounded like one, you know. But before he came up here, I think he had an administrative position and a teaching professorship at the University of Richmond, and then he took over the presidency here, and he was here for a long time. He was a nice man.

Warren: Were there any particular teachers who meant a lot to you, members of the faculty?

Sydney Lewis: Oh, yes, a lot of them, both in the law school and in the undergraduate school. My philosophy professor, a man named Dr. Morton, and one I'm sure you've heard of, Dr. Latture. I think he lived to be 99 or 105, one of the two. He just died recently.

Warren: 104. He just died. I haven't talked to anybody who took any of his classes.

Sydney Lewis: Well, he was not a good professor, but he was a wonderful man, he really was. He was a – what would you call it? He would come in wearing two different shoes or two different socks or he'd come in with his collar open, which you didn't do in those days. He didn't realize his collar was open and his tie was not tied properly or what have you. But he was a very nice man.

In law school, there was Mr. Williams, Skinny Williams as he was called, and Dr. Light and Mr. Laughlin and Dean Moreland, who was dean of the law school then.

I have one nice story to tell you about him. When I was in law school, Frances was at the University of Michigan, and I used to go to Richmond and get my mother's automobile and drive up to the University of Michigan. Of course, at the law school then, if you were on the dean's list, you could take unlimited cuts. You didn't even have to go to school if you got certain grades, to which I was entitled. I used to drive up, I don't know, maybe once or twice a month, I suppose, I forget, and Frances used to meet me. Most of the time we used to meet in Columbus, Ohio. She would come down from Ann Arbor.

Warren: Aren't you a nice date.

Frances Lewis: I used to come on the train.

Sydney Lewis: Yeah, you used to come on the train.

Warren: That bodes well for a good marriage, you both meet halfway.

Sydney Lewis: I think the last time this happened, as a preface to the story, we went up to Columbus to meet Frances, and Cookie Cunningham came along, the basketball coach, because he had been a great athlete at Ohio State University. He'd been all-American football player, all-American basketball player.

We stopped off in Charleston, West Virginia, on our way up to get a sandwich at some fast food place, and when we came out, the automobile trunk had been rifled, been broken open, and our tickets to the football game were stolen from the bag. Well, we were very fortunate, because he was, as I say, an all-time Ohio State great. When we got there, he went to the athletic offices. They'd kept a record of the seats they'd sent him, and so we were able to take our seats over. While we were there, of course somebody came in with the seats that had been stolen. I don't think they were the people who had stolen the tickets. They had bought the tickets from whoever the thief was.

But anyway, when I got back to Lexington maybe three or four days later, I forget because we stayed in Columbus a few days, there was a note for me from Dean Moreland. He said, "Will you please come in the office to see me when you return to school?"

I didn't know what was going on. I went in to see him, and he was sitting at his desk. He was a wonderful old man. He said, "Sydney, there's a rumor going around here which I don't like."

I said, "What do you mean there's a rumor, Dean Moreland?"

He said, "There's a rumor that you're taking your law education as a correspondence course here. I don't like that."

I said, "No, sir. I went up with Cookie Cunningham to see the football game," etc., etc.

He said, "Well, look, I'm telling you. There ain't no more football games for you. Although you're officially entitled to as many cuts as you want to, unofficially you better not take them if you want to remain in this school."

So I didn't take anymore after that year. He was quite a guy, and he was firm, you know. I wasn't about to argue with him.

Warren: That was an interesting way to put it, wasn't it?

Sydney Lewis: Yeah, that's right.

Warren: So why was Skinny Williams called Skinny Williams?

Sydney Lewis: Because Skinny must have been about 6'6" and must have weighed 110 pounds. I mean, that was a good reason to call him Skinny Williams. He was a good professor, a good professor.

Warren: What did he teach?

Sydney Lewis: He taught property law, and Mr. Light, Charles Light, Dean Moreland taught evidence, and Charles Light, he left my freshman year to go into the army, I think in the adjutant general's office or somewhere, but he taught torts, and Mr.

Laughlin came in to take over his job. Then Light came back after a couple years. I forget what were his main courses when he came back. But those were the days of Charley McDowell teaching contracts, and he was a real character.

Warren: Tell me what you mean by that.

Sydney Lewis: What's that?

Warren: How is he a character?

Sydney Lewis: Well, he was, Charley was an open book, and you knew exactly what he was going to give you on the exams. You didn't have to do anything. You just knew what he was going to do. And he was a country storyteller. He would just sit in class all day with you and tell stories, etc. He used to sit around in front of the law school, which was Tucker Hall then, and we used to sit out in front with him in a chair and sort of rock back and forth, and he would tell you stories. He was a nice man. His wife was the secretary there at the law school, Mrs. McDowell, and she remained on even after he died, I think.

Warren: Was she important to the students?

Sydney Lewis: Yes. She was secretary to the dean. For example, she was secretary to Dean Moreland. I'm trying to think who succeeded Dean Moreland as dean. I think Charlie Light succeeded him as dean. He became dean of the law school.

Warren: I'm trying to remember the year. Were you here when old Tucker Hall burned?

Sydney Lewis: No, that was before my time.

Warren: That had happened before. I'm trying to remember, was it 1934?

Sydney Lewis: Yeah. That was before my time.

Warren: So Tucker Hall was brand new when you came.

Sydney Lewis: That's right, yeah.

Warren: It seemed like it was very up to date at that point.

Sydney Lewis: I suppose it was.

Warren: Describe the Tucker Hall that you went to law school at.

