

ASHRAE Leadership Recall (formerly Leadership Recalled)  
Transcription

Interview of: Neil Patterson

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Interviewed by: Pat Ivesdal

Pat Ivesdal

Good afternoon. We're here in Atlanta Georgia today, the headquarters of ASHRAE for the 1996 winter meeting. And we're privileged to have one of our past presidential members with us today for an interview, Mr. Neil Patterson. Good afternoon.

Neil Patterson

Good afternoon Pat.

P.I.

Good to have you here.

N.P.

Nice to be here.

P.I.

Now, tell us about your pres- well, I guess we won't jump right into your presidential year with ASHRAE. We'll start back with when you were born and then lead into it.

N.P.

That taxes my memory. 1929, during the depression out in a little town in South Dakota called Highmore, which nobody's ever heard of I'm sure. I think when I was born I raised the population of the city by one percent or something like that but lived there for about six years I guess. Went to school on a train. My dad was a railroad man for about 50 years. So I rode the baggage car to school. Learned to sort mail at the age of six, came home, my dad would take me off the train. We moved then from Highmore into the big city of Brookings, South Dakota because I think they had, one, a better educational system. My dad was very, very heavy into education for the kids. There were three of us, three sons. Two of us were engineers ultimately. The other one was in the electrical end of the business. But anyway, dad moved to Brookings when I was in the second grade and we then progressed up through the high school, participated in everything I think, sports. We had state championship basketball teams, everything else, you know. And went on to college because the college was located in Brookings, South Dakota. South Dakota State University at the time. So that takes me up, I graduated high school in 1947. And then graduated from South Dakota State University in 1951 in mechanical engineering. And from there then I, one day after graduation I was in the Air Force as a commissioned officer.

P.I.

Did you go through ROTC program?

N.P.

Yes went through the ROTC program. And ended up the year later in Korea for about a year as an officer over there, ground equipment detachment commander over in Kunsan, Korea. Beautiful Kunsan by the sea as we called it. But interesting experience that I wouldn't have given up for the world. See a little bit of the world there. Came back from there and went to work immediately at Rider Development Center. I just changed uniforms and became a power plant engineer on aircraft turbines for about a year, right turbines. Which is very enlightening in terms of learning instrumentation and things like that, very delicate instrumentation which is heavy into the engineering area, testing area. But it was there that I met my wife in Dayton, Ohio. She was a secretary to the-

P.I.

That's Liz, right?

Yeah. Elizabeth but Liz, she likes to be called. But she was secretary to one of the vice presidents of National Cash Register. And kind of the reason I met her was by accident. She had a pass to the big park over in Dayton which has the biggest swimming pool in the city and all the golf courses, the tennis courses. I wanted in there. So it was a rather mercenary thing but I met her and we got to running around together quite a bit. She took me home and said to her mother, look what followed me home, can I keep him. You know, and so we got married 41 years ago.

P.I.

41 years.

N.P.

I've been married for 41 years.

P.I.

That's a nice time together you've had.

N.P.

Oh, yeah we've had a lovely time. And we have two young sons. I say young. They're much younger than I am. Our oldest boy is about 40 now. But he's in the business. He's in the air conditioning business. And he's in marketing and in Cincinnati, Ohio.

P.I.

He followed in dad's footsteps in the HVAC.

N.P.

Well, yes he did and in fact he's very active an ASHRAE I might add.

P.I.

Well good.

N.P.

He's going to be a regional vice chairman next year.

P.I.

It will be a pleasure to work with him.

N.P.

Cincinnati, Region Five. And my other son is also a graduate engineer. Mechanical. He's in research up in Detroit which is about four hours north of Cincinnati. And incidentally we moved from Brookings then

when I retired after 41 years with Trane Company in Lacrosse and their headquarters operation. We moved to Cincinnati to be by our kids.

P.I.

And that was just recently, that move.

N.P.

Just recently. Yeah we're just settled in now. But during the time that I worked for the Trane Company I had a lot of interesting experiences there mostly in marketing.

P.I.

What was your position with Trane? Did you have various positions?

N.P.

Well I had a lot of positions from product management up through, I was their corporate applications engineering manager for about ten years which is a very broad band experience. I was their director of integrated systems. I was their director of building energy conservation systems. I was, the last position I held was as a director of market development and new product planning for the corporation. Just before I retired I held that position I think for about five years which extremely interesting in terms of the long range planning of the company. When I came with them, they were doing 40 million dollars. When I left they were doing four billion.

