Stephen A. Colston (SAC): My name is Stephen A. Colston, I am the Director of the Center for Regional History at San Diego State University. The following is an interview of Dr. Charles R. Schroeder and is a part of a collaborative oral history project between the Zoological Society of San Diego and the Center for Regional History. This interview is being conducted at the Wild Animal Park, San Pasqual, California. The date of the interview is July 17, 1983. The interview is being videotaped.

Dr. Schroeder, I would like to ask you if you would give me some of your recollections of your earliest years. I would like to know first, when you were born, where you were born and your recollections of your earliest years -- your education and your family.

Charles R. Schroeder (CRS): Well, I was born in Brooklyn, New York in a place called Germantown, Halsey Street and Evergreen Avenue. And as you will read in that little brief I gave you, the ah, when I go to the butchershop I always had a big chunk of bologna, free you know, the butcher always cut a piece and gave it to the kids. And we always got all the liver we wanted for the cats for nothing. Then I had another German friend who always gave me banana when I went by. And the area I lived in was very flat, and probably about four feet elevation and in a hard rain it couldn't carry off the water, so the water would go up the street. And everybody had a stoop in front of their door, and it was put on with hooks, and the hooks would come off and your stoop would float away, and you'd have to run around the neighborhood to find your stoop. That was early days.

I moved around considerably in New York, and quite early in the game, in fact starting in kindergarten, I went to the ethical culture school put together by
Felix Adler who came over from Germany to start the kindergarten. Ethical Culture Society [?] is very active today with branches in the states all over the United States. I stayed there for about six years and, incidently, those early days to put the kids in the right mood we prepared, when we studied the American Indian, we made his food and ate it, including samp, socorn [?]; we made candles the way they were made in those days; and we ate the way the Eskimos ate including the bluber and the whole thing. And we had animals in the classroom. And one of my classmates was Jo Melzina; Jo Melzina did the set for The King and I in New York. His father was an artist, his brother was [pause] Leo McKenna - do you remember the name at all? in the movies. And Kay Francis, you know her? she was his wife. So I was at his home frequently. Anyway then, I went to Starhizen [?] Highschool and studied agriculture in Long Island and New York State Institute. And we used to joke about this -- I've worked at Lederle Laboratories in later years with Hillary Kaprofsky. Hillary Kaprofsky is the Director of the Wister [?] Art Institute in Philadelphia, and right now his strong suit [?] is cancer research. So, he's a visiting advisor to Scripps Clinic. So he comes out here occasionally. And he's the guy who developed oral polium, not Salk. Salk was a polio investigator in the early days and did some fine research at Pittsburgh, but believe me, he had nothing to do with the final product that came out. The product he finally produced, we used to produce in 1928 and 29 in Mill Hill in England for the immunization of dogs against canine distemper. And that was a tissue vaccine formaline kip that's used also for polio. A little more refined than that. But, Kaprofsky went into a live virus. A physician in Australia, in Melbourne, what's his name?, studied the genetics of flu virus. And he went over to Malaya and he discovered there was a very low frequency of polio, very little. And to shorten the story, they discovered that they could recover the polio virus from the stool of the kids, it's always there [?], and in their sewage in the runoffs,
lots of polio virus. But it was the polio virus of low virulence and he theorized that these kids and their lousy sanitation, were picking up polio virus, consuming it, and then they were, practically all of them were breast fed. So the combination of breast feeding and the intake of polio live virus immunized them for life. So Hillary pursued the same course, and he had to go to..... Who's the other guy in polio in St. Louis, Cincinnati rather, Cincinnati? Very famous guy. And he had the type three, and Hillary had the type one and two in polio virus. And they had quite a time getting it on the market. And they did things with it that wouldn't be permitted today. No way could you put on the trials they put on. In schools, kindergartens, and then prisons. They also, went to Africa -- they had to be sure the virus they were using wouldn't increase in virulence on passage. So if you vaccinated a bunch of kids with the virus increase in virulence and become a public health hazzard. So, he did his work in a small community in what was the Congo and used the Pigmy Chimpmanzee and instead of bring them all over here and setting up a lab, they were all out of doors there and they just did the work there. It was accepted. He worked with Culmeyer, the Director, Medical Director of the Hooper Foundation in San Francisco, the Medical School. Culmeyer is a very famous guy, deceased five years ago; fantastic. He worked with Hillary, and then they, originally, they went to Chicembrio and finally to the Atigo culture and produced a virus. So Lederle Laboratories produced 95% of all the oral polio vaccine. Well, he took my blood early in the game, and I was immune. And I was immune because almost daily I swim in the East River in New York and that was raw sewage. So I consumed enough to pick up polio virus and several other things, so I was valuable. Well in those days, I lived in East 79th Street, and I used to roller skate across Manhattan through Central Park over to Central Park West on 63rd Street to school. Well from there, I worked with the, what was known as the College Settlement. This was a group of young women from Vassar,
Smith College -- a whole bunch of them and they had interest in social welfare in New York. So I ran the summer camp and produced milk for the kids, as a young guy. And to shorten this up, I had a 1917 Ford and I found a little station wagon body and I picked up a friend of mine and the two of us headed for the West Coast. [pauses for a drink of water] Anyway, we stopped in Kansas and harvested wheat. And in those days they had what they called twin stacks. This is mowed wheat with the straw, and they pile it in two big stacks. You know what a separator is? They put the separator between, and then put a man in each stack and they pitch it in. And they used the straw to fire the tractor for power with a big belt. Then from there we went to Denver, and I worked on trolley cars in Denver.