Sydney Lewis: It was a very small building. The best way for me to describe it is, I used to do all my studying there, and I used to undress in the library. I used to sit around. There were four or five of us who used to do that. I used to sit around in my shorts, and nobody objected. Nobody ever came in there, and it could be awfully hot around here, just like it is now. When this time of the year came around – well, before now, but in the springtime, when it would get real hot, or in the fall when it would get real hot, as I say, we'd study in the library, and we just had to disrobe. We couldn't stand it. There was no air-conditioning, so we had to make do, and the only way we could make do was to take off layers of clothes. So we used to sit around in our shorts and our T-shirts.

Warren: I wish I could find a picture of that. Wouldn't that be a great shot?

Frances Lewis: Is there a shot of that?

Sydney Lewis: I don't think so.

Warren: Wouldn't that be fun.

Sydney Lewis: I don't think so. There were a couple of shots, there might have been some in the *Calyxes*, of a few of us sitting in the law library with our feet up on the table. I don't know. I don't remember that, either, but I've seen those photographs. But, no, no one came in and photographed us when we were sitting around in our shorts. But we would do it for long periods of time, as long as the heat lasted.

Of course, I don't know now, but in fraternity houses – in those days, of course, there were no dorms, no upper-class dorms like you have now. There were Graham-Lees dormitories, which were for freshmen. If you lived off campus, I mean lived off campus in two ways, in fraternity houses or in small apartments around town, and it was very difficult to study in either one of those. I mean, you just couldn't do it.

I know Lee Kenna, who is up here now, was my roommate in law school, and we lived down here in an apartment on a lower level of a house right next door to the

Sigma Chi house. It was owned by Mr. Mattingly, who was the registrar here at the university. I think that was his official title. But we couldn't study down there. We had to go to the library if we wanted to study. Of course, the wonderful thing was, the library was open twenty-four hours a day. We could go whenever we wanted to, and we didn't have to leave or come on any schedule, and so it was very nice.

Frances Lewis: Tell about the relationship among the fraternities.

Sydney Lewis: In which way? Oh, yes. Well, of course, this was—I know whether it was peculiar to me, but I lived in the fraternity house in my undergraduate, where I lived in the freshman dormitory and then moved my sophomore year to the fraternity house, where I lived for three years. My fraternity house was the last building on Letcher Avenue before you get to the parade grounds of VMI. I think now it's the VMI alumni house or something.

In those days, of course, every fraternity house had its own kitchen. The fraternity members ate and slept there. The university had no sleeping facilities for upperclassmen. That was the only place you could go, other than these apartments I'm talking about. But in my day anyway, the fraternities were really very, very open. In other words, I don't think I ever ate a meal, ever ate a fraternity house meal without a friend from another fraternity, either at his fraternity house or my fraternity house. In other words, you would just go around and eat at different fraternity houses with your friends, and they would come to you. It was a cementer, so to speak, of really close friendships. Like for example, I had many friends at Phi Delta Theta, and I would go down there to lunch or to dinner, and they would treat me as a fraternity brother. And the same thing would happen when they came to my fraternity. It was as though the campus was just one big fraternity. I don't know whether it still exists that way, and I doubt it. I know it wasn't like that in my son's day. Of course, it got so here, I remember the last few years I was on the board, and when you were on the board, too, the fraternities just really got out of hand here. They were trashing the buildings and

everything else. Every now and then we'd have a drunken brawl, but it would be one night and it would be cleaned up the next morning, something like that. It wasn't vandalism the way I heard it about what was going on in these fraternities when I was sitting on the board and all the trouble that was being had here.

Warren: Someone who was here last week for the alumni college brought some pictures of his fraternity, and there was one of them where everybody in the picture was wearing gorgeous evening dress.

Sydney Lewis: Oh, yeah, sure.

Warren: I said, "Oh, is this getting ready to go to a formal dance?" and he said, "No, it was just a house party."

Sydney Lewis: Oh, yeah.

Frances Lewis: Those were the days.

Warren: Did you come for those house parties?

Frances Lewis: Oh, yeah, with luggage. We'd have three or four formal gowns. We really dressed.

Warren: Tell me from the ladies point of view, what was it like to come to Lexington?

Frances Lewis: Well, first you had to pack a lot. It seems to me there would be two formal major affairs and then one at the fraternity house. Isn't that the way it worked?

Sydney Lewis: Actually, in those days there were two-night dance sets, which is spring and fall, and then you had Fancy Dress Ball, which was three nights, and finals which were three nights.

Frances Lewis: So that was a major activity around.

Sydney Lewis: So the ladies used to – they couldn't wear the same gowns.

Frances Lewis: So you had to pack and pack, and we really dressed at those things. But, and I was saying this to somebody, dating in those days was not such a serious matter. That is, as I remember it, you had to have late dates after the ball. You'd have a date with someone else to go get something to eat.

Warren: With someone else?

Frances Lewis: Right, other than the person you came with, and if you didn't, you wouldn't get invited back, because he had a late date. Is that not correct?

Sydney Lewis: Yeah.

Frances Lewis: Then you'd have another date. I don't know, it would go on all night. But late dating was an accepted – I was in shock when my children started going out and they wouldn't even date more than one person, you know, because I said we had a lot more fun. But anyway, these parties were something else again. I remember them very fondly.

Warren: Where did all these girls stay in Lexington?

Frances Lewis: We did not stay in the fraternity houses, which was the system at UVA. At UVA, you came down and supposedly the men moved out of fraternity houses and gave it over to the dates. But they didn't all leave. That was a mess. But here, we were much more genteel.

Sydney Lewis: They stayed in houses around town, boarding houses.

Frances Lewis: Who was the lady that I used to stay with? They used to take in girls for these dances.

Sydney Lewis: There were quite a few homes around here that did that. Of course, lots of girls came over from the nearby schools, and they went back after the dance, and then they'd come over the next day.

Frances Lewis: And then the girls would come from like Sweet Briar.

