

PENNSYLVANIA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
BIPARTISAN MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

INTERVIEW WITH:

**The Honorable Lynn B. Herman**

77<sup>th</sup> District

Centre & Clearfield Counties

1983 – 2006

INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY: Heidi Mays, House Archivist  
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Transcribed by: Heather Deppen Hillard

**Heidi Mays (HM):** Good morning.

**The Honorable Lynn Herman (LH):** Morning.

**HM:** I'm here today with Representative Lynn Herman who represented the 77<sup>th</sup> Legislative District from Centre County from 1983 to the present. Thank you for being here with us today.

**LH:** Thank you. And I also represented part of Clearfield County for about 20 years.

**HM:** Oh, thank you very much. I want to start out by asking you what kind of influence did your family have on your early life and your future career as a public servant?

**LH:** Well, I was the first of four children born into our family, and my father was a lineman for Pennalac, that was a local electric company, and my mother was a stay-at-home mom to raise four children, and I think, without any doubt, my parents instilled in me a very strong work ethic. And certainly, I was one who wasn't really academically smart but they made sure I studied very hard. And with those study skills I was able to go to college and actually graduate magna cum laude in Political Science and History and get a Master's degree in Public Administration because of my strong study skills that I think I developed as a child.

**HM:** Great. Was anyone in your family involved in politics?

**LH:** Well, I'm doing some genealogy research [and] I'm finding that, apparently, my great-grandfather, Robert Herman, moved to Philipsburg in the late 1800's and, supposedly, he had a political job with the county, which I'm not sure exactly what it is. So, I'm still doing research on that, but people said that he had some kind of political job with the county at that time, and I'm still trying to search what exactly it was, what position he held. But he was also the Philipsburg Borough Secretary, which, I think, was a paid position at that time. My mother, also, was the Precinct Chairman of the Second Ward in Philipsburg Borough, and I can remember very distinctly, you know, sitting as an adolescent, as a teenager, in my living room when the County Commissioners came over to campaign, they came to visit my mother and, you know, to say, "Hello," and to get her support. I took great note of that, I guess, and for some reason our local area Chairman said to my mother one day, "Well, someday we're going to run Lynn for County Commissioner." So, it kind-of always stuck in my head that maybe there was a future for me in politics.

**HM:** So, you'd say that was how you became interested in politics?

**LH:** I think there was always the interest there, but, you know, in ninth grade, I had a civics class where you learn the inter-relationships of the different branches of government; the executive branch, the legislative branch and the judicial branch of government. And also, I had a great interest in history, especially American History. So, blending those two, that's what I actually went to college and studied; Political Science immediately, then picked up a double major in History as I went through the four-year

career, at the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown. (*cough*) Excuse me. But, I think that, you know, the politics, or whatever, I always kind-of felt that I wanted to work for the government in some capacity. I always felt that some day I'd probably run for public office, I just never, ever, expected it to be when I was 25 years old, very young in my life. But, the circumstances that evolved created the opportunity and the opportunity presented itself and so I decided I would grab that opportunity in 1982.

**HM:** Could you describe your career and experiences before coming to the House? You've alluded that you have your education?

**LH:** Right. Well, I was getting my Master's degree in Public Administration at the University of Pittsburgh at the Main Campus in Oakland and part of that requirement was to do a either a thesis or a policy study or an internship, and because the previous six years of my life had been all academic – I never had any work experience in government whatsoever – I focused on getting the internship. And, by design, I kept that last because you never know if an internship would turn into a job. Well, I guess my calculations worked out to perfection in some capacity. My internship that I was offered was one with the Department of Education here in Harrisburg. And the irony is I think I was 23 years old for my interview to first start my job, and I had never been to the capital city ever in my whole life, until I came here for that first interview in the winter of 1979. So, I started working for the Department of Education, the Bureau of Field Services, and we had a four person unit, and during that time, I had gotten interested in politics somewhat and actually came over to the Legislature. And I remember being in the balcony, the

balcony in the rear of the Legislature, looking down at all those people working so busily on legislation, thinking to myself, “Someday I’m going to be here.” Well, like I said, I never realized it would be so much sooner after I made those thoughts, gave those thoughts. So, at any rate, I worked for the Department of Education, and literally in April I had already packed my car to go back to the University of Pittsburgh and finish my thesis and write my thesis on my internship and what all I learned and so forth, and that week, a women in our unit had taken another job with the Federal government in Education in the same building. Well, during this whole time I had tried feverishly to get a job; I wrote to every Secretary of every Department, every Director of every Board of Commission, asking for interviews, sending my resume, and I think I only got three interviews out of that but no job opportunity. So, I was literally, I was leaving at forty-three to go back to Pittsburgh, and the division Chief called me at four o’clock and said, “Would you be interested in Allie’s job?” “Well, yes. I’m looking for a job, yes.” “Okay, we’ll have to do the paperwork and all that kind of thing.” So, it wasn’t a State job; they were funded from the Intermediate Unit in Susquehanna. The Susquehanna Intermediate Unit funded the position so they had to get re-approval for the continued funding of that. And, I guess it was also the time when the great recession was hitting the nation, and of course, Governor Thornburgh [Richard Thornburgh; Pennsylvania Governor, 1979-1987] was cutting government, so in terms of looking for a job at that time, I was very lucky because government jobs were being cut not created. So, vacancy just happened to fall in my lap and God was with me. So, I went down and back to the University of Pittsburgh to finish my thesis and that kind of thing and then two weeks later, they brought me back later as a State employee. And during that time, part of my

research work at the Department of Education was on personnel management and reorganization of the Department that was transpiring at that time, and the Deputy Secretary had known of my interest in this, that I was doing this research, so about, oh it wasn't too long, maybe six months into my career at the Bureau of [inaudible], she asked me if I would be interested in moving to Personnel and I said, "Sure, I would like to do that." So, I worked in Personnel, at Personnel Classification and Pay, and my job title was Administrative Assistant. And while I'm there I'm, of course, always trying to get a better job and knowing that, you know, you never know when your time is limited when the government is cutting back, so I filled out an application for an administrative analyst position. And the administrative analyst position required a Master's degree, which I had. Because of that, I was asked to come over for an interview in the Personnel Department for the Department of Transportation here in Harrisburg. So, I did that and the Civil Service rules are that you get ten extra points if you're a Veteran, and you know, if you're one of the final three qualified candidates they have to hire the Veteran. Well, they didn't like the candidates – I was not the top candidate because I did not have Veteran's status, but I was the only one with experience, so the Department decided what they would do is send me to [the] Clearfield office to work out of for a certain period of time to [tape skips- acquire?] job training and hire me out of that office, where I was the top candidate. So, they were able to do that. It probably worked against them in some capacity, because I said, "Geez, I live in Philipsburg," and they says, "We know that. You can just live at home, you know, and do this project for us for about seven weeks." Well, that was in the fall of 1981 and, like I always say, my roots grew back very quickly. I came back to an equally depressed community in Philipsburg. Coal was king at one