SAC: And what year was this, do you recall?

CRS: 23. And ah, well, you're not interested what I did in trolley cars. I made sweepers - you know they have these cars with an enormous sweeper, and they used it for both snow and cleaning the streets. Anyway, from there, after Denver, my friend, who was a shoe salesman with the May Company, but I went on to the West Coast and I wanted to study veterinary medicine. So I looked over Fort Collins in Colorado, and then I got such glowing enticements from Pullman Washington, in those days they were looking for students, and today they want to kick them out.

SAC: I want to ask you, what attracted to you to that field of medicine? How far back was your interest in animals, and when were you thinking of becoming a veterinarian?

CRS: Oh, I guess as a kid. I didn't think of veterinary medicine until I studied agriculture. Then I decided I wanted to .... But I only had 17 in my class, and I got the picture at home. Every summer -- well I was in a fraternity house -- and we were all Masons. Today you can't be a Mason until
you're 21, so you couldn't support a fraternity house today if you had to wait for guys to be 21 to get in. But the average age in our house was 34, and a good many of them were G.I.'s, were in WWI. So we put on the degrees down in the city of Pullman, and then we had the fraternity house. And some of the fellows I was with were studying education, and they eventually taught in Seattle schools. But every summer for three summers two of us would go back to the Lookin' Back Lines, did you ever hear of them? It's a big freight line. And we were both oilers. So, I remember I wanted to get on one boat, and the engineer said "If you meet me in San Francisco, I'll take you on." In those days we had coastwise boats, and one was the H.F. Alexander, very fast passenger ship. So in Seattle we went through the crew gangplank without anybody knowing it, and then you crawl into what they call the fireman's focsum, and crawl under the bunks and just stay there until the whistle blows and the boat's out. And then you report to the first engineer and, he's accustomed to this, and he sends you in so you can get a bite to eat, and then you go to work cleaning the deck plates until you get to San Francisco. And then you bee-line it over to the Looker Back Lines and get your job as an oiler. And then you go down to L.A., and then through the Canal, Philadelphia, and New York, Poquipsie [SP?] to unload lumber to Boston, New York, back through the canal, up to L.A., San Francisco, Seattle. And discharge in Seattle. And we did that for three summers; it was great! Got seventy dollars a month, I remember that [laughture], and then back to school. So, our fraternity at Pullman had the highest standards of anything in the college, and our scholastic standing was so great nobody could even come near us. So we were singled out here, and all the other sororities and fraternities down there. So we'd have a house average of about 92. Engineers, some veterinary medicine, teachers. Then from there I went back home to Lederle Laboratories, and I knew them when I lived back there. So I got a job right away.
SAC: And that was in ...

