

P. E. MacAllister: Second Interview, September 8, 2009

Scarpino: The recorders are on and as I mentioned before I turned them on I will say for the record that my name is Phillip Scarpino. Today is September 8, 2009. I'm interviewing Mr. Pershing E. MacAllister in an office located at MacAllister Machinery in Indianapolis. This is the second interview with Mr. MacAllister. The first took place on July 10, 2009. Last time, toward the end of the interview, just to sort of make a connection, I asked you some of the Tobias Center standard leadership questions. We also talked a bit about how you see the pieces of your of your career and your interests fitting together and about the American School of Oriental Research and we ended up discussing your leadership role and your ideas on reconciling the potential tensions between science and faith. So today I'm going to talk to you about public service and philanthropy and politics and throw in the balance of the Tobias Center's standard leadership questions. So, Mr. MacAllister, I'd like to ask your permission to record this interview, to have the interview transcribed, and to deposit the recording and the transcript in the IUPUI Special Collections and Archives for the use of the patrons.

MacAllister: The response is favorable. You are permitted to do so.

Scarpino: Thank you so much. What I'd like to do, I read the rough draft transcript of our first interview and I have a couple of follow-up questions. In the last interview I asked you to talk about the qualities that you felt distinguished effective leadership and one of the qualities that you highlighted was ingenuity. You of course have a distinguished leadership career in business, government, and philanthropy. So based on that experience, I want to ask you two questions. The first is can you discuss a specific example of when ingenuity worked well for you in a leadership situation?

MacAllister: Oh, I was thinking of the first year of the administration of Dick Lugar. In '68 he got elected, beat an incumbent Democrat as the party had rejuvenated itself and cleaned up its ward and precinct organization and brought in a new chairman. That first summer the mayor was concerned about peace in the streets. If you've forgotten this, we were still burning cities down in the sixties. We had a population here, 22, 23% African-American and the kids on the streets are possible sources of trouble, and he didn't want that to happen.

So, he wanted us to see what we could do about addressing that problem. I recall having lunch with Jim Morris, who was his aide at that point in time, and although I had met Jim during the campaign, I was not—we were not very close friends. And on the basis of that, it wasn't much to work on but somebody, a young Republican said that she knew Jim and that we ought to have lunch together to talk about what would. I recall walking down the street talking to Jim and having lunch and the result was that we formed an alliance—at least I volunteered to help—and what we created and I don't know how much I had to do with this but I was certainly into the thing—a summer program called Upswing. What it did was rent five playgrounds in the middle

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of the city and find three to four college kids to spend the summer there, July and August, each day monitoring the activity on the playgrounds. There would be, of course, basketball and basket shooting. There was a summer Olympics, volleyball, tennis if you could do it. There were grooming classes for girls, movies in the evening for people in the neighborhood to come in, chess, checkers, cooking, style shows, etc. A lot of stuff going on.

We raised most of the money. Got a big chunk of it from United Way and proceeded to execute this and kept it going through the summer. It took an awful lot of, I recall, creating a council at each site saying we ought to get the families involved here and I remember writing the book about here's what this council ought to consist of. Here's what I've been thinking about. Whether they used it or not, I don't know, but I did it anyway. The result was we spent a summer there. Got great press every day and got a lot of action, a lot of good comments, a lot of favorable publicity for the mayor and the administration about this initiative. And it went all through the summer. At the end of it we're going to have a big party downtown—10, 12,000 kids down there. They said anybody who brings down 10,000 teenagers downtown is crazy. We said we're going to do it anyway. It went off like gangbusters. Had a great time, great finish. It all went well.

Scarpino: Were you there?

Burns: Yep. Yep. So that seemed to—the other thing was, again, I don't know what sort of the role was. The president invited the mayor to be a host for the NATO powers. In discussing the problems with the cities, everybody after the war had the same problems of infrastructures going to hell and you got crime, you got transportation problems and traffic. You've got crime, and you've got bad housing, you've got migrations of people who are not accustomed to city life coming and all of it was there. So it seemed like a great idea and we were flattered to get the invitation.

So again, Jim Morris and I were the two of the players that, he wanted to have a co-chairman for the event. I said that's great, although I never found co-chairmen to work very well, but who else you got in mind? He said Will Hayes, the mayor of Crawfordsville. So, let him be it. I don't, you know, that doesn't bother me any. I'm—no ego trip here. So we had the first meeting and we had a blue ribbon committee and as this got out everybody wanted to be on it. Then the mayor and Jim were more careful than I would have been about women and about Democrats and about the ethnic constituency. And they were all there and each had an assignment. One is PR. One is set-up for meetings, another's agenda; this is a division of work.

After the first meeting he watched it go and he said you're going to be the chairman. [laughing] It didn't work very well, this guy. So that was it. I was the secretary general, I want you to know. We proceeded then to lay out an

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agenda. We had help from Irwin Miller in Columbus who put some money in it for us. Again, we raised half a million dollars. We got 50,000 I think from the city, and we raised the rest of it and at the end of it turned back some money, by the way, and give it back to some of the corporations—Ford Foundation for example.

Scarpino: That must have been an unusual event.

MacAllister: It was unparalleled. One group couldn't take it back because they didn't know how to handle it. We chartered a plane, then flew people from Frankfurt to Paris, Indianapolis, greeted them at the airport, brought them in here and spent three days downtown. We had a hundred cars, brand new cars. Some from General Motors. A hundred drivers for all the VIPs. This is before the Westin Hotel. The hotel which used to be the Hilton there on the Circle was just open then. There was no convention center. So having a series of meetings in the Athenaeum or the basement of the art museum or in a hotel lobby. It turned out to be kind of chore. Maybe a high school. And getting people around—buses and so forth.

But putting that together and watching that go, then being a factor in orchestrating, and as I said, it came to be a status thing to be on the committee. We had 800 volunteers. That's the first big volunteer effort going on in Indianapolis, Indiana. Well, Morris is used to that. If you're a Presbyterian or been involved in this, that's no big deal. It used to be fewer things are clear and people left here just feeling great.

I remember a cocktail party one night. My wife and I were the only two invited. It was put on by the British delegation. The Lord Mayor of London was here and Lord Peter Walker who was number two in Heath's cabinet in Britain was there and the rest were limeys and the like. I don't know maybe 25 people. It was hot. Drinking warm gin. He said to me what a time we're having. I don't know how you yanks do this. He said what's going to happen they'll want to do it again—we'll turn it over to professional bureaucratic status. They won't have a clue as to how we handle it. But what you pulled off here is something really remarkable. It's the volunteer apparatus in America. You know, we're all familiar with that and how it goes. We're used to doing it. It never struck me 'til he said that. How do you guys do this? Because we couldn't do this in Europe. However, I think maybe they can today.

At any rate, it went off. The vice president came in. Elliot Richardson came in. The mayor of—Coleman Young came in, the mayor from Cleveland, from San Francisco, the mayor of Mexico City. Jim and I made a trip to Europe and met the mayor of Athens, the mayor of Oslo, somebody in France, somebody in Britain. Just a great trip all the way around. And the thing finally came off and three or four languages simultaneously going on and super. I don't think it

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did a damn bit of good. You know, I don't know whatever—Jim and I took the report back to Brussels or the data a little later and delivered it. But it was a wonderful exercise and sort of a warm-up for what would happen in the city. But I played a role in that, I think. . . what else?

Scarpino: So the origin of this was NATO or North Atlantic Treaty Organization?

MacAllister: Yep, yep, yep.

Scarpino: And the President of the United States asked Mayor Lugar...

MacAllister: Yep.

Scarpino: Why do you suppose he...?

MacAllister: Because he was the only Republican mayor of a major city in America.

Scarpino: Is that right?

MacAllister: Yeah.

Scarpino: I wouldn't have known that.

MacAllister: This is 19. . .

Scarpino: . . . '68, you mentioned.

MacAllister: Yeah, this would be '71 before the convention center was open.

Scarpino: So Richard Nixon asked Richard Lugar who was a pretty new politician to take the lead.

MacAllister: Yeah.

Scarpino: You mentioned that you felt that the report may not have done much good in Europe, but that it was a warm-up for what later happened in Indianapolis.

MacAllister: Well it—I recall the Pan American games we had here, was a precursor to that. We got all these volunteers. Police and fire games, the convention here, all that. But you get key people who are the chairman that special—Ramsey Hamilton did all the setup and all the PR. Did a fabulous job. Mrs. Lacy was—took care of the woman's program, what little there was of it. Pauline Selby was on the committee.

Scarpino: Who was?

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MacAllister: Pauline Selby. She's still around—you know, Miss Crowder—these days. She's older than I am too by the way. We had a PR firm doing it. It just went wild. Everybody enjoyed doing it, worked hard getting it done. It all came off like clockwork. Meetings on time, and so forth.

Scarpino: How would you characterize your role in that, particularly thinking about ingenuity?

MacAllister: I think maybe the coach, you know. I appointed the committees. They looked to me when they had a problem. You know, this isn't working. What do we do? We'd meet with each on how are you're shaping up. We had an ethnic night one night. We have to get three or four people to do the Germans, the Italians, the French, and that worked. Did it at the Atheneum. Dick Retter handled the top—the famous, had the Italians, etc. So you get people you know and they're glad to do it if it's for the city. There's a good spirit about that in this community and if you chose right you don't have too many problems. But we met periodically, cross-checking, etc.

Scarpino: How did you pick your committee heads and so on?

MacAllister: Well, partly, part of it's political. These are the people here who want to be on it. Other than that Jim knew them or I knew them. That was it.

Scarpino: Again, thinking about the ingenuity, could you talk a little bit about leaders you've known, particularly. . .

MacAllister: Let me try one more thing. I don't know. Politics. I worked with Dick Pettigrew in the late sixties creating a thing called Greater Indianapolis Republican Finance Committee and it was to raise money for the support of the office staff, and the party. Did not get involved in campaigns, but Republican principles and how do we keep them in front of the public and so forth. The county chairman used to get quite a bit of dough. There were two percent deals in the old days. Two percent of your salary you contributed to the party. Then there was the filing fees which we still do, I think, and then there were license branch money. So they had a lot of dough coming in. Well, that sort of evaporated. The mayors get in and they get pure after they get elected, you know. [laughing] They take, they cut it back. And so they—finally when Sweezy was the last guy they stopped the license branch money and they said we got to figure out some way to make that up so we can keep paying Sweezy. What do we do about it? So I said let's create a thing called the Chairman's Club—Chairman John Sweezy, although it's still the Chairman's Club.

Scarpino: Chairman of the Republican Party?

MacAllister: Right. It's just the Chairman's Club—and this is 24, 25 years ago—and we will charge \$1500 a year, and we will have a—we'll have six speakers a year,

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have a golf tourney, one or two maybe soirées and bring in speakers and we will get the upper leadership element of the party and see if we can't join. So we put that together and it's still around in a very dilapidated fashion. In fact, Lieutenant Governor Skillman is the speaker for our meeting on Friday, or Thursday, whenever it is. But that worked pretty well and we had a little group in the office that handled it. But I remember doing most of the selling and bringing most of the people. In one year we gave to the county chairman after our expenses for the chairman's club alone, \$234,000.