time and when the coal market collapsed so did Philipsburg go down with it. So, a lot of my friends who had gone off to college like I did, came back home and there was no jobs. And I just want to reflect about how lucky I was, you know, getting a job at the last minute and so forth, and moving up my career. And, I can remember leaving [the] Philipsburg community and going to Harrisburg to start my job full time at the Department of Transportation, I said, "Geez, if I ever have an opportunity to help these people I will." Well, there again, I never thought it would happen. So, I got involved in politics, likewise, when I was down here, I guess, like so many my age and everybody else in America, we were very struggling and very disappointed with the malaise of the Jimmy Carter [39<sup>th</sup> US President, 1977-1981] Administration, the hostages in Iran, the oil crisis, so many issues that he was just so unable to solve that I volunteered for the Reagan/Bush Campaign. So, I wrote the National Chairman to ask for volunteering, he referred my letter to the State Chairman who referred my letter to the Area Chairman, or the County Chairman, then finally it forwarded down to the Chairman of the Reagan/Bush Campaign or Coordinator for Cumberland County. I lived in Cumberland County at the time, I think in Camp Hill. So, I went out and I volunteered and I said, "What do you want me to do?" and they said, "Well, there's the telephones. You know, you call these people and you ask them, 'Are you for Reagan [Ronald Reagan; 40<sup>th</sup> US President, 1981-1989], for Carter or undecided?' and circle that and give it to the guy that's probably going to process these." So, I worked very, very diligently at that and I guess they were so impressed with me, plus I did some literature drops, things like that, that they asked me to run for the Vice-Chairman of the Young Republicans for Cumberland County for the next coming year and I agreed that I would do that, and, of

course, it was unopposed, so I was lucked into that position. So, that's how I kind-of like merged my government career, I guess, with politics and all this kind of came to a climax with the reapportionment. And reapportionment occurred which had a lot of dynamics in Centre County, in that the incumbent of the District, his name was Gregg Cunningham [State Representative; Centre County, 1978-1982], was cut in half; the Republicans created a new Republican District, which is now the 171<sup>st</sup>, on the eastern side of Centre County, with part of central Centre County. And before that, Philipsburg was in Camille "Bud" George's [State Representative, Clearfield County, 1975-present] 74<sup>th</sup> Legislative District. So, then they put Philipsburg in the 77<sup>th</sup> District, with Representative Cunningham, and for whatever reason, you know you'll have to ask him, he decides then he's going to move from Ferguson Township, which is in the 77<sup>th</sup> District, physically move to the 171<sup>st</sup> District, where he had a better chance of winning re-election, because that like a 62 percent Republican District and the 77<sup>th</sup> was more like 50 percent, or 52 percent, something like that. So, the seat that actually became open was the 77<sup>th</sup> District. So, some circumstances came to be, in that I was always following the newspapers. I'd go to the State Library and get previous issues of back papers, and I saw where a candidate from State College, Steve Dershmer, had announced that he was going to run for State Representative in the 77<sup>th</sup> District, an open seat. And he said, "Well, if I'm elected I'm going to do this for State College and I'm going to do this for State College," and I got very, very incensed, because I said, "What about Philipsburg? What are you doing for Philipsburg? What are you going to do for the rest of the District? There's more to the 77<sup>th</sup> District than just State College." So, I called my Area Chairman, Howard Bellingham, who later became my Campaign Chairman, and I said, "Howard," I says, "I

just read this announcement.” I says, “You’ve got to get a candidate to run for Philipsburg. This is really the only opportunity you have to have recovery for Philipsburg, and to get some representation in State government.” And he said, “Yes, I know. We have some people here who want to run but, you know,” he said, basically, he said, for whatever reasons he didn’t like any of those; they all had a lot of negative baggage on them, so to speak. And so it was very frustrating, so I said, I don’t even know it just kind-of popped out of my mouth, I said, “Well, what do you think if I would run?” He said, “I think that would be a great idea.” So, I went to the State Library, doing some demographics on the District and I started to look at the District and I said to myself, I says, “Boy, this District is so diverse; it’s going to take a very unique individual to represent the area.” And I felt that with my educational background and my blue-collar upbringing that I could represent the District equally and I pretty much had the kind of background that the District needed and the more I thought about another person to run it really started to sound like me. So, I quit my job with the Department of Transportation because it was Civil Service – I was forced to quit – and moved back home and ran for office in 1982.

**HM:** Would you please describe for me your first campaign?

**LH:** Well, yes, like I said, I quit my job to run for my first election. Otherwise, personal reasons: I was single, I had no girlfriend. I was just starting a new career, which I thought, I was really taking a chance because I had actually gotten a job that required my masters’ degree which is something my parents paid tuition for six years and so I decided

I would do this. I approached my mother and father and they said—my mother was quite upset about it, initially—but they said I could live at home and do this. And I thought, an opportunity like this only comes around once in a lifetime and maybe, in the future, there might be another opportunity, but I might be married, have a career and other kinds of things going on in your life that may prevent you being a candidate. So, I thought I would try doing this. And, you know, of course, helping Philipsburg: it was really my hometown roots, I guess, that motivated me to run and knowing also that I had to represent the rest of the district and that I had the educational background to do that. So, I was the second candidate to announce and we did so to prevent any of those other candidates from Philipsburg from announcing so I could get the whole Philipsburg support. My Campaign Chairman, Howard Bellingham, he said to me, because of the population differences between State College and Philipsburg and State College having so much more population, its going to take about four or five candidates from State College to come out to split off the vote and Philipsburg will carry you in. So, we did get four or five, actually there were five candidates, four from State College, but one didn't really do much so there were three pretty strong candidates from State College and myself. But having quit my job, I went door to door all through my district and we organized—we came back, and I mentioned I was involved in the Young Republicans of Cumberland County. So, the first thing I did was go back home and get all my friends together: ones who were just starting to get employed or weren't employed at all, or unemployed, and we started the Philipsburg Young Republicans. And we started having fundraisers and meetings, and it was really interesting to watch as the youth got interested in backing me to help the town, how everybody else started taking notice. It started to

become a rallying cry and this—I kind of reflected on later, never realizing how it was galvanizing the Philipsburg area behind me as a candidate. So, we had our debates, that kind of thing, and went through the campaign and, I think it was two weeks before the election, and I called my previous supervisor at PennDOT to see if I could have my job back because I had just worked myself to a frazzle. I said, “I don’t want to do this again, because it is so hard.” It is so hard doing this with the media, being inexperienced, and all that kind of thing. So, he said, “You’re civil service.” So, I just said, “okay, I’ll give a final push and just hope I come in second.” Because there were so many other good candidates in State College, that I thought I would come in second—I just wanted to come in second and give it a good try. Oh my goodness. So election day: we—me and Howard Bellingham went to the Court House and I went with him to see the election results come in. Well, Philipsburg Borough was the only municipality in the whole county that had voting machines—they had them since the 1950’s—and everyone else had paper ballots. So, my town came in first—it was their tallies that came in first. Well, I looked at the board and, oh my gosh, they were pretty good results. I mean, I think there was even one precinct where I got every vote. Do you realize how hard it is to get every vote in a precinct? So, I says, “Boy,” as I looked at those five or six in Philipsburg, and then I looked at State College and they have 22 precincts themselves and they are so much larger and I said it was a bit away. I’ll never forget, a couple more numbers came onto the board and so forth, and I went into the room to say thanks to the county chairman and county vice-chairman and they had their heads down like this. Gee, what’s wrong with them? Well, they knew I won. They knew the Philipsburg vote came in so heavy—we had over an eighty percent turn-out in a Primary election and the rest of the