P.I.

You saw a lot of growth. Well what would you consider the milestones while you were with Trane?

N.P.

Well. Probably, it's hard to summarize in one thing. It's probably several things. I did a lot of the work that resulted in what we called capsulized ratings on systems. I used to be able to have to plot all the curves of evaporators and condensers and compressors and it took forever to select a piece of equipment. And so we did all that and then put it into capsulized ratings so that you could select a piece of equipment in 30 seconds which greatly aided to the sale of the equipment and we ended up doubling and doubling and doubling the volume of sales because of it, because it was easy to use. I did a lot of work in the field of energy analysis. Was one of the original inventors of the Trace Program an energy analysis program for buildings.

P.I.

The Trace Program, can you explain that for me?

N.P.

Well it allows you to do it by zone by our analysis on a building over a period of one year to determine how much energy it will use and where that energy will be used and within the building between the various segments of equipment that use energy. So it has a load phase. It calculates the loads on the buildings. It simulates the systems and how they operate and react to the loads. It simulates the full and part load performance of the equipment, it uses a weather tape for weather year that that building sees and in the end it tells you how much energy that building uses before you ever build it. So that's quite an impressive thing. It does about four million calculations in about six minutes.

P.I.

It sounds like that made a big impact on the industry then.

N.P.

So I was one of the inventors of that. And then I also was responsible in the company for our first integrated system work where which was micro base electronics on control, building automation. Knitting the system together into an integrated system which is the thing today that's going on very strongly in the industry. I was also one of the people in the company that got us involved and was actually involved in the early start up of the BACNET Program which is resulted in a standard now, a standard communication protocol, a standard, 135 B. Which is I think destined to become an international standard for allowing various manufacturers automation equipment to communicate with each other.

P.I.

It fits right in with there with the world wide web and all of this new computer technology.

N.P.

Yeah, very much so. Yup, information age.

P.I.

How did you get into ASHRAE?

N.P.

By accident. Actually the reason I joined ASHRAE was kind of in a defensive mode.

P.I.

What year was that?

N.P.

1970, I believe it was. Right in that area. I joined ASHRAE through energy analysis work, technical committee 4.7, which is the one on energy calculations on how you calculate energy use in buildings. And at that time they were not willing to accept the type of weather reduction that we were using within our computer programs. And so I joined ASHRAE and got involved in that committee to try to get those people to understand that any weather you use is an estimation because no two weather years are alike. And any way you condense that weather, as long as it represents a year of weather it's satisfactory, well. In that light I got to know some very, very talented people. The energy gurus of the world at that time. The Ross Meriwethers of the world and Gene Stamper at New Jersey Institute Technology. Very influential in my career and ASHRAE. And through those folks and the chairman at that time of the 90-75 standard building energy conservation existing in new building construction, fellow named JackTumilty, maybe some people remember Jack. He's still around. But he was the chairman of the first standard 90. And I befriended Jack and we got deeply involved in the writing of the standard 90 program on that standard which was really, I think what really put ASHRAE on the map internationally.

P.I.

Was that study of..?

N.P.

It's the energy conservation in existing buildings. New building construction. Not existing, I'm sorry, new building construction. And that kind of put ASHRAE on the map on an international level because until that time ASHRAE was going along and yes, they were writing standards but the only standards of real note were the standard 15, mechanical code standards, things like that that really were recognized on an international level. And so 90-75 was a breakthrough for ASHRAE and thank god we seized the opportunity because if we hadn't somebody else would have. And it brought ASHRAE to the forefront in

terms of, you know, prestige in the energy field. Well along came the Arab embargo, oil embargo in 1975. We were lucky because we were working on this standard in 1973. And it came to pass, wouldn't you know, in 1975 when the embargo hit. And so the federal government picked it up, made it a national energy standard and in doing so gave us a great deal of support and that since now been propagated into subsequent versions, the 90A-1980. 90.1 is now what the standard is called, dash 1989. I'm sure there will be further versions. I also then, through my relationship with that particular committee chaired the first existing building standard on industrial buildings for energy conservation in existing industrial buildings which is a very big market. Today it's 60 percent of the building market. So we put out that very first standard also for the society. So I cut my teeth in ASHRAE in the standards area and the technical committee area.

P.I.