Scarpino: And this was to fund...?

MacAllister: To fund the party staff and the slate. Now, that's a far cry these days. It's sort of the whole (word inaudible) of things but I was just thinking, they said how do we take care of that, I thought let's try it this way and it worked. Not brilliant, but enough to get by. All right, sorry.

Scarpino: You mentioned Lieutenant Governor Becky Skillman is going to be a speaker soon and you talked about the dilapidated state. What did you mean?

MacAllister: Well, GIRFCO itself was the product of a businessman named Dick—ah, he worked for Burkhart, his name was Dick Pettigrew—Presbyterian like myself. I got acquainted with him because of this thing. Called me in one day and made a speech, and he had three ways of raising money for the party. Number one, a door-to-door campaign. You take a given ward or given precinct or a given township and you'd go here to here. I worked with three women in my area and I had to go to businesses knocking on doors—glad to get a check for \$25 in those days. Secondly, sustained giving, like your church pledge. Here it is. I'll give you 500 bucks a year, 10 or whatever it is. Third, was two dinners—Lincoln Day and in the fall, and we'd sell tickets.

So he raised a chunk of money that way. He did it for, I don't know, 10 years then he gave it to me and I ran it for a while, then somebody else. Well we ran out of leadership finally. We could find nobody to take it, and I'm convinced that business people are better at that because they have one objective in mind and that's results. Don't give a damn about the rest of it. And we ran out of businessmen to do it and turned it over to a couple of attorneys for a while and then slowly, it's gone. Finally, one of the county chairmen simply absorbed it into the Party, and with that it lost its glamour, it lost its dynamism. It lost its leadership and its momentum. Now you struggle along but it's pretty much a one-man effort now. We'll have maybe 60 or 70 people there. When she's speaking it'll be a good speech. We had the superintendent of education there prior to that.

Scarpino: She's a good speaker.

MacAllister: Oh, yeah. And I think she's ambitious too, don't you?

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Scarpino: Yes, actually, I can say that. I've met her. Yes. In a good way. In a good way.

MacAllister: Yeah, yeah.

Scarpino: Just so I get this straight for the people who are going to listen to this recording at some point in the future: in an effort to fund the Republican Party infrastructure and the slate, you created an organization that you called what?

MacAllister: The original organization was called the Greater Indianapolis Republican Finance Committee. It's called GIRFCO. That was Pettigrew's arrangement. Mine was, we had different, after a while we got different specialties—you got the lawyers, you got the, you know—and we did a golf outing and a large reception, a legislator reception, several other different things besides the three things I mentioned earlier, and so when Sweezy came up I said let's create this things called the Chairman's Club, as part of the GIRFCO operation.

Scarpino: So your innovation was this Chairman's Club as part of the GIRFCO operation.

MacAllister: Right.

Scarpino: Again, just thinking about ingenuity, can you talk a little bit about leaders you've known, particularly leaders in the city, who—could be government, business, or philanthropy—who you think possessed ingenuity and did a good job. People you've worked with or people you've known.

MacAllister: Yeah. Well, it's fruitless to have a good idea and not be able to execute it and ordinarily to execute it you need some gimmick or something to make it go. We've had terrific leadership in this community because of our mayors. Lugar, who had the vision, broke the pattern of the past and did a couple of things. Number one, he got Unigov in, which is okay in itself but beyond that he never forgot he was a Republican, but he did not make appointments on the basis that somebody's brother-in-law being a ward chairman. It's a meritocracy. The Napoleonic concept. Can you get it done?

So, when he began staffing his boards and agencies—Airport Authority or Health and Hospital Corporation Administration, Parks Department. He picked people pretty much who he thought were doers and could get things done. And when that occurred, people that didn't care much about politics before, saw things happening and wanted to be a part of it, and he was able to enroll and enlist them. So I think a good deal of what happened, beginning with Lugar and since that time, is the fact that we gave a lot of what happens in this community over to private citizens who want to help in making it a better place. That's the arts organizations. The GIPC—Greater Indianapolis

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Progress Committee, Commission on Downtown. May be more really need I guess sometimes. But that in itself seems pretty ingenious. You know, I think that's a good idea, and it's what a republic is all about. Hudnut did much the same thing. He's a little more political and he's much more of a control person. When I ran the Capital Improvements Board I used to invite the mayor and the council once just to get them over to the building to see what it looked like. You know, he told me, well, you're doing okay that that was the way it was.

Got a little different under the subsequent mayors and under the other party it's become, and that's part of our problem, it's become more back to the old way again about what's in it for us rather than what's in it for the—and that's pejorative. Understand I'm prejudiced. But Lugar was thinking out of the box all the time. I think the Unigov—I don't know if it was his idea but he made it happen, and we're talking still about continuing that movement by trying to consolidate the townships and maybe one school district other than nine and why do you need nine separate assessors here and the answer is you don't, you know, that sort of stuff. So from that extent he also wanted a major educational institution in town. And he wanted—you know, you can't be a great city without a great educational institute. Only he let the word out too quick and guess what happened. Purdue and Indiana said we'll do it and they shouldered him out of the way and took over. But he did get a major institution in this town. Maybe not quite what he wanted, but there it is down there and it's what, 31,000 students these days and. . .

Scarpino: . . .at least. . .

MacAllister: . . . and doing gangbuster work.

Scarpino: Yeah, we're up, enrollment is.

MacAllister: The other creative guy—in government or just the city?

Scarpino: Either.

MacAllister: The other creative guy was a guy named John Burkhart who created the—he created this program that Martha Lamkin ran—scholarships for kids. It's called USA or something. It has an acronym. Big operation. He needed—he saw a way of doing it and he began talking to colleges, and he said funding tuition—how do we participate. So they were kicking the dough through a lending organization which he founded which today is national in scope. Secondly, he began this publication, the *IBJ*.

Scarpino: *Indianapolis Business Journal*.

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MacAllister: Yes. He started it. And sold it to Mickey Maurer in due course. He put, I think one in here and one in St. Louis. At least two, maybe three. But he liked the paper for this and that, and he was able to—I asked him why the news was always so bad. He said if they put the stuff in there I would have, nobody would read it. [laughter] People don't read that stuff. But he was an ingenious guy. College life, selling insurance policies to college kids at a very cheap rate and so forth. The Pyramids are—that was his idea. But he was a very creative sort of guy too.

Scarpino: At one point when I talked to you last time, you said something that really caught my attention and you just repeated it a few minutes ago. I'm going to quote you just so I get this right. You said you can't be a very bad businessman very long because it will take you out. So you become concerned with results. And I think when you're talking about any project, what are the results? And you mentioned that again. I'm wondering if you could talk specifically, you know, an example or two where results-oriented leadership benefitted you or where you participated in result-oriented leadership that produced a positive outcome. Now you mentioned a couple of examples already but...

MacAllister: Oh, gee, I don't know where to do with this. I'm making a couple of speeches, one on leadership by the way, to Ed Bowen Engineering. And I'm going to talk about the business mind at work in the community and I'm going back to the Republic of Venice as the model, which is the way to do it. And the point would be, you know something about that started from the waves of immigrants constantly run over by the barbarians coming around the corner, and finally settling on the sandbars and the marshes throwing up the silt in the Po and the Adige River. Decided to live there and they had to ferry stuff back and forth and got into carrying stuff for other people and said maybe we can make a living doing this. Then let's buy the stuff and sell and carry it, etc. then by 800, you got a city-state so powerful Charlemagne is in there trying to take it down and didn't get it done. But it lasted until Bonaparte took it apart in maybe the last couple of years of the 18th century and it finally just imploded, collapsed. It had died before that.

But for 500 years it was a dominant force in the Mediterranean in 700, a major factor. They had a system of government that did not allow for dynastic succession. It was so complicated getting yourself to be doge, that no way of fixing it. And this was an oligarchy of 800 families, all mercantile. They were all in the business world, and they were traveling, using commodities small in volume but high in value. This is incense and tea and coffee and that kind of stuff, gold and perfumes and beautifully organized. But they didn't say anybody who wants to run for doge can do it or who wants to be the ambassador to the Vatican. They said you and your family are going to take this post for the next ten years, and he's going to Amsterdam. He's going to take care of the police department. He's running the military. He's running

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our shipyard and our manufacturing plants. They selected successful businessmen and said you've got the ball. And he said I'm not going to take it. Then you and your family have to leave the State of Venice. Now wait a minute. I guess like the Romans who ruled through 35 families and it was the obligation of the son to run for aedile or quaestor or praetor and ultimately for consul. You had an obligation to serve in the military. All this without pay, because this is my state and it's my responsibility. It's hard to inculcate that attitude today, but I think we're talking about the business mind and you're trying to find a place for that. I saw that a couple of places.

We had a—I'm on the board of Carroll College. Been on the board since 1963 and we hired a new president in the late eighties from Arkansas who had a good record down there, fabulous guy, very attractive, attractive wife, said all the right things, said it all. Got to Waukesha and after a couple of years we begin to hear some rumblings and it was a culture shock between the southern stuff and northern Wisconsin and it kept getting worse and worse and finally got into a—came to a breaking point when two things happened. One of the trustees, he called him in to take a look at his finances and he found an absolute catastrophe. A businessman, a guy named John West, said nobody knows what's going on here, you know, and the president had hired the guy. And then secondly, I was up there in August, and said how do we look financially because the two questions—what does it look financially and what's the enrollment look like. He said well we're going to have a \$65,000 deficit but we've got some money aside, we can put away, some temporary endowment we can use. The figures come out. He's \$600,000 in the hole. Then all of a sudden this and that began happening. He didn't want to leave. He's going to take care of it. It became pretty obvious it didn't work so he was not working. Nobody liked him. We made a bad choice and he wasn't going to leave.

So the board said let's appoint a committee and authorized me to appoint a committee to investigate the conditions on the campus and report back to the board as to how we best fix them. Seven men which the president and I appointed between us, and they came, spent three months talking, called me one Sunday morning and said can you come up to Carroll? Today? Okay, I got on a plane and flew up there and they said, every single one, nobody's talked about how we would but we just would, unanimous, he's got to go. So you got—so he had misconstrued the enrollments for the coming semester. This is in late fall at any rate, and he—they said no it's going to be 300. He said oh let's make it 375. And on the basis of 375 he built the budget. Now he got 290 instead of 375. So you're instantly another \$750,000 in the hole on top of what you got. It was a disaster.

So we put—one of the trustees—an auditor came in and spent six months every day getting the books straightened out, correcting all the accounting errors. One of the trustees, a banker, that had just retired, named Paul Jones,

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took over and ran the school for the next year as the president of Carroll College and talked to him every week, and between us and the board slowly fired people, sacked people, got it back down slowly, slowly, slowly. Had you not had a responsible board at that point in time that thing would have collapsed. All gone to hell. It really would have. But piece after piece—I'm sorry we got to—the vice president has to go, the treasurer has to go, this guy has to go, the development department is one girl that just graduated from Carroll. That was our development department. Today they've got 15 people. But at any rate, and in those instances, being actually pragmatic about it. No bullshitting. You know what's going to happen. We're going to clean this up. We got that done, and that was to me a pretty good demonstration.