counties ran at about twenty-eight percent—and people came and people came to vote for me and their hometown. I'll be doggone—Chester Hill Borough and Philipsbug, South Hills Borough and Rush Township: they carried the day. As Cal and I were leaving and coming back to Philipsburg, we checked out a couple precincts, stopped at Worth Township, got the numbers and then we went out to Rush Township, which is our largest voting precinct in the area, and he said this is the one that will tell the tale. And he was so excited and I didn't even get out of the car—I just wanted to go home. I said I just want to get this done and get on with my life and get my job back or get a job. Oh my goodness. He said, "Look at those numbers." I said, "Oh, they are pretty good." But I still wasn't convinced. Oh my goodness. Well, I pulled up in front of the house and the whole house is just rocking with people and noise and they said, "You won, you won." And I said, "What do you mean I won? I was just at the courthouse and there were so many results that weren't even printed yet." They said, "The paper's calling, the tv's coming over and the newspaper wants a quote." I says, "Really?" Oh my goodness. So, everybody is so happy except me. Because I just worked so hard, but I just didn't want to go through it again, not realizing that I would have more help in the primary, I mean, the general, from the party. So I went to my mother—she was in the kitchen—and I says, "Now what do I do?" And now tomorrow, I have to go through this for five or six more months. Well thank goodness, like I said the Republican Party thought my seat would determine their majority or not, so they came in with all their resources and I got the Peg endorsement, I got live endorsements and I got [*inaudible*] and things I never even thought or even cared about and all this kind of thing, and things just kind of galvanized. But I was painted, in the primary in the paper, the newspaper reporter called me the

“favorite son”, or no chance to win, something like that, so I was convinced I wasn’t going to win either. And in the general election, I ran against Sylvia Stein who was a chemistry professor, I think, or a physics professor at Penn State University, a very, very smart woman. And then there was a third party candidate named Callahan, I think his name was, he was on the Consumer Party. So there was actually three candidates running and someone told me afterwards, Sylvia Stein was over at the Courthouse just jumping with glee when she found out I won because she thought I would be the easiest candidate to beat. Well, we came in and we were able to put on a very, very good campaign and galvanize the whole district—the Republicans across the whole district—behind myself. I was really surprised because I won every precinct from Philipsburg to the Borough of State College including all six precincts in Ferguson Township which is part of the State College School District: I won all six of those. And I even won my opponents voting precinct, too. So, I was very shocked by that, but voter contact, going door-to-door, and, of course, knowledge of the issues, and so forth, we were able to truncate those, and having an air of modesty, I think, is something that—humble beginnings, Abraham Lincoln log cabin kind of thing. But I was very, very fortunate. I won two elections that first year when no one ever gave me a chance to win.

**HM:** How did your subsequent elections play out then?

**LH:** Well, as an incumbent you can sort of build up your constituency base and you are then gauged on if you are doing a good job or not. And I put the same work ethic and time and people contact into being an officer as I was a candidate. So, subsequent

elections I never really had an ‘A’ opponent run against me, you know, a really top opponent that, but I was targeted by the Democrats a couple of time, but each time they targeted me, I won very handily. So, I think I won every election with 50-60 percent of the vote or more, which in that District is very good.

**HM:** Could you describe a little bit more about the 77<sup>th</sup> Legislative District?

**LH:** Well, the District is diverse. At that time we had Osceola Mills Borough and Chesterhill Borough in the District, which was sort-of part of the *[inaudible]* Valley. Then we have the Bald Eagle Valley which consists of Taylor Township and Huston [and] Worth Township and Port Matilda area and maybe parts of Halfmoon Township. And then the center region, which is State College Borough and Ferguson Township and now I represent Patton Township also. But, it’s a very, very, I think it’s the most diverse District in the entire State because in State College, it’s very affluent; it’s very white-collar; it’s very pro-business, a lot of business people. And, of course, with Penn State University being there, it also, literally – in fact I tell a lot of people – literally, some of the smartest people in the world are my constituents, because they are number one in their field of biology or animal science or plant science or bovine research or equine research or turf-grass management, nanotechnology, all of these things. And then, of course, you have the students, you know, which brings in a whole different denominator that is so unlike any other place in the State. And, of course, it’s very young; 18 to 22 year olds who are trying to go to college and they don’t follow much about politics but in Presidential elections they come out and vote and they cause me a dilemma of how to

campaign to them because they are going to vote for President and I am on the ballot, you know, so what kind of campaign tactics can I develop to try to sway them [to] my position. And, of course, you have the Bald Eagle Valley, which is very rural and farming areas, as well as Pennsylvania Furnace and Baileyville. And Philipsburg has no farms but it has textile, blue-collar, you know, blue-collar kind of job environment. You know, most of the people there definitely have a high school education, but many don't have anything past high school.

**HM:** You talked about campaigning. Did you like to campaign, or do you like to campaign?

**LH:** Well, yeah, I liked campaigning to some extent. It's changed over the years; it's very, very hard to do. It's physically – you know, I think I lost five to ten pounds every election – but, going door-to-door, asking people to vote and having, you know, people respond in a positive way is certainly very rewarding and very refreshing. Or, being an incumbent campaigning, “Will you help me with this?,” or, “Will you help my daughter with that?” “We really appreciate all the help you've done for our family and for our area,” and so forth. But, it's changed a lot. But, there are some things about campaigning I didn't like, like parades. I really don't care to ride in a parade in a new convertible, you know, that kind of thing I can do without. I'd rather watch the parade than actually be in it, you know? So, any rate, this year I decided not to run because I didn't want to campaign this year. You know, it just came to a time in my life where I'm young enough to do something else in my life with my educational background, my work

experience, to do something else. And I said, you know, 24 years is a long time to be in public office and I don't believe that the founding fathers of our Country or the State ever felt that these jobs should be lifetime positions. So that, plus the fact that I just didn't have the same kind of motivation or desire to organize and run a campaign this year as I knew it would take to win, I decided I just would not run this year.

**HM:** Since you've announced retirement, have you played a role in helping to select your successor?

**LH:** Yes, very much so. Barbara Spencer, I asked to run in my seat. There were a number of persons who came out to run; one was a farmer from Port Matilda, another gentleman lived in Philipsburg, and a third young man, about twenty-six years old, from Patton Township. But, engaging the District, none of them, I felt, really had the diverse background that it took to represent the District equally, which is why I ran 24 years previously, and, you know, being a Republican, we want to make this sure it's a Republican seat. I did not feel that any three of them could beat the Democrat challenger. So, because I Chair the Local Government Committee, I went immediately to what see what local elected officials I knew who would be good candidates to replace me, and there was a newly appointed Supervisor at Halfmoon Township named Barbara Spencer. So, I called her and asked her if she would be interested, and we talked further about her background and she has a strong background in education, she was a school teacher; and she was a Naval Commander, so she has military experience; she's an elected Supervisor, so she has experience in government; and, also, she's a farmer, she has a beef cattle farm.

So, she seemed to have all the credentials, I felt, to represent the entire District equally, including two degrees, two BA's from Penn State and a Master's degree, also. So, kind-of, her educational background matches mine as well. So, anyway, she asked me to Chair her campaign and I said I would and I continue to Chair her campaign.

**HM:** Great. After being elected to the 77<sup>th</sup> District, what would you say surprised you the most, whenever you first came to Harrisburg?