CRS: In 29. I stayed there for three years, great experience, and then a prof friend of mine in California frequented the San Diego Zoo and they were looking for a veterinarian, and he said "I got your boy." So they wrote to me and I was hired sight unseen and came out with Bill Benchley and Dr. Wegeforth, and had a ball. I stayed here for five years, then I went back to Bronx Park; Dr. Novak died, who I knew, and they wrote to me when I got back. So I went to Bronx Park as the veterinarian. And then Dr. Wegeforth in effect said "What's going on here? Charlie, you belong here." So I came back.

SAC: Well let me ask you, what were your first impressions of the Zoo, of the San Diego Zoo? When you first arrived, what were your ...

CRS: Well, there is an old story, when somebody asks you how's your wife?, you say compared to whom? [loughstructure] You've got to have some comparisons, I had none, none. So how would I know if it was good, bad, or the collection, or what it's all about? And I don't know if I ever told you, but we really joked about this because my job covered everything. So I was the veterinarian, and that's what you call a clinician. I was the pathologist, and in pathology I was the parasitologist, micologist, viologist, everything, bacteriology, serology. And then I had to buy the food for the animals, and I used to go up to what is now Camp Pendleton to buy hay. And then I'd go down to Mexico and have them round up horses, and we'd get these Mexican skinners bring them across -- we had to dip them first -- and bring them up here and shoot them and freeze them. And then we had to arrange for fish, so we got macarel locally, and froze the macarel. I was the photographer, so I'd... Originally I had a Graphics, and a Graphics is an old thing ... we have a big plate you can hear go plump, you know, the mirror would fall down, you'd take your picture. And then later we got a Speed Graphics. And then I had postcard size negatives.
So, late every afternoon we'd make postcards to sell the next day. And I had a lot of volunteers, and I don't know if you've ever done this but, you have these big steel plates and you coat them with beeswax azylum [?], and that puts a coat on the card. And then you have a ringer, like a clothes ringer, that accepts this tin with all the pictures on it, and you roll it through to squeeze off the water, and stand them in the hall and overnight they all dry and fall off, and then you'd have volunteers who would collect them from the floor and run them over to the front gate. But, you know, all these things, as you can imagine, you have all these jobs, and you don't do any of them very well. I was certainly, seriously, not a pathologist, you know. But, we'd do it anyway. And then we'd call in pathologists to help us with the post inaudible.

SAC: I wanted to ask you to give the description of your duties as a veterinarian and a pathologist. What stands out in your mind from most of your duties?

CRS: Well again, we had little basis for any improvements or any changes. You had to do this as you went along. Even to the kinds and quality of hay, the kinds of concentrates. Did you ever hear of the WPA? Under Roosevelt? Ah, Phil Swing was the Congressman here, and he was very friendly with Dr. Wegeforth. So he said "I can get you a lot of money." And Dr. Wegeforth planned things in the Zoo. And the present big warehouse we have at the Zoo we built with WPA funds. The freezer, the refrigeration that you've got to refill. And we'd freeze mackerel, and freeze horse meat, and then thaw it and feed it out. So we killed our horses right in that big complex. Before we built that, the conditions were so miserable, so bad -- no sanitation; a deep hole in the ground -- when we bled a horse, all the blood went down the hole, and all the flushings and everything, down the hole. I remember they used to stand a horse up, shoot him in the head, pull him up, skin him, split the carcass, and then the keepers would come in with their own knife and cut their meat off the carcass. It was
pretty primitive, believe me, and pretty bad.

SAC: What kinds of research programs were you doing here in your first years?