Did you belong to your local chapter? What chapter would that be?

N.P.

Oh yes I was a charter member.

P.I.

Of which chapter?

N.P.

Of the Lacrosse chapter.

P.I.

And that's in which region?

N.P.

Lacrosse, Wisconsin in Region Six.

P.I.

In region six.

N.P.

We didn't have a chapter and the closest one was in Minneapolis or in Madison, Wisconsin or Milwaukee.

P.I.

Did you get started in one of those and then...

N.P.

We built our own chapter.

P.I.

You built your own chapter and in what year did that...

N.P.

That was in 1971. And I was then president of that chapter in 1972.

P.I.

So you've really been a leader in ASHRAE right from the beginning.

N.P.

Well, I started out pretty high on the rank and then the chapter level I was, you know, the president the second year the chapter existed. And the first year the reason I wasn't was we wanted a consulting engineer to be the president, the first president of our chapter there locally, because we felt that

ASHRAE was a very strong engineering society and we wanted a consulting engineer involved in the formation of the chapter.

P.I.

How many members did that first chapter have?

N.P.

Oh we started out with about 60. I think we have 200 now, something like that.

P.I.

Are you still going to your chapter, well you're not in Lacrosse anymore.

N.P.

No not there, no. Since I've moved now to Cincinnati I've transferred my allegiance to the Cincinnati chapter, which is also a very large chapter, 400 and some people. And it's in Region Five.

P.I.

Do you enjoy going to those meetings there? Are you active there?

N.P.

I haven't had the opportunity to go yet. I've joined the chapter though and I'm going to go. It's just that it's so far compared to Lacrosse. I could drive two miles and be in a chapter meeting and now I have to drive 40. And I'm not that familiar with Cincinnati yet. We just moved there so I'm a little hesitant toward going into the bowels of the city when I don't really know where I'm going to go to a chapter meeting but I'll get there.

P.I.

Well they'll be thrilled to have you as a member.

N.P.

They've been very kind. They've sent me all the books on their chapter and the history of their chapter and they're very, very progressive chapter. I'm happy to be a member of it.

P.I.

So you were always attending the society meetings since you were a charter member?

N.P.

Oh yes since about 1970, '69 something like that. I've talked a lot of ASHRAE chapters before I ever became a member believe it or not.

Because of your affiliation with the HVAC industry?

N.P.

Just with my affiliation with the Trane Company. Yeah. I had spoken to many of the chapters before I ever joined. I don't believe in joining things unless you're going to participate.

P.I.

So it was a very easy move for you to make then to join ASHRAE?

N.P.

Oh yeah. I knew people in the society before joining.

P.I.

Now we're going to get up to the year that you were president. That wasn't too long ago. It was just before the centennial year, but you were very much involved in the centennial planning.

N.P.

In the buildup for it yes.

P.I.

1993-94.

N.P.

Yes that's correct, '93-'94. You've got a good memory.

P.I.

Yes I can remember back several years now.

N.P.

Yeah that was kind of a fun year because we were building up to the centennial and everything was in preparation, as centennial committees were formed you know and solidified and a lot of very good people were involved in this, a lot of very hard work. It was a lot of fun. It wasn't my main thought though, I mean in terms of my presidential year. I had some other priorities beyond the centennial because the centennial year was President Billy Manning's year. And all I could do is to help prepare for it so that it, you know, was on a very good solid foundation when Bill got involved. He got involved early and did just an outstanding job that year, really an outstanding job. I was very proud of him. We had a lot of fun, he and I together, being president elect. You learn a lot.

P.I.

What was your theme for your presidential year?

N.P.

My theme was aimed primarily at young people. It was called "ASHRAE the bridge to professional growth". And I had very strong feelings. It was a real good feeling to me to be able to work with young people and get them involved. I've always been that way. I've mentored a lot of young people in our company. Three or four vice presidents and many, many more. And so I enjoy working with young people and that's where I had probably the most fun in my presidential year. Getting out to the universities, visited several. Working with the young people. Enthusiasm and growing the society in terms of new younger members because we're aging quite rapidly, just as the country is. And if we aren't careful we're going to find ourselves without good leadership in the future and my whole idea was to try to build some of that leadership among the young people coming up today and getting them involved because our age is averaging up here in the society. So it was fun doing that.

P.I.

Did you accomplish any, did any committees or programs start as a result of this theme?