**LH:** When I first came to Harrisburg? Well, I think what surprised me the most was my office. I came here, what was then called the Capitol Annex, which is now the Ryan Office Building, before it was renovated, and I swear today, they must have cleared out a broom closet to put me in, because I was the smallest member so I got the smallest office. But, it was a very, very tiny office and a lot of the members at that time shared offices, okay? But, one thing I had in my office was, somebody left behind an American flag and a Pennsylvania flag on flagsticks and I've taken them with me to every office I've had since then and everybody always asks me, "How come you got those and no one else did?" "Well, they just happened to be in the office when I moved in." So, I think that was a big surprise. You know, no one ever told me, I guess, throughout the campaign what it took to actually make law, and that's basically what our position really is, is being a lawmaker, and that's what we're supposed to do; making laws, amending laws, repealing old laws and bad laws. And, no one really worked me through that process to say, "Okay, this is how you work with the Legislative Reference Bureau. And this is how you work with Committees." And the other thing I found surprising was Caucus. I

never even heard of the word before I came to the Legislature. “You go to Caucus,” and I says, “Caucus? What’s that? Geez, is that hard?” “Well, no, it’s not hard at all.” But, those are the kinds of things, just the process, the day-to-day process, of the schedule here in the State Capitol was something that I was totally unfamiliar with.

**HM:** You had seen the House in action from the Gallery. What did you think whenever you were first down in the midst of it all?

**LH:** Well, you of course—I’m twenty-six years old at this time, so I’m young; I’m also very short by stature, so I look like I’m much younger than I am—but, sitting with a lot of older gentleman—most Legislators at that time, I think, a lot of them were retirees or close to retirement, or retired—and being one of the younger persons kind-of was very intimidating. But, I was very fortunate in that, I think, the Majority Whip, Sam Hayes [Samuel E. Hayes, Jr.; Blair, Centre and Huntingdon Counties, 1971-1992], always made sure I had a good seat, so I only sit one seat away from where I started, but I was in a seat with all the Chairman of the Committees; I was the only one not being a Chairman in this row. So, I thought that was quite an honor to be down in front with all the Chairman so I can be part of the action and be very close to what was transpiring down on the floor.

**HM:** What was your District office like whenever you first started and to where it’s grown now?

**LH:** I had an Uncle had offered one of his small offices that he had on Front Street, next

to the Progress office – that’s the newspaper’s office – for our campaign headquarters during the campaign. So, that immediately became accessible, or useful I guess, in turning that into a District office in Philipsburg. Now, we have since outgrown that and moved across the street and has almost doubled, actually, almost tripled or quadrupled the size of the facility, to serve our constituents much better. But during the campaign, I had promised I would have two District offices, one in Philipsburg and one in State College, so I could represent the District equally. So, the next task was the find an office in State College, and I was very, very fortunate to find an office on Route 322, or North Atkins Street in downtown State College. There was a gentleman who was a realtor and he didn’t want to use the first floor of this office anymore. He said, “You know, we use the second floor, I live on the third floor, I use the second floor, and there’s this first floor office.” Well, he had beautiful woodwork and French doors. Oh, it was just a gorgeous office, and I think he only charged me \$300 a month. So, that was our first District office.

**HM:** That’s great. Can you explain the role of camaraderie through intra-caucus, inter-caucus and individual relationships?

**LH:** Well, I think that’s one of the things I think that’s probably disappointing about the Legislature, is a lot of camaraderie between the Democrats, the Republicans in the House of Representatives isn’t like it used to be. And I think that’s because the Legislature has become so busy with legislative activities and going to these receptions afterwards while these constituent groups who want you to come down to their reception and their dinner,

and so forth. But, you know, there were times where guys got up and played softball across the river, or basketball games, where there was just a lot more interplay after work. You know, okay, okay, we got done fighting our partisan battles at the State Capitol let's try to get out and make friendships. And, that has since gone away except for a couple of members here have started the Karaoke Caucus, you know, but they haven't done that in recent months. You know, those are the kinds of things I think I miss. I think that the Legislature should have more of; opportunities for the Republicans and the Democrats to mix it up more and also with the State Senate, as well.

**HM:** Would you say you had any mentors whenever you first started?

**LH:** Oh, absolutely. You know, I think I made a statement in the paper after I was elected that I would look toward Senator Corman [Jacob D. Corman; State Senator, 1977-1998], my Senator, and State Representative Sam Hayes, who was a Representative from Huntington County, in Tyrone area. But Sam Hayes, quite frankly, he was the brains behind a lot of the issues and the tactics we used in the campaign for me to get elected. In fact, he and the Republican Committee, our leadership, felt that my race, the 77<sup>th</sup>, would determine whether the House would retain control, as Republicans. Because at that time, it was 102 Republicans to 101, so they had a majority by one person, one seat. And for whatever reason, they felt that my seat was going to be the one to determine whether they were going to come back as the majority. So, they put a lot of resources in and Sam Hayes pretty much managed my campaign personally, and we were able to win both, I guess, the General Election, against, you know, we were the underdog, and

likewise the Primary. Of course, this being the Primary I didn't know who it was; I did everything on my own, but I was able to pull off a very big upset in the Primary.

**HM:** Did you mentor anyone while you were here?

**LH:** You know, so, likewise, Sam became a mentor when I came here to the House. He was the Whip in the Republican House Party and he helped me with so many issues; helped me really develop a way to address issues and talk to people and write letters. You know, he always said, "You have to be a word master, a crafter, a wordsmith." He'd say, "You say things a certain way." So, I really took a lot of notes about Sam Hayes and how he really mentored me to become a good legislator and, of course, being able to get re-elected. And then, you know, Representative Kerry Benninghoff [State Representative, Centre County, 1997-present] was running in the open seat in the 171<sup>st</sup> many years later, just about ten years ago, I think it was. So, I was looking forward to having another person down in Harrisburg who I could – you know, he's about four years younger than I, maybe five – someone my age, but also someone who I could mentor, likewise, like Representative Hayes. So, you know, I've helped Kerry along with some advice on some issues and we've worked very, very well together.

**HM:** Okay. What was your relationship like with the media?

**LH:** Well, the media, quite frankly, when I first ran for office in 1982, the *Centre Daily Times* was the major paper of State College and they had a political reporter who was

someone who I just did not have any respect for, nor did other elected officials, because he was the kind of reporter who accentuated the sensationalism and he's ask you a question, try to trip you up and then write a story to try to embarrass you. So, I was forewarned about this man almost from the outset and, of course, having dealt with him I found out to be absolutely true, which is too bad; it's a discredit to journalism to have those kinds of people in that profession, I think. So, over the years, it depends on the type of journalist, you know. If they treat me fairly then I'm more accustomed to talking with them and answering their phone calls and having an interview. But, if they're not going to be fair with me, then I'm more reluctant to really participate. But, regardless, the media is something that they need us and we need them as much as they need us. They need us to have comments for their stories, but likewise, we need them to print our press releases and also convey our message to our constituents of our positions on issues on how legislation we're passing is going to help enhance the quality of life for them. So, this is a two-way street for both the – this is funny – for both the radio, the television and, of course, the newsprint.