Sydney Lewis: That's what I said, the neighboring schools.

Frances Lewis: But where did they come from that they had chaperons?

Sydney Lewis: From Sweet Briar and Hollins and Randolph-Macon.

Frances Lewis: But they must have stayed here. What did they need with the chaperons?

Sydney Lewis: What's your question?

Frances Lewis: They used to come with chaperons.

Sydney Lewis: Oh, yes. Chaperons would stay in the house, sure, when they stayed overnight.

Frances Lewis: I'm trying to think of that lady's name. There were people who would do that as a –

Sydney Lewis: You're not thinking about the fraternity housemother, Mrs. Flournoy.

Frances Lewis: No, no, no. I'm trying to think, I stayed in the lady's home who took in young women who came for these events.

Warren: Were you coming all the way from the University of Michigan for this?

Frances Lewis: I think I did a couple times, but the thing is, I came down here when I was still in high school. Time gets screwed up, because when I went to college, I never came back for Fancy Dress, because it seems to me we had exams while you were having Fancy Dress. In those days, they had very big bands here, you know, Benny Goodman and so forth, and I used to be able to tune in to them on the radio and get really mad that there I was studying hard for an exam and you were having fun. I can't remember every detail, but I think after I went to Michigan I did not come back. Or did I?

Sydney Lewis: You came back for finals.

Frances Lewis: Came back for finals, yeah.

Warren: You came to Fancy Dress?

Frances Lewis: I never got to Fancy Dress. The time evidently was not right.

Sydney Lewis: The only time I think you got to Fancy Dress was when your son was here.

Frances Lewis: You came out to Michigan. The big dance at Michigan was J-Hop, the junior prom. I have a picture of us at –

Sydney Lewis: Drove through the snow, right.

Frances Lewis: Right.

Warren: Have me be your best friend at one of the dances that you came for. I'm your friend back in Richmond, and you're coming back and telling me all about your weekend. What did you do?

Frances Lewis: Drove out and saw House Mountain. Well, first of all, when you danced, you also did not dance with the same person all the time. In fact, am I correct, if your date did not get cut in—I bet they don't cut in anymore.

Sydney Lewis: I don't think they do.

Frances Lewis: Somebody would come tap you on the shoulder. You would also not get invited back. Is that right?

Sydney Lewis: No, that's not quite. They were the days you'd get tapped on the shoulder, and everybody danced with everybody.

Frances Lewis: Right. And you had to have some stags around to keep—some men had to be there without dates.

Sydney Lewis: Sure. There were many men who were there without dates, and they would tap the dates of their friends to keep things going.

Frances Lewis: But I also remember that was the era, when you see this in the movies when they depict this era, when these terrific bands were here, when we would sort of stand around the bandstand and listen.

Sydney Lewis: Rather than dance, you would just stand around and watch. I remember the first time Benny Goodman came. It was in old Doremus gymnasium. That's where the dances were held. Everybody in Lexington, Virginia, was up—they couldn't get down on the dance floor where the ball was. Those balconies were absolutely packed and jammed. I was scared to death that they were going to cave in. I never in my life saw so many people up there at that time. But Benny Goodman was the "King of Swing" or whatever it was at that time, and everybody had to see him and hear him. It was worthwhile to see him and hear him, too.

The dances were, as you know, very formal and not rowdy at all on the floor. The rowdiness that took place always took place later at the fraternity houses.

Frances Lewis: See, you didn't drink.

Sydney Lewis: That's right.

Frances Lewis: And I didn't drink in those days. But was there a lot of drinking?

Sydney Lewis: Not in my fraternity house, not at all. But there were some, like for example down the street at the KA house, Kappa Alpha house. I'm telling you, they had a few, not everybody, but they had a few students there who were really, who were drunks in every sense of the word, not only at dance time. They would just stay stoned during the week. We'd see them all the time because they were just a block from us, the fraternity house. That's a fraternity, I don't know whether it's still there or not, but it was sort of diagonally across the street from Tucker Hall.

Warren: That's not a fraternity anymore.

Sydney Lewis: It's not a fraternity house anymore? It was Kappa Alpha then. It was the most Southern of all the fraternities. In fact, I think it might have been one of the—in fact, it might have been the first fraternity on campus, and certainly even maybe the first national fraternity, I don't know. It had a long time to get to where it was when I was here. I never saw it personally, but they used to talk about some of the students getting in bathtubs full of whiskey, etc., etc., and that sort of thing. You didn't know whether it was true or whether it was rumor. It made a good story anyway.

Warren: I need to turn the tape over.

[Begin Tape 1, Side 2]

Sydney Lewis: It was the Southern schools, to my information anyway, that really have always been the big drinkers, big drinking schools, so to speak.

Frances Lewis: I would ask Sydney when he would sit in that board room with the Washington and Lee board, and I couldn't believe that these men—because they were all men at that time, except for me—that they were these drunks of fifty years ago. I

said how did you all turn out – as I said, Sydney never drank. He still doesn't drink. How did they all turn out so well?

Sydney Lewis: Well, it was just a day in their life that they got over real quickly, that's all.

Warren: I'm glad you brought that up, because the reason I want you to be here and be part of this conversation, besides hearing about going to dances, which I love, and getting the female point of view. It's hard to get the female point of view around here.

Frances Lewis: It is.

Warren: But you were the first really significant woman on the board, very active woman on the board, from what I hear.

Frances Smith: Was I the first woman on the board?

Warren: No, you weren't the first woman.

Sydney Lewis: Miss duPont was.

Warren: You were the first one who really did something here. So tell me what it was like to walk into this male bastion.

Frances Lewis: They were all gentlemen. Is that right?

Sydney Lewis: Yeah.