Scarpino: What was the approximate time frame of that?

MacAllister: This would have been probably '91 by now, early '91, and within due course I had—I was the chairman of the committee that hired him too, unhappily. The committee stayed and functioned. We found somebody else. We got him in there and the next ten years were great. Today, we are now a university—Carroll University. Our entering class is 740 students; way too many.

Scarpino: How is doing in the economic downturn? Good?

MacAllister: Record enrollment.

Scarpino: Endowments are in trouble now, as you well know.

MacAllister: Well, we got, yeah, they are but ingenuity said we're not going to take anything off our endowment. You've got a couple of scholarships here. One gives us 6,000 a year and one gives us 60,000 a year. We're not going to use that but would you mind contributing 60,000. I said hell no, I can't do that but I will give you the 6,000. Well he's thinking you know. He didn't say well let's forget about it. He's talked to each of us. Would you supply the money that thing used to earn? And I—he's thinking like a businessman. I'm talking all around your questions.

Scarpino: No, you're actually—this is fine.

MacAllister: All right.

Scarpino: You spent 17 years, according to my count, as president of the Indianapolis Capital Improvement board?

MacAllister: Yeah.

Scarpino: What was the approximate time frame that you held that?

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MacAllister: I was appointed when Lugar got in in 1968. I didn't—I worked most basically in finances in his campaign and selling tickets and rallying so I knew the team pretty well. I remember at the victory party, the banquet that night, Beurt SerVaas said now what do you want? I said, what do you mean what do I want? I want to go back and sell tractors. [laughing] No, you've got to get on something. How about the Capital Improvements Board? I didn't even know what it was. Anyplace I can help, go ahead, I'll do it, so they put me on. And then John Burkhart was the chairman. We built the convention center. Had a little trouble with it. Then we had—costs overrun a half million dollars.

Scarpino: Was that the only trouble? Was it controversial when you approached that?

MacAllister: Not really. The biggest controversy was what do we name it. Then of course who do you put in it for the next couple of years when these things are all booked out, as you know, two and three and four and five years. We got through that. The rock concerts, whatever, to fill the place, etc. Then finally got going. It must have been '84 or '85 John said okay, I'm out of here. You're going to be the next chairman. Well, why me? Well, you're the main Republican here. So I took over.

Scarpino: And so you became chairman of?

MacAllister: Capital Improvements Board. I did it 11 years as I recall.

Scarpino: Okay, then I miscounted. Do you. . .

MacAllister: I was on the board 17.

Scarpino: Do you know where the idea for the convention center came from? That seemed like a bit of ingenuity.

MacAllister: No, I have no idea. It does. They had a group in town called the Convention and Visitors Bureau but you bring in a convention like I mentioned this conference in the city. Where do you put these people and you take one look and say wait a minute. Have you seen Orlando recently or—I do not know. I do not know where it came from. It's a product of the state legislature, however. They created it.

Scarpino: So you were 17 years on the Indianapolis Capital Improvement Board and 11 as president. Just for the sake of somebody who will listen to this recording or read the transcript, could you briefly describe the mission and purpose of the Indianapolis Capital Improvement Board? What's it supposed to do?

MacAllister: Well, it's to generate another source of income which means bring visitors in here who will not only rent our facilities but spend money in the downtown area. Maybe accommodate sporting events and bring a lot more people into

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town, and it's done a fabulous job. It's been well run. It really has. It's a—once again, it's a volunteer group of citizens and they've done a pretty good job with it. Because it was there and had a record, we were able to build the Hoosier Dome. Hudnut said why don't you guys do it, because we'd been doing it.

Scarpino: So that was a project of the Capital Improvement Board?

MacAllister: And it was, yeah.

Scarpino: Was that at all controversial?

MacAllister: The Dome?

Scarpino: Yeah. I mean, I'm thinking expensive. . .

MacAllister: Well, you've got the people that, here we go, taxpayers again, they said, and you'd say which tax were you talking about? Well, the taxpayers. You know, those taxpayers, that's people coming into town paying the five and six percent hotel/motel cost. That's how that debt is advertised. Now, plus you've got people eating in town, and that's, there's a two percent I think it is today, food and beverage tax on this and that, but the gainsayers, generally speaking, in that, when we started doing it a guy named Bobby Welch pumped it up about football because the league was going to expand, why don't we get a team. We don't get a team without a dome to put it in, and he was sure. He brought the coaches in here, the big league coaches a couple of times to show them the city, and he was ready to go with it. Unhappily he didn't get a chance to buy, he was going to help buy a team, etc. but they didn't expand the league either. We got a break when Irsay got mad at Baltimore and decided to leave and that's how we ended up with it. But had we not done it on the gun, the Lord was with us, there would have been—but that is a big business today, that people coming in town and we got a great big, they're building a brand new big hotel downtown with 1600 rooms isn't it.

Scarpino: I don't know. It's huge. I just walked by it the other day.

MacAllister: That Circle Centre Mall. All these things are contingent to a large extent on that convention center. So it was a good idea. But I'm sorry I can't tell you whose idea it was.

Scarpino: Why did you, I mean other than you were asked by Beurt SerVaas to do it, why did you stay with the Capital Improvement Board for so long? What did you find to be attractive about that kind of service?

MacAllister: I got free parking at the football games.

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Scarpino: [laughing] I guess I asked for that one, didn't I?

MacAllister: I don't know. I got along with the staff well. They like me. Still do. I still hear from them—Gene Phillips and Gloria Mills and Bob Haverstick. And why am I sitting here? You know, I should have retired a long time ago. [laughing] Carroll College, I keep thinking, what am I doing up there? If you don't think you're making a contribution you don't belong there, and some day they'll tell me you're not making a contribution. But, and I stay married because I know the woman and so forth. I don't believe in rotation on boards at all. I think if you've got somebody that's doing it well you keep them there. The only reason you'd rotate is to improve the quality of that board, not just to change faces and get somebody younger. And of course that's a battle I fight because they think it's vested interest. But I like being involved in this city very much and I guess knowing that we work pretty well together. Got it done. Succeeded.

Scarpino: What do you think works well about Indianapolis, particularly on a business model?

MacAllister: Well, I think number one, the attitude of the people here is a little different than it is in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. I told you my story there I think? I came down here. I didn't think much of this city. It was pretty disheveled, etc., but the people here were very cordial, very hospitable, easy to know, etc. The hillbillies, Hoosier didn't mean much in the old days. It meant something derogatory. But the people here are just wonderful. And the group with whom I worked and got involved in politics—I was with Dale Brown in the old days and knew how he operated. That was not good. Lugar and Bulen were totally different and the people that we had on that first county council—Tom Hasbrook, George Tintera, Beurt SerVaas, Steve West, Alan Kimbell—people of stature and integrity and they weren't concerned about getting insurance contracts. They were concerned about how do we make this a better city.

Scarpino: Relatively Young Republicans.

MacAllister: Yeah.

Scarpino: What do you suppose attracted that group to service at that time? Why did you have that critical mass at that particular time?

MacAllister: Well, for one thing, Young Republicans as an organization on the campus at IU, for example, were a lot stronger than they are today and secondly, when you get the leader, you know, I think, and when you see what he's doing, suddenly you want to be part of it. You didn't care much for Dale Brown and the way he operated and the way he did things.

Scarpino: He ran the Republican Party before Lugar was around.

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MacAllister: Yep.

Scarpino: And before Keith Bulen.

MacAllister: Before Bulen, right.

Scarpino: So who was the real leader—Keith Bulen or Dick Lugar?

MacAllister: It took Bulen to create the ward and precinct environment which would vote him in and the old guy out. But it took the guys behind him like Burkhart and like Cy Ober and like Kurt Pantzer and the rest of us to give Bulen credibility. He got the job done, but running the mayor's office was Dick Lugar all the way. Now, Keith would talk about appointments and he had some IOUs and you know he had some of that going on and I—you know, personal experience. Somebody I put on the Airport Authority. But he picked good people and generally speaking, Lugar is straight arrow. People trust him. They like him. They admire him enormously. And if they can work along the same team as Dick Lugar it makes it very, very easy. The same thing was true with Hudnut. A little tougher with Goldsmith. He was a very bright guy but his people skills were less, I think, probably than the other two guys.

Scarpino: Do you think that's an important quality of a leader to have good people skills?

MacAllister: Yeah.

Scarpino: How would you define good—what constitutes good people skills?

MacAllister: The first attribute is listening. The second is an understanding that I am not infallible. The third is an honest interest in other people's ideas. How can he contribute? You put somebody on a given thing because you know he has something and when you've got him you need to let him express or reveal what it is you put him on there to do. So I think that bit of sharing—and Lugar was a great delegator. He really was. He didn't look over your shoulder, kibbutz or anything else. Hudnut was more trying to be mother and telling what you ought to be doing, etc. I didn't work for Steve so I don't know much about that.

Scarpino: What stands out as your greatest success during your service on the Capital Improvement Board? What are you most proud of?

MacAllister: The Dome. The Hoosier Dome. Getting it done.

Scarpino: Did you play a direct role in bringing the Colts?

MacAllister: No, no.

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Scarpino: So you weren't on the buses leaving in the snowstorm or anything?

MacAllister: No. The architect of that was Dave Frick, who was the one who built this one, this building, the convention center, and he was a deputy mayor and Hudnut I thought was more political than Lugar, but Dave was a very good choice and a brilliant guy and he was the key all the way around.

Scarpino: When you think about leadership, are there any differences or similarities in the way you exercise leadership say, with the Indianapolis Capital Improvement Board as opposed to your own business?

MacAllister: Yeah. There's quite a bit of difference. Because you're on a board, and you have to have the support of your subordinates and your council or you have to make a motion and get it passed. When you run your own business you get advice from people, you got an option whether you take it or not, and so you can make a decision without jacking around very long. If you're wise you're willing to listen to folks before you do but you don't have to follow it. And often, I guess—I don't know which is the best way. I think running your own business may be the best way.

Scarpino: But you do think that for a person to be successful in an environment like the Capital Improvement Board you had to adjust your style a bit.

MacAllister: Yep. Yeah, because you're in the paper if something goes wrong. The amazing thing about that experience was the lack of partisan politics. You couldn't tell—you can sit at those meetings for—you could hear ten of them in a row and never could tell who was Republican and who was Democrat, because your concern—you talk about earlier what makes a city different. That attitude existed a hell of a lot more than it does now, and I think when you've got a mayor like Lugar who, you know, is not offensive, doesn't cut anybody up, never says a bad word about it and is fairly open and fairly honest, it's hard to attack him, and it was a much more friendly environment and people are inclined to work with him, rather than like Bauer, work against him.

Scarpino: Do you think that Richard Lugar had a vision for the future of the city?

MacAllister: I think several, yep.

Scarpino: What do you think?