**HM:** What role do you think lobbyists play in the Legislature?

**LH:** Well, you know, you come to Harrisburg and you think, "Lobbyists. Oh, they're bad people," you know? I had a couple lobbyists come and see me the first time to talk about an issue and I was really reluctant to even speak to them. And it was only after – it didn't take long until you realize that these lobbyists are hired by groups in your District, okay, whether they are realtors or insurance agents or the farming community, the farm

bureau, and so forth. And, they want you to talk to their lobbyists because they can't keep a handle on all the legislation down here, so they hire someone to follow it and then report back to them. So, I look at lobbyists as an information source. You know, they're an information source of, "Okay, what's your position on the issue? How's this affect your clients, but these are my constituents? And, how's this affect, you know, the whole State of Pennsylvania?" And they'll give you their position. Sometimes they'll give you the answer and, "Well, who has the other position?" and they'll tell you the other position. But, the bottom line is, I think, in order to evaluate and to engage an issue and to make an intelligent choice on a yes or no vote, you have to have good information and a lobbyist provides information. There are many other information tools which I use, but they're one source of information; not the only source, but one source of information.

**HM:** You've served on numerous Committees in the House. Did you have a favorite?

**LH:** Well, I chaired the Local Government Committee and I think that's probably my favorite Committee. I served on the Education Committee - the Education Committee, though, is a close second because of my relationship with the Department of Education before running for office, because of my three University degrees. But, I was the only Freshman Republican appointed to the Appropriations Committee and Sub-Committee on Higher Education when I first served in 1983 and I've been there ever since. I think I'm now the second ranking member behind the Chairman himself. But, the Education Committee is, you know, vast in scope, you know, almost a large part of our budget is appropriated toward education, whether it's higher ed[ucation], or if it's Community

Colleges, Penn State University, which I represent. But being on the Education Committee assures that Penn State University and our local schools in my District have a voice for the very onset of legislation being introduced when it's referred to Committee. So, that's very, very important. In fact, that's one of the first issues I addressed, was the – even though I won an election, the political leaders, Republicans, were wrong, in that they lost other seats they didn't expect, so we actually did lose the majority. So, Democrats came into power, and K. Leroy Irvis [State Representative, Allegheny County, 1959-1988; Speaker, 1977-1978 and 1983-1988] became the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and they made House Bill Number 2 their second legislative priority for the year was to make Lincoln University a land-grant University. Well, that's an affront to Penn State University. Penn State University is the singular land-grant University in Pennsylvania. You know, where do they get the status? So, I had to fight that issue in Committee and, you know, it did so, it articulated the debate and so forth, and I think I was the only one to vote 'no' for the bill to come out of the Committee. But, I used some other stratagems then to prevent that bill from ever coming onto the floor of the House of Representatives for a vote. The Local Government Committee, which I chair – I was really surprised when it came time for me to become a chairman; I was surprised that the Local Government Committee was passed up and it became available to me. But, upon becoming chairman of the Local Government Committee, I was really surprised – in fact, I told the Executive Director, I says, "Well this Committee, you know, never really does much," you know, and he corrected me very quickly and I have finally since learned that these Local Committees rank second or third every session in the number of bills that are signed into law. So, when we talk about being a lawmaker, that's

why I like the Local Government Committee because I can have a first-hand impression on laws going into the Commonwealth Statutes that affect Pennsylvanians, you know, forever. So, I'm very proud of that too.

**HM:** Just talking a little bit about your Local Government Committee. What were some of the most difficult issues that you encountered?

**LH:** Well, I think when I became chairman of the Committee I guess I wanted to focus on three issues and we held these hearings on the issues of regionalism, intergovernmental cooperation regionalism and consolidations and mergers. So, we had hearings across the State and I think, probably, for the next three sessions we worked on legislation that addressed all those issues. And I think one of the things that I try to do and have been successful for it, is to have more intergovernmental agreements with municipalities across the State. You know, too many local elected officials are parochial. You know, what's good for Philipsburg Borough, you know, is just good for – but, you got to look outside your boundaries and look at where you live as a region; the Philipsburg *area*; the Port Matilda *area*; the State College *area*. State College has a very, very active and very effective Councils of Governments. I'm working and have been working for this past year with the municipalities of Port Matilda, encouraging them to form a Councils of Governments. Philipsburg belongs to a Council of Governments, but it's relatively weak; they need [to be] more active. Another thing is mergers and consolidations. I passed a bill to make a merger or consolidation much easier between municipalities and, it doesn't happen often, but South Philipsburg Borough Council

approached me about getting the grant money for a new Borough building, which was very expensive. And I said to them, I says, “Look, you only have 240 people. You know, why don’t you think about merging with Philipsburg Borough? You’re right beside each other and there’s no difference between the two of you except that you have two duplicative governments. You know, you’d have to hire a lawyer, you’d have to hire an engineer, you’d have to have a Sewage Enforcement Officer. You’re just duplicating services. Why don’t you think about merging?” So, they went back and thought about it and they came back and they said, “Well, we’d rather merge with Rush Township because we were actually carved out of Rush Township at one time.” So, that merger question was on the ballot last year and South Philipsburg Borough is now in the process of merging with Rush Township. So, while I passed that law to make merges more easy across Pennsylvania, I never expected it would actually happen in my own District first.

**HM:** As you commented, you’ve always been a member of the Education Committee and why was the Committee important to you, first of all; and have issues in Education changed over time?

**LH:** Well, I think education, you know, I guess, you know, like I said in the – being one [who] has three University degrees, plus I previously worked for the Department of Education, so I had some first-hand knowledge of how the administrative structure of that Department worked, so I guess it was a like fit for me to be on that Committee. But, I think also because if you’re to be a State Representative for the largest University of Pennsylvania – the Pennsylvania State University – I think it’s important to have a seat in

that Committee also. I think Penn State University officials appreciate my presence there, all this time. So, I think, you know, personally its kind-of like a transition from my administrative career to my legislative career, and yet, professionally, it has helped me advance the interests of Penn State University, as well as our local schools in the District that I represent. The issues that have changed over the years, I think the issues, you know, center around funding, which is more of an appropriation issue; that we've seen more advancement of different kinds of schools, away from the traditional public school. What I mean by that, the advancement of Charter schools and Cyber schools and Home schooling; the people who want to do a different approach to schooling that is nontraditional to the public school, and I guess, even though that may not be for me as a parent, I still have supported all of those efforts because as long as there is accountability for good education [*inaudible*], because people should be able to try different things and learn different ways and, you know, sometimes the public schools aren't for everybody. In fact, a lot of people go the private schools and the Catholic schools.

**HM:** You've been the Chairman of the Legislative Data Processing Committee for about ten years? Could you describe the changes in technology that you've witnessed?

**LH:** Actually, I've been a part of that Committee for the past twenty-four years.

**HM:** Oh, I'm sorry.

**LH:** And I've been chairman for the last ten years. That's when Sam Hayes appointed me to the Legislative Data Processing Committee which oversees the computer operations of the State Capitol. I think because when I came to the Legislature in 1983, I was probably the only one who had just come out of college with some kind of experience in communications or computers at that time. I mean, computers were in their infancy then. In fact, I remember being in Graduate School and we had a computer class, there was one computer; everybody went and looked at it and it was nothing much more than, really, a word processor. And, of course, once we came to the Legislature, you know, we were starting to get rid of the typewriters and started the word processing and so forth, so the secretaries had to learn a new system. So, I think, you know, the technology has changed greatly, especially from going from a Mainframe to the new technology, or to the airwaves and the different kinds of wireless or wiring and that kind of thing.