Frances Lewis: Yeah, they were all gentlemen. This board was very impressive. The men were really, they did not run off at the mouth. They asked piercing questions. I was really impressed, because I'd been on many boards, and this one really impressed me. Am I correct?

Sydney Lewis: Yeah.

Frances Lewis: In fact, I almost died when I found out that I was going to be involved in this decision as to whether they were going coed or not. I came back from that first board meeting and I said I would never have gotten involved had I known that this decision was coming up. But it was really amazing to me, and I've told this story many

times. They asked question after question and so forth and so on, and I never knew 'til the vote came what was anybody's opinion. Most of them were lawyers. Is that right?

Sydney Lewis: Yeah.

Frances Lewis: They were very practiced at getting the information they wanted without revealing anything. So that was the big decision we made at that time.

Warren: Were you the only woman on the board at that time?

Frances Lewis: I was the only woman on the board, and I was worried to death that I would be the only vote – I'm not very brave, and I was going, "What will I do if they all – but as I know you know, the vote was unanimous. That's not a secret, is it?"

Sydney Lewis: No.

Frances Lewis: No. I was very relieved, because I could just see me being a lone dissenter on the other side.

Warren: Tell me about being there and that whole process. It was a long, involved process to get to that day. What was that like?

Sydney Lewis: Well, let me tell you this. I was on the board twelve years before Frances joined the board as my term was up, and I don't believe that a single year passed, maybe one or two passed, that the issue of coeducation did not come up. It came up constantly. It would come up this year, and the vote was that the student body had had a vote – I mean, this is just an example – and they wanted coeducation, and what should we do about it, and we did nothing. The next year, it came up the student body doesn't want coeducation, what should we do about it, and we did nothing. So over that twelve-year period, without exception, maybe a couple years, we faced this question every single year, and every single year we turned the proposition down.

Then Frances got on the board, and her first year, when considering coeducation, they accepted it.

Warren: Are you giving her all the credit here? Or the blame?

Sydney Lewis: What I was trying to point out, it wasn't a new issue. It was being constantly – what's the word – looked at. There's a better word than that. So I think the board had heard all the pros and all the cons for a long time. When we were told, I know the last couple of years I started hearing when I was on the board, before Frances got on the board, that the quality of our student body was not keeping pace, and one of the only ways we were going to keep pace, or so the argument went, was to go coeducation and bring coeds in. They all had this exit poll every year of the students who had been accepted for admission and who had not accepted the invitation for admission and asked, "Why didn't you come? You were accepted." It was almost unanimous among those who didn't come that they didn't come because Washington and Lee was a single-sex school. They knew Washington and Lee was a single-sex school before they applied, but obviously some of the other schools to whom they applied were coeducational, and they were accepted at those schools, so that's where they went.

Frances Lewis: I think that many people on that board resisted the idea. You had to prove to them that the applicant pool was dragging the university down.

Sydney Lewis: That's right.

Frances Lewis: The really didn't want to believe that.

Sydney Lewis: That's right. It was just amazing what happened when W&L became coed. The quality of the student just zoomed.

Frances Lewis: You know, I had to stop myself today. We were discussing this at the table, and I realized that one of the participant's – this was at lunch – son was here at the time that that decision was made.

Sydney Lewis: Yes, he had two sons.

Frances Lewis: Right. And I said, "Lord, am I saying his son did not have the right quality?" In other words, I had to shut myself off. I was wondering whether I was saying anything wrong.

Warren: It's a very awkward thing to talk about.

Frances Lewis: It is.

Warren: Because what you're saying, I hear over and over again, that the quality of the student body had gone down. And yet those are some of our alumni, and we have to respect that.

Sydney Lewis: That's right.

Warren: And it is awkward.

Frances Lewis: And then there's the other – when you talk about alumni – there was the other thing. Some men, when they were talking on the other side, would say things like, "Think of Jack Warner, who probably never made over a C in his life and is a very successful –

Sydney Lewis: That's right, highly successful man.

Frances Lewis: Highly successful. "So maybe C students is what we need around here," so forth and so on. This would go on. They really did resist it. But I think in the end, they were smart people. Is that right?

Sydney Lewis: Oh, sure.

Frances Lewis: And I don't know, despite the vote, many of them were still unhappy.

Sydney Lewis: Oh, yeah, I think so.

Frances Lewis: But they knew they had to do it. And, of course, things have turned around here just marvelously.

The other thing is, I remember this one remark, "Professors get disheartened when their students are not apt." I remember one of the men said to me, "I should imagine they would consider it a challenge to teach a C student and make a success of him."

I said, "I doubt that that is the ideal of a person who goes into the field."

Sydney Lewis: That certainly isn't true with your son.

Frances Lewis: No. He wants bright students. I'm trying to think, how many years did we discuss this? It wasn't protracted forever. They scheduled the meetings.

Sydney Lewis: No, because as I said, when I got off the board, I think it was the next year or at least maybe the second year, so maybe two years at the most.

Warren: And there was a change of administration there.

Sydney Lewis: John Wilson came.

Frances Lewis: Yes, that's when John Wilson came in.

Sydney Lewis: Everybody who was opposed to coeducation blamed John Wilson, so he was a good patsy for all of these people.

Warren: Do you think that it would have happened if Bob Huntley had stayed?

Sydney Lewis: Yeah.

Frances Lewis: I don't.

Sydney Lewis: Yes, I think it would have happened. Oh, no, if the board had wanted it, I don't think Bob would have resisted.

Frances Lewis: The president of the board at that time was – you know, he's here also this weekend.

Sydney Lewis: Jim Ballengee.

Frances Lewis: Jim Ballengee, and Jim Ballengee was all for it.