CRS: Well, Dr. Wegeforth initially wanted a laboratory where physicians in the city and veterinarians, if there were any that wanted to do this, could do research. And they would... if they wanted to use animals, we'd have animals. On one occasion we used dogs for research. Dr. Hall G. Holder, La Jolla surgeon, was interested in spinal anesthesia - in those days that was sort of a new thing, with novicane. So he wanted to know, was there any damage to the cord when novicane was used. So they set up a surgical technique putting the needle into the cord above the dura and implant novicane to anesthetize the animal. And then we'd kill the dogs, and we'd have to section the cords and follow [?] treat them. And then he had a man working at Scripps Oceanography who knew how to do the histology, but not the interpretation, just to make the slides. So they had to send them out; they couldn't find anybody in Southern California who could read these slides. But that was one project. Another was using Pumas, Mountain Lions, for intestinal mobility. And Holder did that, and Dr. George Kilgore, who was an oculist, and a good one -- all these men want these projects researched so they could join the College of Surgeons, and they have to have a project. So Kilgore was interested in torn retina, so we devised a vice to anesthetize the monkey, put his head in the vice, and then we had a pistol up above here, and if you don't know it, your cornea is very tough; it's almost impossible to just directly shoot you in the eye - it skids off, especially a BB - it has to be absolutely at right angles if you want to penetrate your eye. Real tough. Anyway, he did this, and they pulled the trigger, and had a probe, little blank up here, drove this pin not through but into the cornea to increase the interocular pressure, and that would tear the retina. Then his idea, it was his technique for retying the retina. And he did that at the hospital.
Howard Ball was interested in cancer research, and that was when did you ever hear of nebutol? Well, do you know what a barbituate is? Nebutol is a barbituate, the first one that came out -- Abbot Laboratories. So, we'd make a preparation of one to ten dilution of Nebutol, and Howard Ball would have a hundred rats, and he'd put them to sleep, and then he had a wooden board -- you know what battery clips are, of course -- so he'd have a little band of rubber and the battery clip, lay the rat out, or guinea pigs, and tie their legs with a battery clip back down, and then make an incision up through the mandible, pull back the tissues, and then they have a little base of bone that supported the brain on the underside. And then he knew where to make a little hole -- you know what trepanning is? -- making a little hole in bone. And he'd spin this thing, make the little hole right over the pituitary gland, and then he'd have a little vacuum, ah, water vacuum, you know you have two pipes, you turn on the water here and it sucks out the other pipe, and he'd suck out the pituitary. Then he would, the term used, hypothoscetimized the pituitary as the hypothesis. He'd remove the thing, then he'd run all these rats out to a research friend of his at USC, and there they'd study cancer transgrance [transference?] to determine the effect of the pituitary with it or without it. So he did that work there. And when they built the hospital, Ellen Browning Scripps inaudible. Dr. Harry was the beginning and the end, you know. So she gave him 50,000 dollars to build a hospital in '25, and that was a lot of money then. So, Louis Gill was the architect, I don't think he's alive, I think his son is -- I know his son is alive. And he got awards from the hospital. But ah, it was a pretty poor structure. For example, when they put in an incinerator, this little gas-fired incinerator, and it went into a flue, and instead of using fired flue tile they used concrete tile. And they supported it with 2 x 4's out through the roof. Do you know what a fat-tailed sheep is? Do you, in the Mediterranean?
And we'd put in the fat tail of a sheep in that thing, and it was super-heated, you couldn't put it out, and it roared, and the heat was so great it opened these concrete tiles and we had a fire in the hospital, through the hospital, through the roof, oh boy. And we finally put it out and the fire department came, and it was a mess. And the building had two faucets in every sink, but both were cold water. There was no central heat, so they had little gas burners in the floor. The ceilings were about 18' high.

TAPE 1, SIDE II

CRS (cont.): and some ah, we had an old Victor xray machine that would occasionally work because the juice coming in -- if you know anything about xray machines, you've got to have a face voltage [?] and you can't have it. Anyway, they really didn't use the old thing, but that was up there. And then they bought a very elaborate microscope, very. Did you ever hear of the Zietz [possibly Zeis]?, well this was a Zietz strobe, and it was laid down on a big steel beam so there would be no vibration, you know. And the big 8 x 10'' plates which we never used. It was pretty pathetic the whole thing. And the hospital was there, but there was nothing in the back, outside. So that went in WPA later. You know the Trepte family in San Diego?

SAC: No.

CRS: You can't be from San Diego. Everybody knows the Trepte Construction Company. The present Trepte, G. Trepte grandfather, was pulled out of retirement by Dr. Wegeforth. Ralph Verden was our construction superintendent, and Dr. Wegeforth told us, tomorrow morning I want sketches of your plans for the back of the hospital. So we stayed up until the early hours trying to design ah, do this thing. Well then we got the money through Swing, WPA, and Trepte's grandfather supervised. He was a real tough German, and he... the
idea was to give labor to men. So he'd get these men with a wheelbarrow and they had to go up a plank with the concrete. And they put up these forms, and they'd have to run up there and pour it in these forms -- and boy, that was tough concrete this way, all the walls. And these days when you do it you have a vibrator, and they poke it down in there so there are no bubbles in the concrete. In those days they had to use sticks, you know. And this was pretty tough. So he bought, do you know what day-go-red is? Well, he'd have these big gallon bottles of day-go-red and he'd let these guys have a whiff of the wine when they grabbed the wheelbarrow to go .... [laughter]. That's a fact. And that WPA inspector came by and said "no more, no more wine." [laughter]

SAC: I wanted to ask you about the other structures that were built when you were in your earliest years here, like the Fair Forest Aviary. What do you recall about that?