N.P.

New programs. We did a lot of work on, in the standards area and we did quite a bit of work on membership in the membership program. We had for I think one of the first times a formal membership growth program. It was very, very intense and as a result we had phenomenal success in terms of young people getting them involved, the student chapters, whatever, the membership which was very gratifying to me. And as a result of all this work, I think at the end of the year we ended up which is very unusual, with a net gain in overall membership when other societies were actually decreasing. So I was very proud of that. It was very hard work and a lot of the chapters and regions really went out there and did it. And I was very proud. I spent a lot of time kind of peppering them up, going out to our chapters around the country here.

P.I.

It seems to me as I observe the people at the show today there's a lot of young people walking around.

N.P.

They're getting there. And that's very encouraging and you don't know how encouraging that is because we went for quite a while without that. And I didn't want ASHRAE to become a good ole boys club.

P.I.

So you feel like this is maybe one of your significant accomplishments during your year as president?

N.P.

I got a lot of young people into the society, I got a lot of new people into the society.

P.I.

It will take a while before that effect is felt, I suppose.

N.P.

That's right. I even got my own president my company to join the society. And our executive vice presidents and our vice presidents of engineering and all these people, I got into the society. One, you asked me about accomplishments, things like that. One of the things that I'm very proud of is a fact that I got my company to commit to the tune of \$75,000 a year for a series of about eight years to form scholarships, full four year scholarships for engineering students from the interest off of that investment. Something the tune of \$300,000. And that started really a lot of the basic work that started up the foundation that we now have. Damon was very kind in recognizing that fact. That was one of funniest things that really happened to me.

P.I.

Can you tell us some more about that?

N.P.

Well we're down I think we're having an executive committee meeting. We have a lot of fun by the way in executive committee meetings but we were down and I think it was Hilton Head. We met down there because we got good prices. And it wasn't the fact that it was a very nice place but we really got some good bargains down there. But anyway we were down there and Damon Gowan happened to be president at the time and Damon's been very influential in the foundation as you know. And Damon was in the bathroom. He was half dressed, we were over in his particular room with Damon and Carolyn. And he was in the bathroom and I said Damon, I want you to come and answer the phone. He came out and he's, you know, and he picked up the phone and the executive vice president of the Trane Company is on the phone. And he says, Damon he says, I'm going to donate \$75,000 to the Trane Company and I want you to know it's because of you. Damon about fell off, you know, the end of the cliff. And he said can I tell the rest of the guys. It's funny but it really impressed him. That charged his batteries in terms of that foundation really heavily and he's been, as you know, very successful and with a group of very dedicated industry individuals as well. Among those are Tom McLee and the Trane Company too. And Carrier has one of their officers on that trustees group. They're just some very, very good people.

P.I.

And that's an important foundation to get started in.

N.P.

That's to subsidize the operation of a society in a lot of areas, particularly education, but a lot of other programs as well. So that's I think a major accomplishment and one that will be lasting. I think at this meeting we had a contribution of one million dollars from one individual.

P.I.

Yes that was quite startling to the membership to hear about that.

N.P.

I think some drop jaws dropped.

P.I.

Yes.

N.P.

But this is the real thing and the goal is far from over. It's just getting started.

P.I.

Now do you want to tell us, since we brought up the subject about the million dollars, who was it that started that?

N.P.

I'll be happy to start. He's was a presidential member. Presidency. It's Fred Kohloss from Hawaii. Fred Kohloss. Fred is a very dedicated ASHRAE individual, let me tell you. He was very influential in my life, in bringing me up in the ASHRAE circles as were several other presidential members like Lou Flagg, Damon was very influential, Damon Gowan. And he was kind of my, I guess my idol or my mentor. He and Lou. But Bill Collins ,very helpful. Bill was the guy that interviewed me and asked me if I wanted or was interested at all in serving in a higher level ASHRAE.

P.I.

Beyond the technical committees?

N.P.

Beyond being a vice president.

P.I.

Vice president. Is that your first introduction to the...

N.P.

My first job, I really haven't gone into that for you if you're interested.

P.I.

I would like to hear more.

N.P.