Sydney Lewis: Yeah. That's what I'm saying. I don't think Bob would have opposed it.

Frances Lewis: I can't remember now who –

Sydney Lewis: No, because I remember the first time I was on the board when this came up. Literally, I could see what was going on. It was completely, "Let's not spend any time on this issue." I didn't say a word, because it was my first year on the board. Bob came to me afterwards and he said, "Sydney, what do you feel about this issue? You didn't even open your mouth."

I said, "I decided that if my mouth was going to contain any ammunition, there wasn't any sense wasting it at this particular meeting, because no one even wanted to talk about it."

So I think he would have, if the board had wanted it. Maybe he personally might have resisted it a little bit, but he certainly wouldn't have fought against it, I don't think.

Frances Lewis: Who?

Sydney Lewis: Bob.

Frances Lewis: Oh, Bob. I can't imagine that he would have introduced —

Sydney Lewis: He wouldn't have led the charge the way John Wilson did.

Frances Lewis: Right.

Sydney Lewis: Well, John was very affirmative about it, yes.

Frances Lewis: And they always say, if you're going to get anything done, you have to do it at the beginning of your new position, whether it's in academia or in business.

You get in and you do it right then. Is that right?

Sydney Lewis: Oh, sure.

Frances Lewis: But I keep thinking of, again, Jack —

Sydney Lewis: Warner?

Frances Lewis: Warner.

Sydney Lewis: Who was a classmate of mine.

Frances Lewis: I'm sure people have talked about Jack Warner, who was adamantly against it. In fact, he almost had a rift with the school, or did have a rift. Not a year or eighteen months had gone by than he sent in a letter in favor of some young woman.

Sydney Lewis: Oh, yeah.

Frances Lewis: Whom they had to refuse.

Sydney Lewis: That's right. I got a call from Jack one day. This is going to be six or seven years ago. I said, "Oh, Jack, it's good to hear from you. What's on your mind?"

He said, "I'm really upset, and I don't know who to go to other than you, because you can get anything done. Washington and Lee won."

I said, "What are you talking about?" I couldn't imagine what he was talking about.

He said, "Well, "Bear" Bryant (you know who "Bear" Bryant is? A football coach, former football coach at Alabama), his granddaughter wants to get into Washington and Lee, and they have turned her down."

I said, "Why did they turn her down, Jack? What's wrong?"

He said, "I don't know what's wrong. I've spoken to John Wilson, I've spoken to Farris, I've spoken to two or three other people, dean of admissions, etc., etc., and I can't get a straight answer. She's like number three in her class at this girls' prep school, whatever it was, a terrific young lady, cheerleader, everything, etc."

I said, "Well, Jack, I know I can't do anything about it, but I will certainly call John and ask him what's going on here."

So I called John, and John said, "Sydney, I've been waiting for your call," because he knew I was friendly with Jack. He said, "We did everything in the world that we could to convince ourselves that we should take this young lady, but she wouldn't last a week here. She's at this particular school, and, true, she's way up in her class, but she has no study habits. She just couldn't handle anything at W&L, and the worst thing we can do is bring her in here and kick her out. We tried to tell that to Jack, and he won't listen. I just don't know what else to do."

I said, "Okay, don't you do anything. I'll call Jack."

And so I called him and I told him exactly what John had told me and what Bill what's his name, the dean of admissions.

Frances Lewis: Hartog.

Sydney Lewis: Bill Hartog had told me and Farris had told me, and he said, "Oh, they all say the same thing. You're as bad as the rest of them."

I said, "Okay, Jack. Let's go to the next topic." He was really upset.

But here was a guy who did everything that he could, beyond shooting somebody, of trying to keep coeducation away from Washington and Lee, and here he is fighting for a young lady to be able to get in.

Frances Lewis: You know, during the last fund-raising, not this one but the last one, you have some stories about you and Jack flying around to see this pigeon and that.

Sydney Lewis: Oh, yeah, we flew all over.

Frances Lewis: When was this?

Sydney Lewis: This was in the 1970s. Jack and I took assignments of people to solicit in various communities. Jack had a jet airplane at that time, and he would pick me up or I would meet him in Tuscaloosa or what have you, and we'd fly all over the Southern United States asking for money, and we were quite successful. That was the first successful W&L capital campaign that we had, I think. That one was about \$75 million. Well, the last one was about \$150, I think, wasn't it, something like that.

Frances Lewis: They were the two political extremes. Jack is to the right of Genghis Khan.

Sydney Lewis: That's right. I'll never forget when I joined that Washington and Lee board, my first board meeting was being held in Tuscaloosa, which is Jack's home. When we got in there, Jack met us at the airport and said, "I want to speak to you," very seriously.

I said, "Sure. Let's talk."

He said, "No. I've got another car for the rest of the people." I think it was you and Bob Huntley and somebody else there, I forget. "Let's you and I go in my car."

I couldn't imagine what this man [unclear], because he was very serious. We get in the car and we drive out. We were going to where we were going to be staying. Jack had this big estate with a big home on it, where the W&L board was going to stay. Anyway, we stop at a fast food joint to have a cup of coffee, and we're sitting down, like

a McDonald's or somewhere, across the table, and he looks at me straight in the eye and he says, "You know, Sydney, you and I are of different political persuasions."

I said, "Yes, probably so, Jack. I don't know, but I guess that you would be a little bit on the right, and maybe I'm a little bit on the left, I don't know. But so what?"

He said, "Well, I just want to tell you that in spite of our political differences, we have one thing in common, and that one thing is Washington and Lee, and we will always agree on what's best for Washington and Lee."

I said, "Let's shake on that one." But he was that sort of person. He was something else again. He still is. I talk to him every now and then on the phone, ask him to give more money to the school. Sometimes I'm successful and sometimes I'm not.