MacAllister: Well, one of his visions was for this major educational institution. The other, Dick is well educated in the arts and he appreciates the arts, music, and drama and I guess the fine arts as well. And he's strong on character. You know, that's a good credential in terms of people who worked for him. They have to be of decent stuff, stand the microscope of public scrutiny and function. And

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you look at the people who have worked from him and learned from him and—like Mitch Daniels, a good example and one of Dick's protégés. There are a number—Sue Anne Gilroy, Mark Miles. A lot of people came up, so...

Scarpino: They were all part of that Young Republican group...

MacAllister: Yes.

Scarpino: ...and sort of orbiting around Keith Bulen...

MacAllister: You find a role for them. If they play it well, you keep them. If you don't, somehow the time goes up. So he is a legend, really.

Scarpino: Lugar?

MacAllister: Yeah, in terms of a break and a new style. But once you get cranking and are proud of your city you want to keep it that way, don't you? And you ought to feel that way.

Scarpino: Well, the reason I asked you that question is partly based on the leadership issues and partly just based on my own experience. I mean Indianapolis has undergone remarkable changes in the last 25 years, and I was just wondering what role you thought Richard Lugar might have played in sort of jumpstarting that or putting some points on the horizon.

MacAllister: Well, we would not be here this way without him, period. Not at all. First of all the consolidation, but secondly, in terms of the public/private partnership. You know, he found a way of working with business downtown. You wouldn't have the Westin down there if we hadn't had the city saying what is the problem here. Well, we can't get the package together. Well, they finally say—and you've got to have people in the mayor's office that think about that. You've got to provide public parking, right? Yeah. What happens if we build a big garage down there and you share with it, you can use it too, will that make a difference? It's \$10 million. It makes the package worth it. The Westin goes in. So, that's way—finding ways to make it happen, not ways why you can't do it. Like you have the bank telling you all the time what you can't do. [laughing]

Scarpino: Did the Capital Improvement Board play a role in the development of Circle Centre Mall?

MacAllister: Not to my knowledge. Not to my knowledge. I don't know. That's something else—the people like the Simons and like the Wests. Big bucks helping you. Like the Lilly Endowment has always been a major component here in what good happens in this city. So it's a combination of stuff but it would not be like this unless—until Dick Lugar came along.

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Scarpino: Is there anything else that I should have asked you about the Capital Improvement Board that I just didn't that you want to get on the record?

MacAllister: Like what's wrong today and how do you fix it? [laughter]

Scarpino: Well, that's a different question.

MacAllister: Well, I—it's a little larger than it used to be. We ran the convention center. Then we ran the convention center and the Hoosier Dome. Then the Pacers are going to leave. They've got an owner on the west coast that doesn't care much about them and they're about to go. So we sit down and talked to the Simons. And they say we aren't in the basketball business. We've got to keep this team here. What do you want us to do? So we tell them. They buy the team and they keep it here.

Scarpino: So were you instrumental in persuading the Simons to buy the Pacers?

MacAllister: Personally?

Scarpino: Yes.

MacAllister: I was on the meetings. I didn't do the negotiating. Frick did the negotiating but I recall talking more than once to Herb.

Scarpino: So it was the deputy mayor that did the negotiating.

MacAllister: Yeah.

Scarpino: Okay.

MacAllister: And then the next thing you know, you build Conseco. You take over what had been the old one and you got Conseco. Then you pick up the baseball stadium. So you've got that one board of people running all these things for better or for worse.

Scarpino: Do you think that that cluster of the football stadium, Conseco, and the new baseball stadium downtown has had an impact on...?

MacAllister: Absolutely.

Scarpino: How would you assess that?

MacAllister: Well, think of the restaurants, when you got all these games going on—basketball games, what, 80 of them or 40 of them? Ten football games,

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baseball games, it's got to help. You got to bring people downtown and it's got to bring business to downtown people continually.

Scarpino: Indianapolis did not become a doughnut city did it?

MacAllister: No.

Scarpino: No. So if you had to pick the people that you think were most instrumental in the economic success of downtown—you've already mentioned Dick Lugar—who else would you put on that list? And I, for the record, will put you on the list because I don't think you're going to do that, but...

MacAllister: Oh, I, he will kill me for saying this, but nobody has done more for this city than Jim Morris. Number one, as aide to the mayor for six years—Dick Lugar's aide. He was his driver in that campaign of '67. Dick was so impressed he kept him on.

Scarpino: Is that right?

MacAllister: That's right.

Scarpino: Is that how they met?

MacAllister: That is correct. But to make the story more peculiar, there were three guys running for mayor in '67. One was Alex Clark, former mayor; a guy named Bill Sharp, an attorney, hell of a judge; and then Dick Lugar. Jim's bank, which is American Fletcher, had assigned Jim to drive for Alex, the mayor, would have been the previous mayor before and now a candidate. Alex Clark took us out in the primary and Lugar beat him. And then Dick—or Jim was persuaded then to become the driver for the other candidate for mayor, Dick Lugar. And so Dick was so impressed he kept him on as mayor on the 25th floor up there. I remember it very well. And he stayed there for at least six years and then thought it was time to leave. Then he went to the Lilly Endowment, within four or five years, was running the Lilly Endowment. At one point the biggest in America. It isn't today, but it was. And he did that for a number of years and he ducked from there and went to the water company and ran that for 17 years, and then of course he did five years as the executive director, ambassadorial status for the World Food Bank at the United Nations. And now he's running the Pacers.

Scarpino: Right.

MacAllister: But in his—when he was—when we were building the Hoosier Dome, I remember him calling me, saying, in terms of your financing—I don't think he called me first, but he called me, and said we've got, the Lilly Endowment is prepared to give you \$25 million and Krannert is going to give you five and

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it's \$30 million to help you finance the Hoosier Dome. Wow. What do you say?

Scarpino: What was the source of the five million?

MacAllister: Krannert.

Scarpino: Krannert, okay. So that's \$30 million of the total of?

MacAllister: I said 63. People keep saying no, it's 72, 73 something like that.

Scarpino: So it was half to 40% somewhere in that range?

MacAllister: Yeah, yeah, yeah—big time.

Scarpino: And Jim Morris raised that money.

MacAllister: He was—happened to be the chairman at Lilly when that occurred and he took it out of their, maybe over a couple of years, but out of their annual gifts. And what else that the endowment has done for this community is endless, and Jim had a role in all of that, I'm sure, while he was there. But I got pretty well acquainted with him but we were both younger and I can think of so many things. He said one day, you know, the Kingan property out there in West Washington Street sitting empty. Wouldn't it be nice if we had an urban park in this city? That's White River State Park, and he said one day, you know. . .

Scarpino: . . .so you would attribute the idea of White River State Park to Mr. Morris?

MacAllister: Jim Morris. He said, you know we ought to have a sort of a conference center out here at the campus of IUPUI. And guess what they did? They built the conference center.

Scarpino: They built the conference center.

MacAllister: Just lots of ideas, ingenuity you mentioned earlier. He had it and he can see—nobody loves this city more than he does. But he had been a major factor. Beurt SerVaas has been a major factor.

Scarpino: How would you characterize his contribution?

MacAllister: Well, basically by running City-County Council for 40 years, you know, Monday night after Monday night, twice a month I guess it is, on and on. He owned a couple of businesses in the city—rubber company. His wife still, or his daughter, I guess, now runs *Saturday Evening Post*. She's out there with all. . .

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Scarpino: I met his daughter a few weeks ago out there.

MacAllister: Is this Joanie?

Scarpino: Yeah.

MacAllister: But he'd been active in several business ventures. The Wests have been pretty good to this town too. The West Foundation plus Steve served on the council. We mentioned the Krannerts have been good to the city.

Scarpino: Now most of the things that you mentioned that Jim Morris was involved in, you were involved in too. White River State Park?

MacAllister: Well, I was never involved in that.

Scarpino: Not at all?

MacAllister: No. Huh uh.

Scarpino: Okay. I'm going to switch out here a little bit. You have been a major supporter of a national opera competition; The MacAllister Awards.

MacAllister: Yeah.

Scarpino: If I did my research correctly, it began in 1988 and continues to the present.

MacAllister: 1980.

Scarpino: '80?

MacAllister: '80, 8-0.

Scarpino: Okay, 1980. Longer than I thought, and you've obviously been both a donor and a supporter. What attracted you to opera and then to becoming a major supporter of a national competition?

MacAllister: I was raised in Wisconsin and I got interested in music when I was in third—did I tell you this story, third grade?

Scarpino: You mentioned, you talked a little bit about that last time.

MacAllister: And I learned all the—I'd say 30 records and classical—played a clarinet all the through college, from fourth grade on, and this repository of music, I love classical music. And the gal who wanted to start an opera company was a—married my roommate at college, was our treasurer here at MacAllister, two years younger. Her name was Miriam Ramaker. She came in one night and

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said Indianapolis needs an opera company. Well I was somebody that had been to operas and known operas and knew opera singers and knew opera arias, etc., a limited amount, but I'm familiar with it. Let's do it. So she started an opera company called Indianapolis Opera. She was teaching out at called—Indiana Central in those days—now the University of Indianapolis—and she was putting operas on out there and getting by okay. She had a board and I was up to my neck in other stuff so I told her I can't spend much time. But her husband took care of the cash flows of the company here and she kept going, but she put on *The Telephone* by Menotti, *Susannah and the Elders* by, who was it Lloyd or Floyd, *Woman Without a Shadow*, stuff like that. To me that isn't opera. I want *Aida*, *La Boheme*, *Carmen*, *Barber of Seville*.

Scarpino: That doesn't sound like classical music to me, but I'm not the best judge. This was a professional company or she was still doing this at the university?

MacAllister: At the university, and she was charging, and she discovered a thing called CETA which was a funding agency where the feds were dumping money into the communities for different projects, and she had—she was able to hire a singer and so forth. We expanded the board a little bit, but at any rate we got into a major, I don't know, temperamental tiff, and she got in the board meeting one day and quit, made a long speech and quit. Couldn't figure out what was going on. Alex Scott got on the board, I got Larry Hannah on the board and Roger Monner who ran the trustee department for Indiana National Bank and Spanaki, a big developer in town, Mary Jo Pennington Smith. Even had Ellen Clowes on the board for a while. Alice McKinney, a bunch of people. And I don't know, she flipped, and off she went.

So, we appointed a gal named Elaine Morgan Bookwalter who I had worked with in dedicating the Market Square Arena and done a Presbyterian pageant in 1977. She was working with the Parks Department. So she agreed to take it over, and once again we had CETA funding—lots of it.

Scarpino: And it's still affiliated with the university at this point?

MacAllister: No.

Scarpino: No.

MacAllister: We took it there, and we moved to Park Tudor for our first season, and expanded the board, meeting monthly, raising money, and we did the first performance was *Pagliacci*, and so let's do a one-act opera because we've got to build the sets, we've got to make the costumes, we've got to get the cast and get the scene, the whole nine yards.

Scarpino: I'm going to ask you then, how did you put those pieces together? How did you find the people to build the sets and sew the costumes?