**HM:** Could you imagine working today without the use of a laptop on the House floor?

**LH:** Well, yeah, I could probably still do that. But, I can remember, you know, going on the House floor when they had the leather binders about that high; leather binders full of the bills that you'd look at and so forth. And you'd go into Caucus, you'd have your printed Calendar, and they'd go over the Caucus bill by bill what you're going to vote on and even then, there really wasn't enough information. But now, with the advancement of the need for more information, we have these things called the "Chairman's Report" which is where he puts a bill summary with your packet so that you can actually read the

bills summary instead of the bill itself, which gives you an encapsulated overview of what the current law is, how this bill would change current law, what groups are for it, what are against it, the pros and cons, which I think are very, very helpful. So, of course, before having laptops, before the computerization on the House floor, during the budget it was just a sea of paper because all of the amendments would come across your desk and they would just pile it, a stack-pile high. When you would try to find one, when you would try to bring up a vote and try to find one, it was almost impossible. So, I think the laptop, or the computer on the House floor, certainly has made the legislative process much more expedient, and of course, you have a cleaner desk as a result, also. So, I think it's much more efficient and certainly brings us into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

**HM:** You were selected to Co-Chair the House History Caucus and also be a part of the Capital Centennial Commission. Your educational background is in History. Could you tell us about the duties of this Caucus and the Committee?

**LH:** Well, the House History Caucus is sort-of one of those fun things. It's not really a formalized Caucus with anything like Statute, but Representative Pistella [Frank Pistella; State Representative, Allegheny County, 1979-2006], evidently, was talking to Representative DeWeese [H. William DeWeese; State Representative, Fayette, Greene and Washington Counties, 1976-present; Speaker, 1993-1994], who is the Democrat Leader, and he at one time formed the House History Caucus and I kind-of remember that many years ago. And he, of course, ascended into Leadership [and] he didn't have the time to do it, so he asked Frank Pistella if he would take that over and get some

Republican help. And they started talking names and they thought, of course, they knew that I was a history buff in Civil War history and stuff so, I was asked to be the Co-Chairman with Frank Pistella for this House History Caucus. And basically, all we do is try to keep the members apprised of history that has transpired across Pennsylvania. There's always things going on in Gettysburg, nearby, for example. But, we just came off the 140<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the great battle of Gettysburg a couple of years ago. But, one of the things I'm doing the last four years, have been doing the last four years, is the Bicentennial of the Lewis and Clark expedition. So, the years 2003-2006 has been 200 years since Lewis and Clark and their soldiers formed the Corps of Discovery, you know, traveled through the vast Indian lands of the Louisiana Purchase and on into the Pacific Ocean. So, that is still an ongoing project for me, which will be concluded sometime this fall. So, I brought a reenactor, who I met out in Fort Mandan, North Dakota with this expedition, he was a reenactor. I asked him to please come to Harrisburg to give a presentation [and] he did. So, this is also the Sesquicentennial celebration – maybe it's the sesqui-bicentennial celebration – of the French-Indian war, 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. So, Frank – Representative Pistella – asked us if we had some ideas to get our members more in tune with the French-Indian War. So, that's more than just Civil War, but it's the Lewis – anything that we can think of about American history, we want to have Members – and you'd be surprised how many of our Members are interested in that kind of thing, and participate in our programs.

**HM:** You're involved in Civil War reenactment. Could you tell us a little more about that?

**LH:** Well, actually it's kind of interesting how I became involved with that. I was in my District office in State College and a person who worked for the Senate Region Code Enforcement Office came to talk to me about the instruction of legislation for the State-wide building code – which is now a law but then was in the incipient stages about ten years ago, or eleven years ago – and so, I started talking about that issue and he told me some of his thoughts about inspecting and all that kind of thing, so in the meantime he brings out this book, this big thick blue book, which is the Regimental history of the 140<sup>th</sup> Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry, and he says, "I understand you enjoy Civil War," because previously I had started to read a lot more and had some audio tapes on the Civil War and the battle of Gettysburg and I started to tell people this, and eventually, I guess, he heard about it. His father was one of the Township Supervisors, maybe that's how. So, he came and he says, "We're forming a Civil War reenactment group for the 140<sup>th</sup>," and I says, "Well, who are they?" So, we talked about it and all that kind of thing, so he says, "We're going to have a meeting next week. Would you like to come?" Well, I don't have time; I'm so busy with my schedule. Well, the more we talked, the more we talked, the more interested I became and I said, "When's your meeting again? I tell you what; I'll come to your meeting." So, I went to the meeting and I said after that meeting, I says, "Sign me up. I'm going to join." So, I went out and got my equipment in the next two or three weeks, got all my equipment, my musket, my uniform, and I was ready for the Bicentennial of Bellefonte Borough celebration that summer. And literally – this is the honest to God truth – the first day with a wool uniform on participating in that reenactment, it was 100 degrees. I mean it was 100 degrees; it wasn't 99, it was actually

100 degrees that day. I thought, “If I can get through this day with that wool uniform on, I can get through any day.”

**HM:** Oh my goodness. You’ve had numerous bills enacted as well. What major legislation that you sponsored would you consider to be your favorite and why?

**LH:** I would say it’s probably the, it would be House Bill 550 of 2001. We had a very big issue in our County, and in other Counties, with the imposition of an Occupational Assessment Tax, which is a very, very unfair and indiscriminate tax which taxes you job title and bears no reflection to your ability to pay it as your title. For example, the Secretary of Education might pay the same as a secretary who is just starting the work force. Or, a Professor at Penn State, for example, might have been there twenty-five years, thirty years, has a higher income and so forth, and the Professor who is just starting, they pay the same bill. The irony is about this tax, is that it was imposed by – it’s an optional tax, and as I started researching I found there’s about 110 school districts that impose this tax and they all seem to be in and around the Susquehanna Valley. But where I live in Philipsburg-Osceola, our school district never imposed this tax, so I never paid this personally, but the other school districts in Centre County – Bellefonte, Penn’s Valley, State College and Bald Eagle Area – all paid that tax and everybody complained about it. It was just a horrid, horrid inexorably, very unfair tax to begin with. So, after a number of hearings and listening to a lot of people talking about this tax, I started to think to myself, you know – because I had gone through a local tax reform issue with Governor Casey back in the [19]80’s, so a lot of the same concepts I learned back then I started to

rethink, think those through – so, I called my Executive Director of the Local Government Committee, Don Grell, who had worked on the local tax reform issues with Governor Casey [Robert P. Casey; Pennsylvania Governor, 1987-1995] for the Republican Caucus back then, and I started talking to him about my ideas and how to repeal this tax. Now, the key is to repeal it, you have to also replace the lost revenue and how do you do that? And how do you make sure? So, basically, I just thought of three concepts; one is a referendum – let the people decide. If they want to keep them, keep it; if they want to repeal it, repeal it. Number two, if they want taxes repealed, have the revenues replaced with an earned income tax. And the third is taxpayer protections, meaning that once that dreaded occupational assessment tax is repealed it can never, ever be reinstated ever again. Number two is that the earned income tax will be capped, okay, at that rate, so the School Board or the elected officials couldn't come back and raise that so that it would actually become an increased tax. And, of course, third is the voter referendum where the people themselves who get to vote on this local issue. So, I'm very pleased to say that the State College School District grasped a hold on this legislation and lobbied for it here in Harrisburg and they were the first to actually take steps after it was enacted into law in 2001 as initiative and, I think, the first four school districts to pass it and put in on the ballot were in Centre County. And since then, of those 110 school districts I think there's well over sixty, maybe almost seventy school districts who have taken steps then to repeal that tax and have used the concepts of my legislation.