After chairing a lot of standards I became standard chairman, standards committee chairman for the society on all standards. And then I served on the Technology Council from that. And I've served, really on all four, five councils of the society including Regions Council. I've chaired four of them and served on the fifth one as a vice chairman. So they kind of spread you around and groom you so that you have a very good intimate feel for the committees and the councils of society, very important if you're going to be effective at all. And also I think it's good to have grassroots experience which I had. So it was very, it was very surprising that I ever rose to the level of president. I didn't try to do it at all. I had no real strong aspirations. It's the truth, the office seeks the person I think. And that was the case in my case they asked me if I would do it. And I said oh, you know, one year of your life. It is a year of your life.

P.I.

Yes I imagine you and Liz had quite a year as your presidential year. How many places did you visit?

N.P.

Somewhere between fear and panic most of the time. But we didn't travel abroad too much. We went to England for the joint CIBSE meetings and things like that. Those are obligatory for the most part. We spent a little time in Mexico. We spent some time in Puerto Rico. Spent quite a bit of time in Canada. But most of our membership in the society, as you probably well know Pat, are within the United States and Canada. Probably be 90 percent of our total membership. And so I kind of made a conscious decision that I wanted to serve that 90 percent more effectively than trying to spread myself like peanut butter all over the world because God knows we have people that have pretty much travelled around the world promoting ASHRAE. I didn't think it was necessary to do it every year. And I thought I'd be more effective trying to do it within the continental United States and Canada and Mexico and San Juan were pretty close by.

P.I.

And you do that by going to the CRCs?

N.P.

Oh by CRCs and chapters.

P.I.

Regular chapter visits.

N.P.

Yeah you spend quite a bit of time also nurturing relations with various associate societies. I spent quite a bit of time with SMCNA, Sheet Metal Contractors Association. I spent a lot of time with the lighting people. IES. I was mending fences in this case. We had various conflicts from time to time. Some personal some others, you know, in general philosophies. But they were involved in writing part of our standard you know in the 90 standard which is a big standard for ASHRAE.

P.I.

It's good to cooperate.

N.P.

So I wanted to try to soften up that relationship and get it on a good even key and it did come about very nicely and they're very cooperation now and it was fun. It was kind of the peacemaker role a little bit. But there are a lot of other societies too that, we have just a whole lot of associate societies around the country and world. And I was always amazed at how well we're received by them. Every place you go ASHRAE is way up here, you know. You get a seat at the front table. Let me tell you a little bit about what happened in our executive committee meetings, that's kind of funny.

P.I.

Yes, I do share that with us.

N.P.

I look at that as probably the most fun. That and chapter meetings and regional meetings where you get out and really get to meet people. But we have a lot of fun in our particular ex-com because we had a great rivalry going between the senior and junior officers. The senior officers actually thought they ran the executive committee but they didn't see, we had them outnumbered. And Damon was kind of a control guy, a very strong willed individual, very ethical, a very nice man. But one day we passed a

motion so fast that he couldn't figure out what happened that gave us all the power. Damon's mouth just dropped open. He didn't want to say. He didn't know if we were kidding. We were.

P.I.

One person made the motion, somebody seconded it.

N.P.

Yeah and another one said, I call for you know, cease. Everything goes and we passed the motion. All in favor I, four out of the seven voted yes. And Damon was off, you know, out of control. We had a lot of fun with that. We were always playing jokes on each other, kidding each other, play a lot of golf together and stuff like that. So we had lots of fun as a as an ex-com. That was joyful.

P.I.

And when you got together with the board in general were there any amusing moments?

N.P.

Oh, gosh. There are always amusing things. I remember we passed a regulation that somebody had to cut his beard. But he never would.

P.I.

It didn't work.

N.P.

No it didn't work. He's still there and he's still wearing his beard. We had all kinds of little things. I always try to have a little fun while you're at it. You get the most done.

P.I.

I think it makes the time better for everyone.

N.P.

I've always thought a little humor diffuses tension also. When you get into some really tight situations, you know. We've had several over the years where very tough decisions.

P.I.

Was that while you were president or while you were working your way through the different councils?

N.P.

Well we had, you get into a lot of these while you're president.

P.I.

While you were president. What were the hot buttons while you were president?

N.P.

Well, always, energy is always hot. It will be for a long time because we're burning up, you know, nonrenewable resources. So we better do something about that and continue to do something about it. We are doing something about it. We're leading in that area. Other areas, very strong were the CFC issue. Billy got involved in that, Billy Manning got involved quite heavily in the code side of it. We were writing new standards, standard 15 which is a standard on mechanical rooms. Safety in mechanical rooms. We're writing a standard 34 on classification of new refrigerants in terms of their toxicity and their, you know, their volatility and flammability and suitability from standpoint of depleting the ozone layer.