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MacAllister: We hired them. We had nine or ten people from CETA funding, and you looked—people looking for jobs. IU's got the best opera school in America. These kids are coming out of opera school and getting masters, no one would take this voice, isn't quite mature, and looking for a job. And they were making \$9,000 a year with us, and that was pretty good in those days. This was '82, '83, '84. So, at any rate we cranked it off and then it kept getting a little bigger and we got good press reviews, and finally the next season we did at the Murat, and we did. . .

Scarpino: . . .that was a step up.

MacAllister: Oh, yeah. 2,200 seat house. The last performance that Elaine and I did with them was *Aida*, cast of thousands, filled the house, standing room only both nights, and when Corbin Patrick wrote up his review of the arts for the year 19— whatever it was. What the hell would it be? '86 or '87, '85. He said the art story of the year was the production of *Aida* by the Opera Company—of the year for the city. Well, that's pretty good.

We owed \$60,000. I wanted to stop because we had some money coming in—in part thanks to Jim Morris and the Lilly Endowment—and the rest of them wanted to go ahead. I was tired and wound up and I thought okay, go ahead. We hired a guy named Judge Michael T. Dugan to take over the Opera Company, and then at that point I bailed out. But the last season must have been '79. Elaine had said, let's start an opera competition. What are you talking about? Well, let's bring some young singers in and give a prize, and I wasn't interested. So she did the first one. They had about 15, 20 singers and Nova Thomas won and got, I don't know a check for \$1,500.

Scarpino: The first name was Nova?

MacAllister: Nova Thomas. And she's been singing opera, not in the Met, but she's been here ever since then.

Scarpino: I mean she still has a career, right?

MacAllister: Yeah.

Scarpino: Okay, I thought that sounded like a familiar name.

MacAllister: In '81 they did another one and I finally came, '82, '83 and she invited four or five judges, and finally they got into rows all the time but it was at best a lot of politics involved. So finally, a guy name Walter Castle at IU, he was a teacher down there, thought we should use a method of scoring somehow or other. Well, he still had a row about it so he didn't do it, and I did it the next year and organized an arithmetic, you judged every aria and you rate it up to the

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maximum of 70 points. So much for voice, the quality of voice, so much by training, interpretation of the aria, the persona, and that went on then for the next. . .

Scarpino: . . .now the teacher from Bloomington developed that?

MacAllister: He started it. I don't know how far he got but he said arithmetic scoring. And when you're going to hear it in one night, it's crazy, she had a hundred and one singers. One day do that, it's crazy. You can't remember who's fourth and eighth and tenth and fifteenth. So, knowing that, that's why you do them now. It's tough enough that way. And besides that you keep the number down.

But the way it happened, she, Elaine enjoyed doing it. She was a music major and knew music pretty well, and she itinerated the country. And I went with her every year to New York at least once, usually in the fall, often in the spring, and we'd hear probably 30 singers, and we'd pick out, we thought, the best two, three, four and I'd go to—Milwaukee was there or Bloomington if they were playing that year, to Chicago every year, etc. Been out to Seattle once or twice, but she did most of them, and she'd bring back the best from each of maybe a dozen regionals and they'd all come here on the last Thursday in—no, they'd come here the last Friday in August.

Scarpino: So the regional competitions already existed.

MacAllister: Yep.

Scarpino: And they were separate from. . .

MacAllister: No, we created them.

Scarpino: Oh, you created them.

MacAllister: Yeah. They would hold—we'd make an arrangement to somebody and we put ads in the paper and the opera people in the area would send you. . .

Scarpino: What I'm trying to get at here is the developmental sequence. She did the first competition because you were not interested. You were kind of ready not to do it for a while.

MacAllister: Yep.

Scarpino: And then she did the second one.

MacAllister: Yep.

Scarpino: And then you came on board about 1982.

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MacAllister: Yep. '81.

Scarpino: '81, and at that point it was still relatively small...

MacAllister: Going to be 20.

Scarpino: 20? And from that point on, one of the innovations was this arithmetic or mathematical scoring system, and the other was regional competitions.

MacAllister: Right.

Scarpino: Whose idea was the regional competition?

MacAllister: It must have been hers. I don't know.

Scarpino: Okay. But it originated here.

MacAllister: Yep. Oh, yeah.

Scarpino: How many regions?

MacAllister: It would vary from year to year. She was corresponding with various operas and the grapevine works pretty well too in this thing, and it begin picking up steam and we got, after about the fourth year, third year, by the fourth year we had a guy named, I'll get it in a minute, who started Seattle in the Ring Series. Glen Ross, a legend in the opera field—Glen Ross. We had a guy from the Met, a guy from Lyric in Chicago, a guy from St. Louis Opera, from Dallas Opera, from Houston. We had the four major houses in town.

Scarpino: These were your judges?

MacAllister: These were the judges. They'd come in on Saturday to do the semi-finals which would be 20 singers, and they will select the 10 which come on the next day which are the finals. So Friday is all the gang, and we try to hold it down to 65, you know, something like that. And Elaine and I and two or three other guys would do that. Well, usually she and I did most of it. Then we'd present the 20 to the judges on Saturday. That's two arias. We'd save the scores on the two arias. And then the next day you have 10, and they'd sing two more arias. So you've four arias. You can't sing twice. And those total scores would end up with one's first and one's last.

Scarpino: So the competition in Indianapolis was not an open competition. The contestants came through regional.

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MacAllister: Yep. A lot of them would come here, the final one was the Indianapolis regional. That was on a Friday. So we'd have a bunch come in here for that hoping they'd stay.

Scarpino: So there was a regional competition here and whoever won that or. . .

MacAllister: There would be several, yeah.

Scarpino: And then they would come to the. . .

MacAllister: If they were selected they'd come on, yeah. As I recall the top prize got to \$10,000. When we had our 20th anniversary it was \$15,000 top prize then maybe 10 then 75. Those who finished in the—from 11 through 20 each got \$500. And those who finished from four through 10 got a thousand, and then 25, 5, and it went on from there. It cost about—it cost—it was costing me about \$250,000 a year to get keep this thing going.

Scarpino: And just to get an idea, do the contestants pay their own way to Indianapolis?

MacAllister: Yeah, they'd come. Yep.

Scarpino: So the cost is the house and all that stuff.

MacAllister: Riding herd on the regionals. You can raise money, but the city never picked it up. They could care less about it, which sort of pissed me off. I remember they hired a director named Aldo somebody from Amsterdam to come in here and run the Indianapolis Opera Company. He wanted to have breakfast with me because I was the—he said you know, I never knew Indianapolis had an opera company but I knew all about the MacAllister Awards. It had international notoriety, and nobody here gives a damn about it, so... [laughing]

Scarpino: So, let me ask a question. I don't mean this to sound flip in any way at all but we started this conversation talking about ingenuity...

MacAllister: Yeah.

Scarpino: Whatever caused you to imagine you could make Indianapolis the center of amateur opera competition in the United States?

MacAllister: Serendipity.

Scarpino: I mean, were you having coffee one day and it came into your head?

MacAllister: I didn't expect it to go, but it worked well.

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Scarpino: Let me ask it in a different way. Did you start off imagining that's where you were going to end up?

MacAllister: No, no. I thought it was a lot of nonsense I didn't have time to put up with.

Scarpino: So, once you were persuaded to come on board, were you thinking "I'm going to make Indianapolis the center," or it just sort of evolved?

MacAllister: No. You're thinking of seeing all these kids you've been working with looking for a chance to use their voice, you know, and secondly you're hearing these judges, the rest of them, that's all politics. We had squareest, the fairest, and the best judged in the country and still well-known. Went into Dallas one day four or five years ago to see one of our gals, Denise Graves, perform *Carmen*. I met somebody there on the staff. I said I'm P. E. MacAllister. Oh, are you *the* MacAllister? Makes you feel pretty good.

Scarpino: Now, do other opera competitions now use the system that you guys developed?

MacAllister: Not the same. The Met has one, two, by regions. They do this, but it'll be handled out of IU down here, etc.

Scarpino: I meant the sort of mathematical judging rather than the. . .

MacAllister: No. I don't think so. I don't think so.

Scarpino: So you got involved. You got involved with what at the beginning was a relatively small competition here in Indianapolis.

MacAllister: Yeah.

Scarpino: And then can you talk a little bit about the stages of expansion? I mean, at what point did you think, did somebody think gee, we need regional competitions? I mean, can you think of an approximate time frame there?

MacAllister: Ah, I can't. I cannot think. I would guess logically, she knew the guy over in Cincinnati although they never respond all that well continually. Chicago, they always got a good house in Chicago. Then you hook up with individual opera people. The guy teaching opera in Lexington. Doris, what's her name, Doris, teaches at Yale University. These people want to see this sort of competition because their singers need to be seeing what's out there, and they would say, the singer would say time after time, I didn't win anything but man, did I have a great experience here to see how this happens and what kind of competition there is, and what needs to be done to perform and all this and that. So it was a tutoring process as well as a performing process.

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Scarpino: So was it a multi-year process to go from what must have been sort of a local competition to a national one?

MacAllister: Right. Just kept growing, and it's—every year you have trouble cranking it up again. Who was great? We went out to Seattle twice and then three or four years, nobody out there. But you need 10, 12 people before you want to go out. So...

Scarpino: Do you still go to all the regions?

MacAllister: We don't do it anymore. It's done. It ended in 2002.

Scarpino: Okay. I actually knew that, so I got a little bit ahead of myself. So, until 2002 were you still active?

MacAllister: Oh yeah. I did. Well, the last six years we were live for six hours on public broadcast and that cost money too, to bring a truck in here and six or eight camera people and so forth but we'd get—and it would also piss me off was the local station wouldn't even pick it up. WFYI—they picked it up in Los Angeles. People would tell me in Washington DC or this and that, but this guy here wouldn't even run it. [laughing] At any rate, that's a long story.

Scarpino: So in this particular case then, it was hard to be a prophet in your own town, wasn't it?

MacAllister: Yeah. A prophet is not without honor save in his own town.

Scarpino: Yeah. So, what happened in 2002?

MacAllister: Well, I got tired of it finally and I just felt that, constantly scrounging for money, and I'd given a lot of my money away. I didn't have as much as I used to have, and it just, you know, just. . .

Scarpino: You were one of the major supporters, right or the major supporter?

MacAllister: Oh, yeah. If we spent \$400,000 I would come up with at least 250 of it.

Scarpino: What are you most proud of when you look back on that?

MacAllister: Well, I guess the number of singers I see today performing at the Met came through us. And the number of people—Angela Brown will stand on the stage down here and talk about getting her start with the MacAllister Awards here, and she's singing Carmen at the Met these days. That sort of stuff. But the disappointing thing—I never got a check from a single opera company, opera singer, to help support the very thing that got him or her lofted. But again, you know, I'm expecting too much I guess.

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Scarpino: Is there anything like that in the country now?

MacAllister: There are two or three—Farrell has an award and Domingo has one. I can't really comment, but the judges say they're not the same as this one, which is totally open and arbitrarily judged.