Frances Lewis: The closest thing to the old-time Washington and Lee house party was the board meeting in Tuscaloosa, which took me back a thousand years. They had two formal balls, and everybody brought a suitcase of clothing. I remember that. It was Alabama. It's the last—

Sydney Lewis: Jack is sort of the last— what would you call it? Jack's one of the last of the— what were they called?

Frances Lewis: Big-time spenders.

Sydney Lewis: No, not big-time spender. He's a big-time spender, but he's the last of the— who were the guys who were the railroad magnates and the oil magnates? What did they call them? There's a word for them. I forget.

Frances Lewis: I'll think of it. And he collects that stuff. He collects late 19th century.

Sydney Lewis: And early 20th century.

Frances Lewis: What do you call them? Well, forget it. It'll come to me.

Sydney Lewis: I hope you get the opportunity to interview him, because he's a—

Warren: I'm planning to go down there.

Sydney Lewis: Yeah, because he really is, he's quite an interesting character.

Warren: Tuscaloosa is on my list.

Sydney Lewis: And he is the king of Tuscaloosa. I mean, they own paper mills down there. Jack has been very kind to the University of Alabama, which the main campus is in Tuscaloosa, as he has been kind to Washington and Lee.

Warren: You were talking about a good party in Tuscaloosa. When I moved here in 1977, all anybody was talking about was the great party that had just happened.

Frances Lewis: The law school.

Warren: Tell me how did Lewis Hall come to be. How did your involvement start with Lewis Hall?

Sydney Lewis: I suppose it started as follows. All of a sudden my company, my business, our business, became a very thriving institution, and we were in a position where we had resources that we could give away.

Frances Lewis: It became a public institution.

Sydney Lewis: We had become a public business. I called – I'm just trying to think whether I called or wrote. I called two institutions in which we had an interest. One was Washington and Lee, and the other was the Virginia Museum. I told them I had funds that I wanted to give them, and they should tell me what their priorities were to see if we had any interest in any of these priorities so that we could help to fund them.

The rector of Washington and Lee, who lived in Richmond, Jack Thomas, called on me, and the director of the Virginia Museum, of course which is in Richmond, called on us. The rector said, "Won't you please go up to Lexington, because we're now in the midst of a capital fund campaign and you can literally see what we're trying to do. Jim Whitehead will be in Lexington, and he will help you and show you around the various elements of the capital campaign."

So anyway, we went to Lexington and met with Jim, and the first thing he showed us, which they wanted to fund and spruce up, etc., what's that little estate out on Route 60 just as you come into town from the east?

Warren: Col Alto?

Sydney Lewis: Col Alto. Col Alto was on the agenda, and he said, "Would you be interested, maybe, in funding the restoration of this, etc., etc.?"

We said, "We don't think so. That's not what we would want our money to be spent for."

Remember, at the time I told him – he said, "Could you tell us how much money you want to give us?"

I said, "We're willing to give you \$100,000 to start with."

He said, "Fine."

He took us over to, I don't know where it was, some building, I forget now, but showed us the various elements of the campaign, what they were going to build and what they hoped to build, etc., what they hoped to restore and renovate, etc., etc. They came to the law school, and Jim knew that I had been at the law school. So we looked at it, etc., etc., and he said, "Well, you know, for \$100,000 you could develop the library, or for \$100,000 you could do this." I forget the things. Do you remember?

Frances Lewis: No, I don't remember.

Sydney Lewis: I really don't remember at all. So I said, "Jim, what is the budget for the law school?"

He said, "\$6 million."

We said, "We'll take the law school." It was just that simple.

Then Bob Huntley got into the act and said they wanted to develop a law center in addition to the law school, so we funded the additional, which was \$2 million, so we funded the law center, also. So that's the way it happened. It was very quick and very pleasant, without any fanfare. Did I tell the story right?

Frances Lewis: You said 6 and 2. Where did the other came – it was 9 to start.

Sydney Lewis: Yeah, it was 9 to start. It was 7 and 2, whatever.

Frances Lewis: 7 and 2, probably.

Sydney Lewis: Yes, it was 9. What was the other million for? You're right, it was 9 million to start. Talk about million like they're pennies, right? But that's the way it happened.

Frances Lewis: It was very fast.

Sydney Lewis: It was very fast, and it just sort of hit us where we wanted to be, I suppose. But we had never thought of that, because I didn't even know they were planning a law school.

Frances Lewis: You didn't even know they were having a campaign.

Sydney Lewis: That's right, I didn't. No, I didn't. We didn't know there was a campaign on. I'd just written out of the blue.

Frances Lewis: I've heard this. When you have a campaign of that size, you never know who's going to come forth that you never thought about. And what's his name this last time, the Lenfest. It was a similar thing, wasn't it? I don't think he was at the top. His name wouldn't pop out if you were automatically thinking of—

Sydney Lewis: Or Ernie Williams, either one. No, that's true that always with these big capital fund campaigns, the people that you expect to do things never do do them. It's always the surprises that do them.

Frances Lewis: Don't you remember, you and Jack used to go down to see the Hunt, what's his name, Hunt?

Sydney Lewis: Yeah, the Hunt brothers down in Dallas.

Frances Lewis: Well, when they still had their money.

Sydney Lewis: That's right. We really knocked on that door maybe five or six times, and then, of course, what happened, they lost everything. We tried to get it when they had it, but we couldn't get it.

Warren: Did you get involved in the planning of the building?

Frances Lewis: Not at all.

Sydney Lewis: Not really.

Frances Lewis: We didn't, did we?

Sydney Lewis: No. That's one thing we've been the same with anything we've become involved in. I'll give you the money, but you do it. I mean, really it's –

Frances Lewis: The only thing you got involved in –

Sydney Lewis: Was?