CRS: Well, the first cage that went up was paid for by Miss Scripps. The second one across the road, was WPA. Initially there were no walk-ins, but just birds inside. Jean Delacour, do you know who he is?

SAC: I know of the name.

CRS: Well, he was a French man. He was a captain in the French army. He did spend years in Southeast Asia, Indochina. When he was over there he was a real scientist, and he studied Pheasants, and he's written the classical treatment on Pheasants of the world. And he had an estate, still has it but he's given it to France, at a place called Cleres -- do you know a little about France? Do you know Rouan? Well this is right next to Rouan, Cleres. And he has a big estate. And you know, trees from all over, and an enormous bird collection. And the house was gutted by fire. But the gatehouse is a beautiful thing, and he has his guests there. He's over there at this time of the year, then he'll come back, and he stays at the California Club in L.A. He's not broke. And he
told us -- he looked at the big cages in the Zoo, and he said "you've got to put the people inside." Which we did. We had this one cage with Indian Condures, Bald Eagles and hawks. It was pretty bad. Then when we went in, and we rebuilt the whole thing and put the walk through it. And we did the same thing with the Scripps cage. And ah... well in the '30's, the whole thing was done in the '30's. When I came back in '53, it was late '53 so I really didn't get in until '54, and then we decided the Zoo is a mess you know, having been around and looked at them and around the world. The first place we wanted to change was the Deer Mesa, hoofstock. We had a man by the name of Howard Cannon who was the Vice President and general construction supervisor for Callahan Brothers, and Howard was, is, fantastic. He's retired now, he had a brain tumor and all sorts of problems. But he knew the Zoo; he knew what he could get in the Zoo, and he could underbid anybody, so that contractors in the city said 'Don't touch the Zoo, that's an inside thing, they've got, you know, between Schroeder and Callahan.' And we went into the Deer Mesa, but we experimented. We tried moats. And I saw moats in other parts of the world, and we put in these little moats that the animals didn't cross, even today. One of our curators is now putting up a fence here and there and I'm pretty mad about it because very seriously, it's a stupid thing to do; you don't need it. We did the whole Deer Mesa, and the way we did it with Howard Cannon and his foreman, and you know you take a sack of lime and you take it in your hand with a bucket and you lay the lines out where you're going to put the moats and where you're going to put the exhibits. And then he came in with his people, and eventually it was a inaudible, he'd just go in, we had our own superintendent, and we'd go in and put it in. And then we used plaster for backdrops, and it sealed [?] I think very nice. Then we wanted to build the great enclosures for the gorillas, orangs, and Charlie Faust, our designer, laid that thing out -- made a model. And, they built that. And then all the bear grottos were too wide; it was silly -- a bear
doesn't run and jump; a poda (?) will run and jump at water, but he always has one foot on the ground. So, and they'd fall in these big moats, and we had some fractures. I remember we had a tiger who broke his two legs falling in the moat. So we sloped the moats so he'd slide down. And we put a "V" in the bottom so you could clean it efficiently. So we did all the moats -- bears and the big cats. And then, of course, we got rid of the great ape cages; they were Ward cyclone fencing -- very bad, terrible. And we got rid of all that. Then we wanted to build the Children's Zoo, and I saw the one in Bronx Park, and theirs was only a third of an acre, and ours was about two acres. So on the site of the Japanese Village in Balboa Park, very lovely place with a little bridge, and they served tea -- you'd have loved it, what a place. And ah, they lost that during the war, of course. So then we acquired it for the Zoo; we ripped everything out and put in the Children's Zoo. And Charlie Faust did that in its entirety, but he had a team of about five young architects, and once a week they'd get together at night and design the Children's Zoo, and they did it very well. And they've loused the Children's Zoo now, somebody down there, I can't find out whom, tore out all this stuff and put in some pretty bad exhibits.