Scarpino: Do you miss it now?

MacAllister: I do, yeah. I really do.

Scarpino: Now that you've been away from it for a few years.

MacAllister: Yeah.

Scarpino: All right. A related question, and I don't want to challenge your modesty here, but do you consider yourself to be a leader in the area of philanthropy?

MacAllister: No.

Scarpino: Do you feel you have something to say to people who are interested in philanthropy?

MacAllister: Yeah. Well, yeah. I have a lot more to say to people who are *not* interested in philanthropy.

Scarpino: Let's start there then.

MacAllister: Well, I've disappointed my kids. I've told them that too. I've made my daughters rich, and my son, of course, is. . .

Scarpino: . . .works here in the company. . .

MacAllister: Yeah, blown out of the water. I didn't dream it would get this big. Now, he bought me out some years back, doing his own planning and so forth and watching it go. But my feeling is, I guess biblical—to him who is given much is much is required. What I've got was given to me—my genes, my family, my education, this business. It's payback time, right? That's the way I feel about it. Indiana's been very good to my family. My father was very successful here, and we've been enormously successful—well received and well accepted, and I think that's part of the deal, really.

Scarpino: Do you think that the giveback is a responsibility of successful businesses, successful business leadership?

MacAllister: Yeah. Uh huh. I do. Absolutely.

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Scarpino: Do you see or could you talk a little bit about what you see as the similarities and differences between the kind of leadership one would exercise in business and the kind of leadership one would exercise in philanthropy?

MacAllister: I think there is some similarity. What bugs me a little bit in business, of course you achieve because of your efforts and because you did it right, done it right. I don't people preaching philanthropy who have never raised any money or never given any money. There's a lot of that going on. I think there's a sense of hypocrisy in that, frankly. If Herb Simon wants to come out here and chat with me about a gift, he's entitled to do so, or Christel DeHaan is entitled to do so, or the foundation. But I think a lot of it has become almost, not academics, more theory than fact. It's—raising money's no fun. It's pretty hard. I've done enough of that to know too. A lot of it is done badly. Too many development people don't know how to do it. In other words, just—I've seen them come in here and say I'm from the symphony, I'd like a contribution. I'd say, can you give me a couple of reasons why I should be giving the symphony money? I'm a tractor business for god's sake. Well, I'm from the symphony. You aren't hearing me. You don't connect me here. There's no sales pitch, no rationale involved. There's no study. This and that.

Scarpino: So you think that sales pitch and study are crucial elements of successful. . .

MacAllister: Well, you've got to know, first of all, your prospect. You got to assess his interests in what you're trying to sell him. You've got to assess his capacity to be able to give and you got to give him some compelling reasons to do so and you've got to give him a figure that works because if you give him a wrong figure, you blow yourself out of the water. Ask him for too much, well. Ask him for too little, he snorts a little bit. But to get all this done when the imponderables, you've got to do some guessing, but if you got them all right—when I get it right I've had pretty good luck. I haven't raised a lot of dough. I raised, I told the Church Federation I can raise \$100,000 a year for three years in a row and I did it by getting most of the guys to give me a thousand, give me 250 or \$2500 for three years in a row and got it done. They're having trouble following up on that because—but again, I don't ever go into a guy like George Seifert without a proposal to tell them what it is I was thinking, maybe, only thing went wrong, I was thinking maybe \$2500. He said well okay. I said should I have asked for more? He said, I was thinking a little more. I said how about five? He said that's fine. But you need to know the right number. Now this is not rocket science, but people don't want to take the time.

Scarpino: Let me ask you a question that occurred to me while you were talking. It seems to me that part of the success of your business here is the ability to sell a product.

MacAllister: Yup.

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Scarpino: And along with that product is an idea of what the product can do. It also seems that maybe philanthropy is also about salesmanship.

MacAllister: Sure, sure.

Scarpino: How do you connect the two?

MacAllister: Well, you got to, the rationale for giving. Why is the symphony important? And why is an art museum important or a theater important and you can find reasons for that. The ambiance in the community. Other people looking at us here that—the Greek concept of catharsis, you know. The image it creates to the wider world, etc.

Scarpino: So the ability to sell an idea or sell a vision works in business and works in philanthropy?

MacAllister: You sell benefits. We sell benefits. We don't sell iron, you know, productivity. You sell benefits, that too. Music hath charms to soothe the savage breast. Something like that. But you can think of things why. I always talk about this city, and what this means to Indianapolis, to have these viable groups performing in different and sundry locations. The Phoenix Theatre down there to me, and Spencer down there on Massachusetts, amazing. These guys got little houses. They've been there for 15 years cranking it in, civic and so forth. But they get people that like it and they're teaching people things about life that they wouldn't have known without that exposure.

Scarpino: Have you been involved with the Phoenix Theatre?

MacAllister: No, I'm not. I know Bryan Fonseca. He did an opera for us. I remember that—directed one.

Scarpino: I'm going to ask you some of our standard leadership questions which I'm obliged to do.

MacAllister: Okay.

Scarpino: How would you characterize your idea or your concept of leadership? What constitutes leadership in your mind?

MacAllister: I think it's knowing what to do. It's knowing what's wrong and how to fix it. It's knowing where to go. It's critical thinking skills. It's figuring out—I remember my old friend Irwin Miller once said a manager's job is to look for trouble. That's what leaders do, look for problems. And they're fascinated by the unsolvable because it gives them a chance to exercise the mental capacity to see how they can overcome it and be better than the problem is. And

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beyond that you have to have enough people skills, that people trust you and trust your judgment and are willing to follow and willing to accept your advice. And the value—think of *Band of Brothers*, remember that, have you seen that?

Scarpino: I certainly have.

MacAllister: You think about Dick Winters. They'd follow him anyplace.

Scarpino: One of the most successful leaders I ever met was a major in the armored cavalry.

MacAllister: Really?

Scarpino: I'd have followed that guy anywhere—civilian or military. How would you describe your own style of leadership, or characterize your own style?

MacAllister: Yeah. Well, I'm a word guy. Not that I'm a great speaker, but I like words and I think it's important to know precisely what it is we want to do and people have to understand precisely what it is we're after, what their role in this is, what the general outcome will be. They need to be in tune with where we're going and what we're going to do. They can't be going blindly into something or stumbling along or going through a routine day after day without some objective or motive in mind. I think the leader's job is to indicate how important it is—what we're doing is, and this is what it is and this is your role in it and so forth, something like that.

Scarpino: What do you think has worked well for you about your own style of leadership?

MacAllister: Well, I think one thing that I suggested earlier, when you get a title, with that goes a certain authority. The guys know that you're calling the shots. If you want them to follow I think you need to get input. I think it needs to be a consensual decision you're making, not just your idea. They would buy in to something they've got some ownership in rather than something they think you're just good at doing because you think it's a good idea. So, I think listening. I think the way you handle objections and criticism is important too. I think you need to not react and rebuff it. I think you need to absorb it and welcome it to some extent.

Scarpino: Is there anything about your leadership style that from time to time has not worked well for you?

MacAllister: Well, I keep thinking of—I never thought of myself as being a leader, you know. [laughing] It's just sort of doing things.

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Scarpino: But you know, when you turn around and you're on the five-yard line and everybody's running behind you, you know...

MacAllister: Okay. Oh, I think haste. I think not thinking something through thoroughly. I think in trying to—don't ever come to me for advice about real estate investment because I can tell you all the things that you shouldn't [laughing] do because I've done them all. I think improper preparation is the biggest mistake I've made. We're great at jumping to conclusions too. We assume a lot of things and make judgments that aren't quite accurate about persons and about people—about Democrats especially. [laughter] They aren't all that bad, I think.

Scarpino: Do you see any distinction between leadership and management?

MacAllister: I think leadership's more creative. I think management's the way one effectuates what the leader's already put into motion in terms of a plan or a program.

Scarpino: Some of the literature related to leadership wants to argue that in the case of many leaders, there's often an incident or an event that had an impact on the way they exercised leadership. Has there been an incident or event in your life that's had an impact on the kind of leader that you are?

MacAllister: Oh, I don't think so. I think what helps you a lot is approbation from people in the military. I was an officer and the enlisted men view me as being a lot more tolerant, a lot more understanding. I mean their complaints and situations—many guys. And to go back to reunions and have guys say, hey, you were the guy I came to when I had a problem, that makes you feel pretty good. You didn't know it at the time maybe but it does. So empathy got a lot to—I think a lot to do with leadership too.

Scarpino: Do you think that leaders are born or leaders are made?

MacAllister: Both.

Scarpino: Could you elaborate on both a little?

MacAllister: Yeah. I think of the illustration of Chamberlain from Bowdoin College at the Battle of Gettysburg. At the end of the line with his Massachusetts guys and about to get rolled up and he said, fix bayonets and charge. He was not a military guy at all. The circumstances there indicated that he had to think something through and he did. I think you take a look at Bonaparte, for example. You find somebody who is gifted because he didn't get much teaching about what he did aside from the artillery in terms of his medical thing. Alexander of Macedon was given not only experience but the most effective military unit in the world to fight battles with in the phalanx so he had

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a lot going for him but where would it have gone with the average leader and the answer is probably no place. So there had to be a vision there too. I think you can make leaders, yeah.

Scarpino: *Killer Angels* is one of my favorite novels that deals with Gettysburg.

MacAllister: Oh yeah, okay.

Scarpino: Do you think it's possible for a leader to pursue goals or outcomes of questionable utility or morality? In other words, the question is, are people like Adolph Hitler and Idi Amin leaders?

MacAllister: Oh yeah. Oh yeah. A lot of that going on in these political movements today. They get obsessed with one viewpoint and that's my own viewpoint and it's assumed damage to the nation, therefore off we go at it. We create situations that are fallacious for which we fix solutions that are totally irrelevant. Yeah, you've seen a lot of those. John Brown is a good example. He was going to fix labor. He did and got hung trying to do so. But he was heavily committed to it too. Commitment doesn't really prove a hell of a lot.

Scarpino: His attempt at Harper's Ferry.

MacAllister: Yeah, yeah.

Scarpino: I'm going to shift away from the leadership questions. In September 2007, then Indianapolis Mayor Bart Peterson and the Greater Indianapolis Progress Committee presented you with a Whistler Award which is presented to people who share Charles Whistler's talent and leadership in bettering the community. And I read the press release that announced your receipt of that award and noted that you produced more than a thousand programs in 25 years in public broadcasting in central Indiana.

MacAllister: I think that's hyperbolic. They say 700, that might be pretty close.

Scarpino: Okay, we'll amend the question to say a whole lot, quite a number. And so I'm kind of wondering, what attracted you to public broadcasting?