**HM:** Would you like to comment on any of your other legislation?

**LH:** Well, I think in tandem with that, you know, I was very proud that I just got done Chairing the Conference Committee on Special Session House Bill 39 on property tax reduction and local tax reform. And , here again, a lot of the same concepts that I've been advocating for years about getting the people involved were put in that Conference Report. Specifically, that if a school district would chose to reduce their property tax dollar for dollar with the imposition of an earned income tax or a personal tax income tax, that the local people would be involved. First, they created a Local Tax Study Commission of, I think, five, seven or nine persons. And that Local Tax Study Commission then would make recommendations to the School Board on whether it's going to be the EIT [Earned Income Tax] or PIT [Personal Income Tax] to replace the property tax and how much. It will be on referendum. So, those are some of the concepts I was able to get, you know, from this previous bill in this Special Session House Bill 39. I think if those two are the highlights but I think if there's a third it was that the Legislature in 1991 with Governor Casey's advocacy, passed a budget that included – well, of course we know that it was the largest tax increase in Pennsylvania history – but, it included a sales tax on computer services, and once that was imposed, a company in my area, my District, AccuWeather, which does weather forecasting all across the world, came to me and told me that they would be charged six percent for every communication they did over a facsimile machine. And, so that's some of the consequences that you never think of when you pass legislation like that. It was probably never intended to be that way. So, I went to the chairmen of the Finance Committee and Appropriations Committee and told them about this dilemma, suggested legislation that would repeal that sales tax of computer services and a session went by and a session was

still out there and, low-and-behold, I kind-of got a break; Maryland, the state of Maryland, was advertising in its newspapers for businesses to come to Maryland because they did not have a sales tax on computer services. And it was then that the Governor and here in the Legislature reacted quickly to repeal that tax.

**HM:** Very interesting.

**LH:** So, that repeal all started with AccuWeather in my 77<sup>th</sup> Legislative District.

**HM:** Thank you. Can you explain your involvement to get the particular species of Firefly – I can't even pronounce it – "Poturis –

**LH:** – Pansylvania [De Geer]" [Act 130-1987-1988]

**HM:** Thank you.

**LH:** Actually, like I said, I represent some of the smartest people in my District, but that came from a Professor of Entomology at Penn State University, and he came to me and he said, "You know, I was looking through this brochure of Pennsylvania symbols," you know you have the State Dog and the State Tree and the State Fish and the State Flower and all that kind of thing, and I always knew the State Insect was the firefly. And he says, "But in parentheses they have a genus that encompasses all fireflies." He says,

“There is a firefly genus-species that is particular to Pennsylvania.” So, I said, “You’re kidding me? You want me to introduce a bill to change this law?” Because I could see all the ridiculing that would go on, but, he’s my constituent and he’s a Professor at Penn State; he’s a smart guy – what are you going to say? So, at any rate, I said, “Dr. Cameron,” I said, “I’ll tell you what. I’ll introduce the bill, but I’m not going to lobby for it; you’re going to have to lobby for this bill to pass, because,” I says, “there’s other issues in Harrisburg that are much more important than this.” And so, he got his Pennsylvania State Society of Entomology to actually be the advocates to lobby for passage of this legislation, and now it’s now law. So, now we actually have the word “Pennsylvania” as part of that Latin derivative of that bill.

**HM:** I think those are always one of the most interesting ways that those State symbols actually become...

**LH:** Actually, that always caused me a dilemma because in a campaign, an opponent would say, “Well, all he ever did was pass legislation that made the firefly the State Insect,” which isn’t true.

**HM:** No.

**LH:** You know, of course, I would counteract that and say, “Well, actually, it was passed in 1974 when I was still in high school.”

**HM:** Right.

**LH:** “All I did was amended it to add the word ‘Pennsylvania’”

**HM:** Right.

**LH:** So, that would always cause me, sort-of, a little angst and I kind-of always knew it would, but how could I say ‘no’ to a constituent who felt this was so important –

**HM:** Right.

**LH:** – for insect science, you know, which was his specialty at one of the top Universities in the world.

**HM:** And Pennsylvania.

**LH:** Exactly. Pennsylvania State University.

**HM:** Yeah. Since you’ll be retiring at the end of this session, is there any legislation that you would like to see completed before you leave? I know that wasn’t on my list of questions.

**LH:** No, that wasn't on your list. I think, getting back to property tax reform, you know, that bill I just said about House Bill Special Session 39, if this bill is allowed to work and people at the local level get accustomed to shifting their tax burden away from bad taxes, like the occupational assessment tax, or the property tax, which places the excessive burden of financing our local schools, our boroughs, our townships and our counties, if people can accept this adjustment in this House Bill 39 Conference Committee Report—which is now law—that the local people will be able to relieve their tax burden of paying almost entirely for the property tax to alleviating that burden by reducing the property tax almost dollar for dollar within position of earned income tax or personal tax, one that is based on the person's ability to pay, then those same concepts can be applied to reduce the burden of property tax that funds our municipalities and our townships and our counties. So, I think these are – I often times look at lawmaking as a progressive action; it's a progressive exercise. And sometimes you need to, like the occupational assessment tax repeal which is a small, small, small bite of whole the bigger picture. And likewise, the Special Session 39, property tax reduction legislation, is just another step. There are many more other steps to take, but these are building blocks that you can make government work better for the people and you're going to have a much fairer way to finance your local governments and your school districts as a result if this is going to work.

**HM:** You served during Republican Leadership and Democratic Leadership in the House. Can you explain the difficulties you've had serving constituents under each of these Leaderships?

**LH:** Well, I think, you know, in terms of being a lawmaker, I would say that even in the first fourteen years when I had a Democrat-controlled House, I was still successful in getting bills passed in the General Assembly, and if the Committee Chairman wouldn't move my bill I would find a vehicle, another sort-of like, tricks of the trade, find another bill that I could take my legislation and amend it into that bill and then eventually get it into the Senate. The Senate was Republican, so I could talk to Senator Corman and Senator Jubelirer [Robert Jubelirer; State Senator, 1975-2006; President Pro Tempore, 1984-1992, 1994-2006] who would help me on that end, so, I was very successful. I think partially, one of the disappointments I have right now is this Administration. The Rendell [Edward G. Rendell; Pennsylvania Governor, 2003-2011] Administration is very, very slow in processing grant applications for the Community Revitalization Program, which many of our communities or our different types of organizations back home, recreational parks, rely heavily on for grants and, you know, they're backlogged well over a year. So, when I get any grant money in the budget, tell my Leadership to get money in the budget for, you know, last year, they are just now starting to get that funding; it's a funding cycle; it's been a whole year. Now we're in the next year's budget already. So, I think that's probably one of the – that is something that has never happened either under the Republican or Democrat Governorships previously, is the tardiness of getting grant applications converted into actual checks and checks into people's hands so that they can advance the quality of their life and complete their community projects.