In the old days; when I came here in '32, I came in February, in the rain, in my 1930 Model A -- it was the second Model A -- when I drove it across the country with my bride. And the Zoo was all dirt, no paving at all, and the canyons every rain was a wash-out. Ah, the hospital was there, the Zoo itself had some buildings up front they used as an entrance, and the Harvester Building was the Reptile House. And Morley, the Park Superintendent, had his home right where the small parking lot is now in the Zoo -- where you've parking (sic.). So we had to change all of that, but it was pretty bad. But they had a collection of animals and Mrs. Benchley was up front in a little bit of a building and they
had a little board room up there; they had a common restroom facility for men and women, I always remember that, used to make me so mad. So they had two entrances to the Zoo, one down at the old Harvester Building, where the Children's Zoo is now was an entrance. Then we built the Reptile House from scratch and moved the reptiles. And that was pretty well planned, and Sy Perkins who had been a broker in Denver, and a kind of a part-time student at Princeton he never finished, and he flew a plane in the war, and he loved reptiles. A great guy. He ah, I guess he had a whole bottle of bourbon every night. And I used to buy his bromoseltzer wholesale [laughter]. A loveable guy, really; I don't know if it was because of or in spite of, but just a wonderful fellow. And then he became attached to Charles Shore who was at State College and Chuck went to school at State with Sheldon Campbell. And then Chuck stayed on and Sheldon went to Stanford and got a masters at Stanford but never got his Ph.D. The old story is, you know, you almost get it but you don't have your thesis -- you've gone through that. Anyway we implored Shore, a great guy, a good snake man, "go to school -- in your job here you could do it anytime. If you have to go to school in the daytime, go ahead, you know, I'll keep you on." He wouldn't do it. It might have changed his whole life. Sheldon Campbell, you know, became a broker, no, first he was a training director for Rohr, and then he had a heart attack or something. And then when he got over that he became a broker, and he's still a broker. And all his life, he wanted first to be the director of the Zoo, and he didn't make that. Sheldon Campbell, well we had the job director open, I was retiring. I went out and brought in every character I could think of who could do the job. General Brute Krulak was the Selections Committee of one, and he didn't like anything I brought in. I brought in some pretty good people. One fellow we brought down from Vancouver, and we had a dinner for him with Krulak, Krulak never showed for the dinner, came in late,
and he gave this guy about four minutes and came over to see me and [said] "I don't like him." So then he went to a, you call them a flesh peddler, this was a company in L.A. and they told Krulak "we've got your man," greatest guy and he's with Teledine, but he's now living up in back of Del Mar, and he's available. So Krulak interviewed him, they brought him in and the Board had a breakfast to meet him, and they were so impressed. And he had a book that he had written on management, and Sheldon was there; Sheldon had given up his trusteeship so that he could apply for the Director's job. And he threw in the towel, you know. He couldn't compete with this guy. So on the spot they hired him. Then "Charlie, will you stay on and get this guy straightened around. He doesn't know anything about a zoo, he's a business man." Sure. So then he promptly told the Board I was uncooperative and he couldn't work with me anyway. So the Board said to me, Andy Borthwick was on the Board, he said "Charlie, you stay there anyway." Well then, early in the game I tried walking this fellow around the Zoo a little bit and he didn't want to go. So, I told Andy,"I don't know what to say;" But I knew he had his doctorate from the University of Luxembourg. You know I'm delighted because he [SAC] hasn't heard this story -- everybody's heard it but you. Anyway, I knew the guy couldn't speak French, and I was sure he didn't speak German, and I wondered how do you go to a graduate school in Luxembourg? So I worked with a friend at Lederle, a Dr. Burt Zinc an M.D., and he had switched to another company, and his home port was Zurich. So I wrote him a little letter with divided paragraphs and said don't bother me writing the letter, just answer these paragraphs. What is the official language used in Luxembourg? Does it have a celebrated school of business? Who are the profs and what do you think ......? A whole row of questions, and I got a letter right back from Bert -- there is no University in Luxembourg. [laughture]. It was so funny. Do you know Neil Morgan? Well, Neil Morgan got