MacAllister: I was an investor in the old Comcast station. Here history is that in the old days before Lugar, the county commissioners had given a franchise for cable outside the City of Indianapolis because they had no jurisdiction inside the city. It went very well. It's going very well. After consolidation, there's this big blank in the middle with no television, no cable television. Who's going to put it in? So the guys who owned the old one said we'd like to do it, just add it on to our contract. Time Life decided they wanted to play in the game and they had bought Krannert's box company out there and a guy named Henry Goodrich ran the box company. He's a friend of mine from Northminster

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Church. And he along with Bill Byron put together a group of people to become investors. Time Life would sell 20% of its total stake to 20 investors in Indianapolis. Each would own one percent, and they picked them out. There were four or five black people—Julia Carson was one of them. Chavez is another one. Crawford in the legislature was another one. Democrats and Republicans. Crawford talked to me about it, and I said I don't think this turned me on. Aw, let's have lunch. We had lunch. Look you don't have to buy, you don't have to come up with \$90,000. We'll finance the \$90,000 for you. Just pay the interest for it a couple of years. How's that? I said okay. I'll go for it.

Scarpino: So they had a plan and they sold you.

MacAllister: Yeah they did - exactly! And they got together a group of people. Rex Early was in the group. Gene Sease was in the group as well. So we bought. . .

Scarpino: . . .so Rex Early who ran for? . . .

MacAllister: . . .yep. So we bought into it, and had meetings from time to time and watched it go and watched the building go up and watched all the cabling go up. Two, three, four, five years passed. They finally get it cranking and part of the contract said you are mandated to provide X number of hours or percentage of locally-originated material for Marion County. Okay, we'll do it. So, the guys are going down, their people were going down, they got their studio, their lighting, their sets, their editing equipment doing their programs. What they were getting, primarily after three or four months, was just a hell of a lot of colored preachers, and the quality would not be universally enjoyable to a lot of folks, and they were not punctual sometimes in getting there or getting out or cleaning up or this and that.

Scarpino: And it was relatively low production quality?

MacAllister: Yep, oh, yeah. Right. So the vice president, a guy named Lloyd somebody, I'll get it in a minute, called and wanted to have lunch. Now Elaine has a different story about this because she and I were doing opera at that time. And he says, did you ever thought about doing television? And I said, I hadn't thought too much about it, why? And he said, well, would you like to try it. We'll give you the camera guy, the equipment and so forth. So we decided to do it, and the first program was down at the city at the top of the AUL building—the Skyline Club, 36 floors. The two guests were Jim Morris and Dick Lugar, and the program was called *On Site* and the narrator said this program is called *On Site* because if it stays here, this area you see around here in 360 degrees is the City of Indianapolis, our site, and here are the two guys that created the psyche and the ambiance that today constitute the City of Indianapolis. So I talked to Dick and Jim for an hour. That was it.

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I forgot what the second program was but I had Hudnut. I had—first of all Dean Phillips walked through the Dome or the model of the Dome, the Hoosier Dome, before he did it. Had an interview with Herb Simon and Ned Lampkin and some of the Pacers when they bought the team and we went down there and did that. And when you get the crew from Comcast, they come out there and you're forever late and hauling this cable, your guest sitting there chomping at the bit and you're embarrassed. So finally we decided to buy our own camera. So the company bought the camera, and Elaine decided to do the.
..

Scarpino: . . .the company being your company? . . .

MacAllister: . . .Yep. Decided to do the editing. She did the editing. So from that point on we had a guy named Jim Dolder who would do the shooting for us and she created a little studio someplace in one of her bedrooms or someplace, or she rented an office someplace and she did the editing and I did the television.

Scarpino: So you were the on-camera interviewer. She did the editing. And that was film in those days so it was actually cutting and all that stuff.

MacAllister: No. I don't recall any cutting of film.

Scarpino: Okay. So anyway, she did the editing and then you had a cameraman who was in your employ.

MacAllister: No, no. We just hired him a day at a time when we needed him for \$10 an hour in those days.

Scarpino: And you produced hundreds of these shows.

MacAllister: Yeah. The studio said have you ever thought about doing a live show? Well, I don't know, I guess so. So we did a live show for a couple of summers. It didn't turn out very well. Then he said have you ever thought about doing some around Indiana? So we did a thing called *Hometown Indiana*. We must have done 30 or 35—Noblesville and Franklin and Crawfordsville and Greencastle, Vincennes, Fort Wayne, you know, Richmond and all those things. And, was there something else? That was about it then. Kept doing *On Site*. So, we just did a lot of shows.

Scarpino: So, what did you see? There are only so many hours in a day, right, and so you decided that you were going to invest your time in this for a considerable period.

MacAllister: Yeah.

Scarpino: What did you see as the value of what you did?

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MacAllister: Well it never sold any tractors.

Scarpino: [laughing] Well, that occurred to me but. . .

MacAllister: It was basically an ego trip, frankly. But what it did is show a lot of people in Indianapolis, what's in Indianapolis. I don't suppose one person, I don't know, maybe in five, has seen the Civil War Museum in the Circle, down at the base of the Monument.

Scarpino: It's hidden down there, isn't it?

MacAllister: Yeah. I don't suppose one in five has seen the Hall of Champions at the NCAA headquarters. And take, the same is true of the airport for goodness' sake. Some people never see the airport or get to the new Lucas Stadium. I'm going to do those two next. Or Crown Hill Cemetery, the monuments in Indianapolis of the wars, the Purple Heart garden over there. Strawberry Festival. I did the Iraqi ambassador for God's sake when he was in town before oh, the shit hit the fan, the Austrian ambassador, Dick Lugar several times, Dan Quayle. Just a lot of people. And I was amazed to do a show at the legislature one year. Bob Orr was the governor and we picked five people. I thought we'd get two people out there, but the governor was there with 500 people to do a television show. I said you bring a camera someplace nobody says no. Everybody is there. [laughing] But it was a lot of fun and I just enjoy doing it. Still doing it.

Scarpino: Did you, do you do your own background on this? Or do you have somebody that does?

MacAllister: No, no, I do it. They called it kamikaze television at the station. We did a program for a while—they did 12 or 24—*Heartbeat for Middle America*. I tried to get the station here to say—Boston's got something on public broadcasting, Minneapolis does, Chicago does, Seattle does, every—why don't we have something in Indianapolis that we could put up on the national, move it up on the national network. They wouldn't do it. So we did a bunch, at least a dozen programs—some of them weren't too good—and put them on. It only cost \$900. Let them get it up across the network all across the country.

Scarpino: So this basically, what you did was sort of public service type programming for Comcast.

MacAllister: Yeah. I enjoy doing it too.

Scarpino: And do you still do it?

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MacAllister: Yeah. The last program was a dairy farm two weeks ago up in northern Indiana. Four thousand head of cattle, five farms with, I don't know, 27—is it that much—yeah, 27,000 cattle. Seventy cows in a big stall, milking 24 hours a day, the whole business. Nobody knows it's up there, but they will when we put it up.

Scarpino: Well, when I was in high school I worked on a dairy farm with 18 cows.

MacAllister: Did you really—18 cows? Milk them by hand?

Scarpino: No, we had machines but I actually, in power outages we did milk by hand a few times. That's hard work. Did you see yourself as a leader in the field of public programming like that?

MacAllister: I don't—never thought about it that way. It was there. I've, as you know, got a good background. I could talk to you about history at some length. I can talk theology pretty well, Old or New Testament. I've been around most of Europe several times. In fact, I'm going again on Saturday to make a tour of the Rhine Valley from Amsterdam to Basel and I've traveled quite a bit and I read omnivorously. So I'm better equipped than most tractor salesmen are to handle a lot of these topics, and enjoy talking about them. And by the way, I have lunch with your friend Bob, Robert Vane, at least three to four times a year with Ken Cutler, his professor, and we do nothing but talk history.

Scarpino: I miss Ken. I'll say that with the recording on—he was a good man when I first got to IUPUI. Did you ever work with the Greater Indianapolis Progress Committee?

MacAllister: I was on it just briefly when I was doing Upswing that first summer. They put me on it for a while, but it didn't prove anything. I didn't do any good in it.

Scarpino: What was Upswing?

MacAllister: That was the program, I said, that the mayor wanted to get the kids off the street.

Scarpino: All right, okay. I'm sorry, yes. In April of 2009, the Indiana Historical Society named you to its list of living legends.

MacAllister: Wow.

Scarpino: And, well your name is actually on a plaque in that lovely great hall that they have, and included in that particular class of inductees was Anita DeFrantz who was the first African-American to win her Olympic gold medal in rowing, Bobby "Slick" Leonard, former coach of the Pacers and broadcaster, and Mel and Herb Simon, which is pretty heady company.

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MacAllister: It is.

Scarpino: How did you feel about being named a living legend in Indiana?

MacAllister: Humble. Standing next to Herb Simon, you've got to feel pretty swell. Leonard too, I didn't realize it, he was a powerhouse as a basketball player, and he had been a legend around town for years. Miss DeFrantz I didn't know very well. But I've been to two or three of those and Jim Morris and the Cooks down in Bedford, Irwin Millers.

Scarpino: Bill and Gayle Cook.

MacAllister: The Gaithers did it once. Some guy named Babyface something, whatever his, the singer, very popular singer, they said. Very prestigious company. I didn't think this was coming, to tell you the truth.

Scarpino: So was this—how far ahead of time did you know you were going to receive this award?

MacAllister: About six months. Quite a long time, yeah.

Scarpino: So when you look at that astonishing group of inductees that you were part of—when you start with Mel and Herb Simon, how would you assess their impact as leaders?

MacAllister: Oh, I think it's significant. Number one, he is the biggest owner/manager of mall property in America. He doesn't have to be here. Indianapolis, come on. But he stays out there and builds that brand new building for I don't know how many million dollars a year ago and he keeps his headquarters here.

Scarpino: Downtown?

MacAllister: Yeah. And he told me one day the reason he stays here is because he served here at Fort Benjamin Harrison in the military and he fell in love with Indianapolis. You know, that's almost sentimental, so...

Scarpino: I had no idea.

MacAllister: I don't know where he is now, but I saw one year he and Herb were worth over three billion dollars between the two of them. That's a lot of money, and to do what they're doing now with the Pacers without bitching or moaning or wailing in the paper or crying, and I think it's very, very outstanding. I have a lot of respect for them.

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Scarpino: I want to ask you a couple more questions before we wrap this up here, and I'm going to come back to your association with Richard Lugar. He spent a couple of terms on the Indianapolis Public School Board and elected mayor and so on. What attracted you to work with and for Richard Lugar? I mean I assume that you had plenty to pick from in terms of what to do with your time.

MacAllister: Well, he was in a position, obviously, that could make a change, and I guess he thought on occasion that I could help somehow in his greater role of getting Indianapolis up off of the curb and into the major leagues. To talk to him personally for a while is just a—you know, he's—a thrill. He's different than any politician I know. He's an intellect to begin with, which is—would surprise a lot of people. I hear—go to Florida or go to Wisconsin or wherever you are—I like your senator. He's universally admired and so forth. But he knew where his head was at. Always gentle. Never saw him lose his temper or flip, ever, and he came back—they did something for me in March in the opera world or the music world. Jackson Wiley has a thing going on and they had a big program of adulation out there at Pike Township. Dick Lugar showed out there and spent the whole evening sitting next to me and got up and made a speech.

Scarpino: That was this past March in 2009?