**HM:** When you recount your experiences in the House, do you have a favorite story?

**LH:** I think, probably, you know, I think one of the things I remember quite distinctly is that Speaker Ryan [Matthew J. Ryan; State Representative, Delaware County, 1963-2003; Speaker, 1981-1982 and 1995-2003] started the Millennium Speaker –

**HM:** Lecture Series.

**LH:** Yeah, the Speaker's Millennium Lecture Series. And, somehow he got an idea – I don't know who gave him this idea to do this; I forget. He told me one time, but I forget where he got the idea – But, basically, he would bring in a lecturer and he'd open up the Hall of the House – the floor of the House of Representatives – to the public at night where they could come and hear a lecture, actually sit in the member's chairs, while the lecturer gave his lecture from the dais, which has been an outstanding event each and every year. Well, Representative DeWeese had a hand in this, but, Representative DeWeese suggested that they get Dr. James McPherson, who is a Princeton University Professor, but he's also one of the top Civil War historians in the county, in the world. And, he agreed that he would be the very, very first Millennium Speaker and we suggested and then arranged for Civil War re-enactors to actually escort him onto the House floor. So, being a State Representative, they all knew that, so I was able to don my Civil War uniform and carry my musket and myself and three other local, not Members of the House of Representatives, but local re-enactors here in the Harrisburg area joined me, three or four of us joined and then escorted him to the dais and actually,

then positioned ourselves in chairs right in front of the Speaker's podium where he gave his lecture that evening. So, I have a picture of that that's probably one of my most favorite times; a combination of my passion for politics and the legislature and history, Civil War history, all together.

**HM:** What aspect of being a State Representative did you like the most?

**LH:** I think the people. I think to be an effective State Legislator, a State elected official, you have to have the ability to work well with people. I think this job is much more about listening to people's concerns. People want to be heard; they want to have their concerns aired; they want someone to listen. And, once you listen and you listen well, then you can take appropriate action. But, this is, you know, this is not a position where you're here to represent yourself, but you're here to represent the people back home. And, you know, whether you're campaigning door-to-door, or going to your local carnivals or riding in the parades in the various festival back home, or your business after hour receptions and so forth, I think probably the thing that I enjoyed the most was just the interaction with the people and, you know, not necessarily talking issues, it could be all about issues. But, you know you make some tremendous friends, some great friends; some friends that will last a lifetime and that's how I look at my constituencies, as my friends.

**HM:** Was there an aspect you liked the least?

**LH:** I think, probably, sometimes the partisan politics that's played here in Harrisburg between the two Parties – when I got down here in Harrisburg first being elected back in the early 1980's, someone said that our Legislature – a lobbyist for another state – said that this is one of the most partisan Legislatures in the whole country. And I found that quickly to be true, but I don't think it's as bad today as it was in the early 1980's. I don't know why that is, maybe it's the different type of Leadership style, maybe it's because the members are a little more independent from their Party Leadership bosses and all that kind of thing. But, I think, you know, the rancor is there for the partisan politics. You know, I'd rather get something accomplished than digging my feet in and saying, "No, they did this and I'm mad at him." That's just petty stuff. So, I think that's the part that I don't like. The other is in the campaign cycle is how much the phenomenal amount of money it takes to run a campaign. I mean, when I first got elected in 1982, we, oh I know I spent, maybe, two, three, four thousand dollars in the Primary and then in the General Election less than 30,000 dollars possibly. Well, you can't even think about those numbers now, because cable TV is a medium that every challenger can beat the expense of and that's a \$50,000 expense right there. So, I think, you know, just in the last election, you know, I spent something like \$121,000 or \$119,000. Any campaign now is well over \$100,000; it has to be. So, in order to meet that kind of monetary demand, you have to constantly have fundraisers. You know, you can't just do it in the election cycle, you have to have it in the off-year too, and I have been, because you cannot go into – because I already raise probably about half of what I spend each year, you know? So, I think that's one of the things I find disappointing is the amount of money it takes to run a campaign. You know, I think the news media has been disappointing in the last six or

seven years. I just see them focusing on the sensationalism and making a mockery of society, of people, including the Legislature, and tearing it down rather than having the respect that they should have for people. It's hard to get people to run for office today, and, you know, they need not be discouraged because when they put their name out there and say, "I want to run for office," that the mediums, all they want to talk about is the bad things you ever did in life, or your bad breaks and so forth. And, I find that very, very, unfair.

**HM:** What would you say was the hardest issue you encountered as a Representative?

**LH:** I think probably, the hardest issue was this local tax reform. That's why I'm so proud, I said many times. But the Special Session House Bill 39 is really the biggest bite for property tax reduction, local tax reform that we've had and the Legislature had been trying to grasp and tackle this issue for over 30 years. So, I'm very, very proud that; one, I got the occupational assessment tax repealed, which was my bill; and then being part of this Committee, Chairing the Committee, that actually has made a major breakthrough in one of the most difficult issues – if not the most difficult issue – to face the General Assembly in the past three decades. Almost every candidate that has run for office for the past since I've been in office has said, "Elect me. I'll reduce your property taxes; I'll find a way." Well, we finally found a way this year, you know.

**HM:** How do you want your tenure as State Representative to be remembered?

**LH:** Well, I've always looked at myself to be a public servant. I just want to be remembered as a public servant.

**HM:** Upon retirement, what are your plans?

**LH:** Well, that's something I'm not at liberty to disclose, but, you know, certainly I'm talking to some various people. But, I think that I love the Legislature, I love the House of Representatives. I decided not to run for reasons I expressed earlier; I just do not want to be a candidate for a House member again this year. You know, I turn fifty in October, so I'm young enough now to use my three college degrees, including my Master's degree, my experience with State government, with PennDot and the Education Department of Personnel Administration and twenty-four years of the Legislature, including being the chairman of a major Committee and being on the Education Committee, to do something else. And I thought to myself, I said, "Even if you ran this year and you won, you'll be here two years later asking yourself the same questions, you know, and all you are is two years older." So, I'm taking kind-of a chance, I guess, in the fact that for me personally, but, I'd like to do something, I'd like to stay involved in the government arena, you know, it's what I've wanted to do since I was in the ninth grade, you know? So, I've continued to use what I've learned to advance the interest of State government, and advance the interest of people in some kind of government capacity, you know, in the future. You know, you always see with a clear focus of, you know, the government is how we can best enhance the quality of lives of people.

**HM:** Okay, my last question. Do you have any advice for new members?

**LH:** Well, I think the advice is to listen to your Leadership when you get elected to the House of Representatives. There are a lot of resources here in Harrisburg that the resources that are available to freshman now weren't available to me when I was a freshman; of how the legislative process works, the different services that are available and so forth. And also, keep in mind—I think that it's important to regularly attend Caucus. We have a *Republican Rumble*, which is the newspaper clippings, you know, read that regularly every day so you're always on top of the issues that are transpiring not just in your area, but across the State, because you still have to vote on those issues that affect the other parts of the State also. And, you know, also back in your District: be active, be visible, be kind to people and be modest. Always conduct yourself in your District with an air of humility, because you are the public servant.

**HM:** Thank you very much. This concludes our interview today.

**LH:** Thank you.