wind of this, so he in his column, he talked about, you know, getting to Greece, and how you buy the... and so on [rest inaudible]. And this guy, Kintner in the morning was up in arms -- how could they do that to him? So in the Zoo they said "Well, how'd you know it was you? They didn't use your name." So the keepers of the Zoo came in through the back entrance and they [all said to] Kintner, "Hi doc." [laughter] This is so funny, you know, you couldn't put it in a paperback because nobody'd believe it. Then he brought his wife in, gave her an office. And ah, I've always believed in having a secretary in the office with me. I never want to shut my door. My door was open, and all my secretaries sat there, and the gal before her, and you could come in to see me, you didn't need an appointment, if I was busy you'd wait a bit and then walk in. So he got rid of his secretary, and he had a closed door policy. He got Dr. Andy Borthwick's desk from the bank, a beautiful desk, they're still using it -- I guess Bieler still has it. And he kept that desk and he got some overstuffed furniture and new paneling for the walls, new carpeting, and really dressed it up. And in the hall outside. Then he began to change things in the Zoo. But one thing he did that, that has been done [through] the years by people, you have the confessional seat is in the chair next to his, you know, so that you whisper and you get down there, and he asks you "Have you heard about his guy, have you heard about him?" and so on. So the guys that were most cooperative with him got boosted up the stairs. And he told some stories about some people that they could have sued him, they could have taken him to court. And you won't believe it, but he did that with some trustees. And Milt Wegeforth took me aside, he said "Charlie, you've got to be cooperative, you've gotta give this guy a chance, what are you doing?" And I said "Oh, you're kidding, I haven't done anything." Well, and he told the Board at one meeting, he said "I don't want Charlie here to fiddle around with NCR." He said "I'll get the money, I'll get the loan, I'll take care of it, I know those people, and I don't want Schroeder up there." This
was at an open Board meeting, and they looked at me and said "Don't go." So after the meeting, Andy Borthwick said "I don't care anything about him, you go, I want you up there." So, I knew the guys up at NCR very well. One guy was a Rotarian, and he was in my Rotary, and I said "I'm sorry, but I'm not supposed to go up there anymore because of your arrangements with Kintner." [They said] "Who's Kintner?" They'd never heard of him. And we discovered, when we finally pinned Kintner down, where he got the degree -- I didn't, I had to stay away. I should have told you, when this occurred, I couldn't go to the Board, but I did go to our research committee, and Claude ZoBell at Scripps, do you know the name at all? he's a great guy. And Claude [said] here's the problem here, here we are. So Claude immediately went to the people in Berkeley and the graduate school, and they said 'No, there isn't or hasn't been a University of Luxembourg.' So from there, it went to the Board, through Andy, and they fired the guy in five months, not because he lied, not because he did that, but for what he was doing in the Zoo -- just raising hell. And he was very positive; he knew what he wanted, you know. That's a great story. And then they fished around to find somebody and they went after Bill Conway at New York Zoo who was very good. Speaks well, writes well, knows zoos, knows how to do it. So they gave him a first class passage for he and his wife, brought him out here, and he looked the place over. But I could have told them, he's not going to come here; he liked the trip, but he loves New York, and I don't mean the city, he loves the life. And in his position, he, especially his wife, was chummy with the Gimbals and the Asters and the Vanderbilts and the Rockafellers, the whole bit. It's a, you know, nice arrangement. You finally even get a British accent [laughter]. Anyway, he wasn't coming. So, and we tried a lot of other people, so they finally settled on Chuck Bieler who never fought for the job, never. He was interested in sales, membership sales, and he'd go to facilities up in L.A. and
they sell these, not memberships, but "Zoofare" cards and gave you a cup [?] to come in the Zoo. And he did very well. And he was in the next office until mine, with Chuck Shore. Chuck Shore who was ill and he died. I almost call it self-inflicted -- he didn't take care of himself at all, very sad. Anyway, Chuck went in, and he's a good business person. And, of course, when I came back in '53, we were hoping to get the millionth visitor and our budget was eight to nine hundred thousand, and then it began to climb. I remember we only had about 500 members, so we put on a drive for more members. And Andy Borthwick, that guy really did things for the Zoo; fought for the Zoo. And we grew, and we grew, and we grew. And I don't know whether you know but this year's budget is 42 million, and the membership now is almost up to 150 thousand, and that's more members than there are for all the members of all the other zoos across the country. And the 42 million budget is four times greater than the next largest zoo. But so many people relate the size of the budget to the size of the collection, the food bill, and that's not so. Half the budget is labor, but most of the labor is taking care of people. So, I remember in a meeting with a women's group we tell them about the budget and the reply is "I had no idea it cost so much to feed the animals." And then you say "It doesn't cost very much to feed the animals." How much does it cost to feed the animals? One fourth of the P.R. budget. So the food for the Park and the Zoo together is $800,000, and the P.R. budget's well over 3 million. And memberships, 'e gods, you know, you can't believe it. And Zoonooz climbed and improved, finally all color, and the editor keeps pushing it up. And Frye and Smith, I think, are as good lithographers as there are anywhere; beautiful. So the color is perfection, the whole thing is just great. So they produce well over 150,000 Zoonoozs today, every month. And they use those color separations for the guide book, and ah, they pay on the nose for everything. We used to share all these jobs
around; not today.