Frances Lewis: You had some say, through an intermediary, on the architect for the wing at the Virginia Museum.

Sydney Lewis: Oh, yeah. Paul Mellon and I did that together.

Frances Lewis: Yeah. But that's the only time you ever –

Sydney Lewis: The Virginia Museum came to Paul Mellon and me and said, "Look, you guys are putting up the money for this wing. Why don't you select the architect?" We had been very pleased with an architect who had just finished a building, a new office building for us. So when I sat down and talked to Paul about who we should interview, I told him that we had been very satisfied with this one architect who had worked with us on a new building, and he said, "Well, let's talk to him first." Our agreement was that we'd talk to him and then we'd talk to an architect designated by Paul.

So we talked to this architect, called him down to Washington to Paul Mellon's office there at the National Gallery. A couple of weeks later I was talking to Paul. I said, "Maybe it's time we should talk to someone you designate."

He said, "No, I'd rather talk to your architect again."

I said, "Fine."

So we called him. He came back down, and we agreed that he should be the one to do it. So built us a terrific wing, he designed a terrific wing for us, so everybody was happy. But you're right, that's the only time.

Frances Lewis: That's the only time you ever became involved.

Warren: There was a terrific party. I've seen the pictures. What are your memories of the dedication of Lewis Hall, of the party?

Sydney Lewis: All I remember was, it was outside at Wilson Stadium.

Frances Lewis: I remember Elizabeth Taylor was there.

Sydney Lewis: Yeah, I remember Elizabeth was there.

Frances Lewis: She came with the other John Warner.

Sydney Lewis: That's right. And for someone who didn't drink, I must say that it wasn't so bad. Of course, you know they were drinking Scotch all over the place. They had barrels of Scotch there that had been brought in. Was that due to Bob Huntley? Bob had prevailed upon somebody. And there were very nice souvenirs.

Frances Lewis: I still have three bottles.

Sydney Lewis: Do you? Three bottles of that Scotch? And how about the tin cups?

Frances Lewis: And the tin cups, that's right. I don't remember what happened after that, though. What happened?

Sydney Lewis: I don't remember. I think that was it. I don't think there was any –

Warren: That's what I've seen the pictures of. I've seen hundreds of cups.

Frances Lewis: That's right.

Sydney Lewis: I don't think there was any party or anything afterwards. I think the party was right there on Wilson Field.

Frances Lewis: Yeah, right.

Sydney Lewis: I think that was it.

Frances Lewis: When was that? Do you remember the year?

Sydney Lewis: When was that? What was that year?

Warren: I think it was '76 or '77, because I moved here in '77.

Frances Lewis: And it was built already.

Warren: Well, you know, I'm connecting it up with Sally Mann's Lewis Law Portfolio.

Frances Lewis: That's right.

Warren: She was working on that. But I'm not sure whether the building was – I'm not sure whether I was here when the party happened or it had just happened. I kind of think maybe I was here. It was either '76 or '77.

Frances Lewis: That's right, I forgot about her portfolio.

Warren: Now, I found all these pictures of the dedication, and in one of the pictures – and I must say, you are so much prettier in person than the pictures. You're somebody who doesn't photograph as well as you are in person. But anyway, there's this picture of you both with Lewis Powell, and he's from Richmond, too, right?

Frances Lewis: Right.

Warren: Is he somebody you know very well?

Sydney Lewis: Yes. Well, I mean, Lewis has been in Washington, of course, for many years, and since he went to the Supreme Court, he's still – in fact, somebody was telling me – he kept his home in Richmond, but he lived in Washington for many years, even after he left the court. But someone was saying the other day that they think he's moved back to Richmond. I think Judge Marries [phonetic] was telling us that. I haven't seen him in –

Frances Lewis: A long time.

Sydney Lewis: It's been a long time.

Frances Lewis: We came down for some colloquium here, is when I saw –

Sydney Lewis: You saw him here at the dedication of the archives.

Frances Lewis: Right. Weren't you here?

Sydney Lewis: No, I wasn't here. I was at home in bed. That's where you saw him. I didn't see him.

Frances Lewis: Gosh, '70 – I can't believe. That's almost twenty years ago. It's a long time.

Warren: Yeah, I think it was. It is hard to believe, isn't it?

Warren: When you walk through Lewis Hall now, how does it feel?

Sydney Lewis: It feels good, because it's a good building.

Frances Lewis: Yeah, it is a good building.

Sydney Lewis: It really is. You know, that's where the alumni college, every time we've been here, has been held, there in the moot court room.

Frances Lewis: The only thing not good about it—

Sydney Lewis: Is?

Frances Lewis: I can say it *entre nous*, is Bob Huntley and the dean of the law school—

Sydney Lewis: Now or then?

Frances Lewis: Then.

Sydney Lewis: Dean Steinheimer.

Frances Lewis: Yeah, Dean Steinheimer decided to save money and they would pick out the furniture.

Sydney Lewis: That's right. Well, the seats in the moot court aren't bad.

Frances Lewis: No, that was not part of it. I mean the furniture outside. The moot court is beautiful. I think that's a terrific room. But the rest of the furniture could stand a slight—

Sydney Lewis: Improvement.

Frances Lewis: Improvement.

Sydney Lewis: Well, it's twenty years old now.

Frances Lewis: Designwise. Do you feel that way?

Warren: I agree with you.

Frances Lewis: It's funny, but a good designer will design something good, and you round that down, and it's not good anymore.

Sydney Lewis: I wonder if Fred Cox designed the furniture.

Frances Lewis: No.

Sydney Lewis: He did not?

Frances Lewis: No. Somebody good did the moot court room, but somebody else, I think they just got ready-made – I don't know.