MacAllister: Yeah. And he sent messages on my 90th birthday a year ago, a videotape again extolling, which I, you know, miniscule compared to him. So he's appreciative and he's generous, he's a gentleman, he's a good Christian guy. He's just rare and chinning with him, his knowledge about Karzai or Musharraf or Putin, people like that, the inside. He'll tell you what's going on there and what he thinks about it and so forth. Who else can you learn like that from, that kind of stuff from? It's just amazing, and he's always got time, and I've never called his office I didn't get a response.

Scarpino: When he was mayor...?

MacAllister: Well, even now. Even now. I've tried a couple of times and talked to somebody there. They'll tell you. I don't know if I should put this on tape or not. Well, I don't know. The president of Christian Theological Seminary is a guy named Ed Wheeler, an African-American from Atlanta and he's out there having a big conference and Dick Lugar's one of the speakers along with Martin Marty, the theologian from Chicago, and they're sitting at my table. Dick and I are talking to Marty. I think that's pretty heady stuff, you know. After we're finished, the president of the Seminary comes up and says P. E., I've got a favor to ask of you. Do you think you could get me a couple of tickets to the inauguration of President Obama? I said, I'm a Republican.

Scarpino: I was going to say that.

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MacAllister: He said, I know. Can you get? I got them. I think I got him four tickets.

Scarpino: Dick Lugar got them? Oh, okay.

MacAllister: But that's the kind of guy.

Scarpino: I know his brother.

MacAllister: Do you really?

Scarpino: He's a well-known historian. You talked about being attracted to Lugar's mayoral race and the fact that he was somebody who had the potential to generate change and you mentioned picking Indianapolis up off the curb and getting it back into the game. What did you mean by that?

MacAllister: Well, my expression usually is, we used to be an oval in the cornfield. Today we have all-American status, and in many respects. Our educational system has a lot to be desired, but the mayor, alas, has no control over that. But the matter of the cleanliness of the town, I think probably Hudnut gets most of that credit. This city is clean, you know, people can't believe our downtown. Spick and span. But the entire change, and we can do this started with Lugar any way you look at it, and he never doubted for a minute.

And secondly his, something else that he tried very hard to do which we've never been able to completely accomplish—his theme song when he was inaugurated is 'Bridge Over Troubled Waters.' I'm the mayor of all the people, and that meant the black people in this town as well as the white people. That meant the Republicans as well as the Democrats and he actually meant that, and he worked very hard to get it. So he at least called attention to the fact that we are—there are differences in town. We have one city here and we have one mayor and that he needs to be mayor of everybody.

Scarpino: First elected in 1968, right?

MacAllister: The election was '67, yeah. Took office in '68.

Scarpino: That was a tough year.

MacAllister: Yeah.

Scarpino: How would you rate his performance in that tough year?

MacAllister: Very good. Very good. There's a new sense of hope in the Party. But again, I don't—going to get too political, but it was a Republican that did it. You know, nothing, the same climate, the same water supply, the same location in

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America, same labor force, everything else, and dramatic change from his point on.

Scarpino: So you've mentioned the change a couple of times. When you were looking at Lugar in 1968, what did you want to change, other than the Republicans to win? I mean, what fundamental changes were you hoping for?

MacAllister: When they asked me to join the Action Committee—that would be now in the fall, the late fall of '64 after we got cleaned in the—was it Goldwater, I think, washout. No, it was the Johnson landslide, and the paroxysm after the Kennedy assassination. We got cleaned out of everything. I said Dale Brown's been okay to me. He said why did you get involved in politics? I said because I got tired of losing everything. Lost Capehart, lost the two guys in the senate, lost the governor, lost the mayor, lost the council, I'm tired of losing. He said, that's what we're all about. Okay. I'm with you then. So that's what I joined, and the objective was not to put the Republicans in office, but because I think they govern better than the Democrats, and when you see somebody like him you can see change. You see this in history. You can take a look at the Roman emperors and you'll find a Caligula on one hand and a Vespasian on the other and Augustus on the other. And look at the kings in Britain. You'll find some tough ones and some bad ones. A lot of American presidents and so forth. So there is a difference and he's the kind of guy you want to be affiliated with, but he takes you places. He was a producer and an achiever, and the city is a talisman to his contribution.

Scarpino: Would you consider those to be central qualities of leadership?

MacAllister: Yeah, yeah.

Scarpino: Did you play a personal role in the creation of Unigov?

MacAllister: No.

Scarpino: You, if I did my research correctly, were also campaign chair for William Hudnut's mayoral elections. Is that correct?

MacAllister: His two congress terms first. He ran in '72 and won, he run in '74 and got beat. [laughing]

Scarpino: Right. So he was congress, congress, and then mayor, mayor.

MacAllister: That's right.

Scarpino: And you were his campaign manager. As I recall, he, in the mayoral race, he defeated incumbent Andrew Jacobs.

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MacAllister: Yep.

Scarpino: What attracted you to work for Hudnut?

MacAllister: He was Presbyterian and I got acquainted with him. We worked in the National Missions Committee together and this local presbytery and he was from the east, but another intellect. He's a Phi Beta Kappa at Princeton and an honor student at Union Theological Seminary, and he came from a very long and historic Presbyterian family. Also, on the other side, the Hudnuts were, in the old days, big in cosmetics. So, there was some. . .but he was sort of, in my mind, sort of an aristocrat. But he was a gung-ho sort of guy, and a great mind, and just a good guy, but a hard guy to work for. You know, he wanted it done, he wanted it done right.

Scarpino: He was a demanding boss.

MacAllister: Right. Moreso than Dick, yeah.

Scarpino: So, besides being demanding and intelligent and gung-ho, how would you characterize his leadership style? What made him work as a leader?

MacAllister: Oh, he was a cheerleader, you know. The, de Medicis in Florence had no elective capacity—they call them gonfaloniere. They were the standard bearer for the—their class and their city. He was a great cheerleader. A fabulous speaker, especially campaign speaker, and he could really excite you and get you worked up. But he was positive. He knew where he wanted to go, what he wanted to do. If you didn't do it right, he would tell you. He knew when it wasn't right. But he was energetic. Spent a lot of time down there in city hall and he got into everything. Got it going. Wanted to know how you're doing, how you're doing. He was a more hands-on guy than Dick was.

Scarpino: When I, in the few times that I met him, the one thing that amazed me about him was he knew the names of his opponents. Even people you would think he had no knowledge of, he could call them by name.

MacAllister: A very bright mind, yeah.

Scarpino: How would you compare or contrast his style with Richard Lugar?

MacAllister: More hands-on, I think I said, a little more. Dick would be content with the larger picture. Bill would sketch a larger picture, and then watch the nuts and bolts very carefully. He was mayor for 16 years to be popular with the people, with the press. Easier to talk to than Dick probably. He's more gregarious. More affable.

Scarpino: How does somebody manage to stay popular for 16 years?

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MacAllister: By doing a good job. That's what did it. Of course, it was the stadium that had a lot to do with it, but we miss him. Should have kept him.

Scarpino: I'm going to ask you about one more person, and I'll be honest and tell you that I met this man and we interviewed him a long time ago, but how would you assess Keith Bulen's leadership qualities, and maybe compare and contrast with Lugar and Hudnut.

MacAllister: Well, Keith was energetic to begin with, full of ideas, very sarcastic, and his people skills, the people that worked with him thought he was great, but he was critical and hard to please, and inclined to be dissatisfied with a lot of stuff. He told me one time on the golf course in Florida that down underneath this all he was really very introverted. Now, I don't know if he believed that, but he told me that and he used the bluster as a façade. Now you can take that with a huge grain of salt. But he was clever and very skillful as a political tactician in terms of looking at races and looking at issues, and looking at campaigns and how you do the campaigning and how you use your power in the ward precinct organization and so forth. And the guys that were around him, and I think of Mitch being one. . .

Scarpino: . . .Governor Daniels? . . .

MacAllister: . . .yeah. . . remember him with great kindness and great fondness. He was kind of a strange—but he was feisty and too inclined to be sharp. I guess people got used to that and got rid of it. I found it strange. He took a group of us, I don't know, like 30 or 35 people out at French Lick once one weekend for a brainstorming session and he had an agenda and so forth, and he came to me in the afternoon and said, P. E., you know something, I think we ought to have a worship service tomorrow, breakfast on Sunday, have a worship service. Not at all like Bulen. And I did think that ever without telling him. So he says can you get, yeah, I think I can get, so I got together a worship service. Preached the sermon, had the hymns and readings and the whole nine yards. But I, just a—I think a very, very clever touch however. Puts a little different tone, little different aspect to the whole deal, fine. But he was successful and he called them right. Unhappily he ran into trouble later on. We don't want to talk about that. Nobody knows too much but he never got, but he did not—I think he left before Lugar did. Then he went on, became the, did the Canadian Commission, American/Canadian. . .

Scarpino: . . .International Joint Commission.

MacAllister: Yeah, that's it—that's what he did. But a gifted guy. If it hadn't been for him, who would have changed the ward and precinct organization? He had to get the bloody precinct people to vote for a different boss. If he hadn't been there, that wouldn't have happened either. So it took the two of them.

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Scarpino: Richard Lugar and Bulen?

MacAllister: Absolutely, yeah. And then the Hudnut thing, 16 years to anchor in and solidify and institutionalize the Lugar changes in style, and in commitment.

Scarpino: I'm going to ask you two more questions and the first one is, as you look back over all the years you spent here in Indianapolis as a businessman, a philanthropist, and public broadcasting and opera, what gives you the most satisfaction?

MacAllister: (pause) Well, I guess, I don't know—I guess my role in the whole thing, it's hard to pick out one of these, but to have been involved with so many things, you know, to be in a system, holding office is part of it but it's only part of our system. There's so many other aspects to it, and to have an impact as an appointed board at a given agency at a given time and do the right thing is critical. But I guess to come as far as I have and done the things I have and generated as little rancor as I have, I think it's—I feel very good about that. And I feel very good about the city and the fact that working with guys like Lugar and Hudnut and Morris and even Goldsmith. It's been a real, you know, God, what a treasure, what a treat.

Scarpino: Do you think of yourself as a salesman for Indianapolis?

MacAllister: Do I think what?

Scarpino: Do you think of yourself as a salesman for Indianapolis?

MacAllister: I hope so. I hope so. Yeah. I am. It's great. But it proves the validity of the system. We can be what we want to be, and it's great to have those people who live in a community arbitrate the situations and conditions under which they will operate, and I think that's marvelous.

Scarpino: One more question.

MacAllister: Yep.

Scarpino: Is there anything that I should have asked you that I didn't, or anything that you'd like to add that I just haven't had the insight to talk to you about, particularly on the subject of leadership?

MacAllister: I don't think so. You've covered the waterfront and half the ocean as well.

Scarpino: Well then, before I turn the recorders off I want to take this moment to thank you very much on behalf of the Tobias Center and myself for being gracious enough to sit with me for almost four hours on two separate occasions.

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MacAllister: Well, talking about oneself is never odious! [laughter]