SAC: I wanted to go back a minute to the 1930's, and wanted to ask you, were there any animals, any particular animals that stand out in your mind?

CRS: Well, the Mountain Gorillas.

SAC: They were acquired one year before you came, weren't they?

CRS: '31, I came in '32.

SAC: What do you recall about them, what are your....

CRS: Well they weren't babies; they were under a hundred pounds but growing, and Mrs. Benchley's joy, you know. And she'd go see them every morning, sit next to them, and feed them until they were both obese. And you'd tell 'em, "You can't do that." Well, she loved them. Whether they'd still be here or not I don't know, but obesity is the cause of a lot of breakdowns in people, you can't do it -- your ticker can't handle it. One had andartoritus, this is build-up in your blood vessels. The other died of San Juaquin Fever, do you know what that is? Coccidioides. The one was kept here at the Museum of Natural History, the other went back to Natural History of New York. And Harry Raven was the curator, I guess, well he was the curator at the American Museum of Natural History, and back in those days they didn't have self-defrosting refrigerators, so this refrigerator had ice this thick, and to defrost it they moved all these carcasses out in the hall and then a little warm air in there and try to break it and get rid of all that ice. And I went down there, and here was Ngagi, one of the Mountain Gorillas, who was just a jelly of mush. Well you couldn't work with it, you couldn't dissect it, all they could do was use the skeleton. So I was pretty mad. I had nothing to do with it. So I told Bell Benchley what had happened... [end of side 2, tape 1]
TAPE 2, SIDE I

CRS: Well I think Dr. Wegeforth was very friendly, really a warm friend with Alan Hancock. Alan Hancock was on the Board of USC; he had a captain's license for oceangoing vessels of any gross tonnage or any power, in other words, coal, oil, steam, motor driven, whatever. And he owned a boat -- he had the Valaro I, the Valaro II, and then the Valaro III I was on, and now there's the Valaro IV. The Valaro IV isn't quite so luxurious and it was built right here, I guess Campbell Boat Works down here. The number IV, the number III you could go out on a cruise for three months and have fresh milk every morning. And Captain Hancock wanted to be a cello player and he just was a musician. So he'd bring a group of really good musicians from Hollywood to the boat and we'd have a musical every evening. And he'd saw away on that thing. And then he took these people on tour -- he had an orchestra, only he had to play in it. And he paid for the whole thing. Which I really think is allright. And the reason I tell you this story, I have some friends who think it was a calamaty, it was just awful, and you shouldn't buy your way in like that.

SAC: What years were these? The 1930's

CRS: Late '30's. See Dr. Harry died, as you know, in '41. Hancock died a little bit later than that. Up at USC they have a Hancock pavillion that he had built, the family.

SAC: Let me ask you, were there any other animals that, I'm thinking of the python, and the feeding of the python as it was quite an event, I understand, in the 1930's.

CRS: Well, it's not the first time it was done, but they tied these rabbits all together, you know, on a long pole, lubricate them and shove them down and pull the stick out. Snakes, you know, live a long time without any food at all, you don't have to feed them every morning, or every Monday morning, you just.... If they're not sick, and if they have no mouth lesions, they'll