Sydney Lewis: You mean that's Bob and Roy Steinheimer?

Frances Lewis: Yeah. And I hate to say this. They would not know the difference. That doesn't make them bad people. Terrible people care about design, as well as good people. But I don't think they ever saw the difference.

Sydney Lewis: Maybe not. Do you think they could tell the difference between a Rembrandt and a Titian?

Frances Lewis: No. [Laughter] But the interior outdoor courts are terrific, I think. And see, I don't know anything about gardens and trees, and those courts look wonderful to me. Probably somebody who has more expertise may know different. How do you feel about them?

Warren: It's a lovely idea to have that sense of a garden within a building.

Frances Lewis: Oh, I think it's terrific.

Sydney Lewis: That was done – while you were talking, I was trying to think of his name, but a group of architects from Philadelphia.

Frances Lewis: So they got in some experts.

Sydney Lewis: Oh, yes, absolutely. What was their name? I forget.

Warren: You know, the only complaint I have about the building?

Frances Lewis: What is that?

Warren: It's not properly signed. You get out of your car and you don't know where you're supposed to go. It's so confusing. I mean, I know the building well enough. I go in any door, and I can find my way around. But try to explain to someone where to park and then which way to go. Usually you'll say, "Well, you'll see the sign, and that will lead you to the front door." If you don't go across the footbridge, you don't know where you're going.

Frances Lewis: That's exactly right, and we don't go across the footbridge anymore. That is true.

Warren: I think you two ought to complain about it. You might get some action on it.

Frances Lewis: Should we do that?

Sydney Lewis: I've never gotten any action in my life around here.

Frances Lewis: Well, that would be interesting. I never thought of that.

Sydney Lewis: The next time I see Barry Sullivan, I'll tell him people are complaining all over the place they can't find the law school, and they want to see it.

Frances Lewis: We could hardly get out today.

Sydney Lewis: We could hardly get out?

Frances Lewis: We have to go to a certain landing.

Sydney Lewis: Oh, yeah, within the law school. But that's because of my handicap.

Frances Lewis: Right.

Sydney Lewis: I mean, others wouldn't go that route.

Frances Lewis: Correct.

Warren: But others are just as handicapped because they don't know –

Frances Lewis: Which way to go.

Sydney Lewis: Exactly right. Probably more handicapped, because I know the way to go.

Warren: Exactly.

Frances Lewis: I always thought it was me, because I never know where I'm going anyway.

Warren: I assure you, it's not you. But you two are the only ones I can think of who would actually maybe get some action on this.

Sydney Lewis: We'll try.

Warren: Some nicely designed signs.

Sydney Lewis: Well, you know, there are no signs at all at Washington and Lee of any building.

Warren: I know.

Sydney Lewis: No signs at all.

Warren: It's so confusing.

Sydney Lewis: Yesterday we went over to the new science building, and I was just kidding it took us longer to find the new science building than it took us to fly from Virginia Beach to Shenandoah Valley airport.

Frances Lewis: Of course, we were trying to get close with the car so that he could get out and ride his machine.

Warren: It's not easy.

Frances Lewis: It was not easy. But, you know, giving directions, which is what signage is sort of a subdivision of, is not an amateur job.

Sydney Lewis: No, no, no. It's very difficult.

Frances Lewis: It's very difficult, and it certainly needs improving. All right, will you pass that up?

Now, when is this book to be – what is it going to be? Is it going to be a published book?

Warren: Yes. You will have a substantial book in your hands by October 1, 1998.

Frances Lewis: That's terrific.

Warren: The actual anniversary is, of course, Founders Day, January 19, '99, which is what they set for me as my goal, and I said, "No, no, no, no. No one buys books in January. People buy books in the fall."

Sydney Lewis: Before Christmas, right?

Frances Lewis: Is that true?

Warren: Yes.

Frances Lewis: Oh, I didn't know that.

Warren: Oh, yes. I've done a lot of book marketing, and, believe me, nobody buys books in January. So I said, "We'll get it out in the fall and let everybody know it's coming." Surely everyone will have it by the actual Founders Day, but the goal is that we will have bound books by 1998.

Sydney Lewis: That's terrific.

Warren: Is there anything more you all would like to talk about? You are such a wonderful prompter. You've been such a help. You know the stories that he knows about.

Frances Lewis: I know the stories. Get them out. Well, there are loads more, but I—
Dear, think a while.

Sydney Lewis: No. I've thought enough today.

Frances Lewis: We're always wondering what else is different, which would make this book interesting. The dress we've touched on.

Sydney Lewis: I'm sure that everybody you talk to will have the same story to tell about this university.

Warren: There's a continuity of feeling about this place that's very impressive.

Frances Lewis: What age span have you covered so far? I mean, the age of the interviewees.

Warren: I'm doing someone from the class of '34 later this week. He will be the oldest so far. I've talked to several people in your age group. And the youngest person just graduated.

Frances Lewis: Terrific.

Warren: The youngest person just graduated. I think that's very important to get the young people's point of view, as well, because they're the alumni of tomorrow, aren't they?

Frances Lewis: That's right. Well, I hope you hit somebody who was at the end of the all-male period.

Warren: Is there anybody in particular you would recommend for that time period?

Frances Lewis: I don't think I know anybody.

Sydney Lewis: What do you mean at the end?

Frances Lewis: The ones who ended the all-male Washington and Lee. What years would they have been?

Sydney Lewis: Well, what year was coeducation?

Warren: 1984 is when the decision was.

Sydney Lewis: That's the year of the Supreme Court decision. No, that was 1954.

[Laughter]

Warren: I'm going to turn the tape off now, and thank you both very much.

[End of Interview]