P.I.

And this is all during your presidential year?

N.P.

It was started out in that area. And finished, I think during Bill's presidency. But nothing happens that fast. ASHRAE is a big fly wheel, you learn that very quickly that you may have great ideas but you probably won't finish half of what you start. If it's good it will get finished. If it isn't it may be dropped. So obviously you try to do good things that will carry through. We've had very good luck with standards 15 and 34. They're in all the major codes now, building codes. ASHRAE is the basis of code. So you can see we're building continually our relationships with the code bodies of the building industry in general the world for that matter. We have the secretariat on many international standards right now which is a very powerful position. And ultimately will control what goes into those things. And that is a big factor in terms of international trade. If you can write the standards around your systems, your products you have a big advantage internationally.

P.I.

So you would say ASHRAE is definitely been a big factor in the growth of the industry.

N.P.

They're right up there. They're right on the top right now. I'm very proud to be a member frankly because we've gone a long way, in my opinion. And due to some great people.

P.I.

And you can see in the future, ASHRAE being an important part of the industry?

N.P.

They'll be a global leader. They will be for a long time. If we don't drop the ball and we never will I don't think because we're growing all the time technically. We are very heavy now into indoor air equality. We're the leader in that field in terms of standards. Standard 62, ventilation for expectable indoor air quality is a very, very important standard. It's a nationally recognized, it's internationally recognized right now. And it's going to be in the new building standards internationally. So you can see these things are really leadership roles. That's why we have the respect worldwide that we do. And we continually amazed people that how we can get so many people to volunteer to do all the work that we do. And they do. And they fight to get on these committees because

P.I.

People with great education and career experience.

N.P.

Yeah, they're taking time out of very, very busy schedules and, you know, the untold hours that are donated to this society, you know, would dwarf our budget.

P.I.

Well it's just see why you fit in with all these other people that are just as qualified as you.

N.P.

I'm just one of the one of the many. Believe me. It's really funny.

P.I.

You're one of the leaders of the many.

N.P.

Well I was lucky to become that really.

P.I.

What other interests and hobbies do you have besides ASHRAE? I heard you mention golf.

N.P.

Yeah, I like to play golf. I'm not very good but I like to play. I spend a lot of time with my grandson now.

P.I.

You have a grandson. He's how old?

N.P.

Thirteen. He's a sports nut.

P.I.

Is he going to be an engineer?

N.P.

Oh yeah he's a straight A student in math and science right now. He's got perfect report cards for the last three years. He gets, he costs me an arm and leg every time he gets one. But I mean you know. He's a good kid. He's going to be in science I know. Probably he's going to end up going to his dad's university which University of Wisconsin. He talks like he wants to go to, you know, MIT but I don't think he'll make it. It's a little bit of money there. His dad won't put up with it, but he's a good kid. So he's my joy right now as far as, you know, spending my retirement years.

P.I.

Yes your retirement years. How long have you been retired?

N.P.

Since August of '94. I'm kind of getting the hang of it now.

P.I.

What changes have you made in your life since you retire?

Well, I'm still working. Oh yes, I don't ever want to totally retire. I'm still, I'm writing a book right now. I'm consulting with a company. And I'm rewriting their air conditioning manual which covers a broad subject of air conditioning. And then when I get done with that, they tell me they have another book they want me to write. So it's one these things where you can work as much as you can work and, you know, without losing it all. So I'm doing that and I stay pretty busy really.

P.I.

That would keep you busy and then that helps ASHRAE to because you're still going to be involved with ASHRAE. What are you doing with ASHRAE right now?

N.P.

I'll tell you once you become president, they don't let go of you very easy.

P.I.

They know a good thing. They're not going to let go of it.

N.P.

No. I was chair of the nominee in committee this year for officers and directors. And also the vice chairman of the long range plan committee for the society. Also chaired a steering committee on a total building design conference that we put on in Chicago about three months ago, something like that I think it was, as a first. It's kind of plowing new ground which I love to do. So I'll stay involved. I'll be involved for a few years yet anyway and probably not as heavily as during the presidential year of course. Because that year was just a blur. You were on the road all the time. I think I counted up, I spent 150 days a year in an airplane.

P.I.

That takes a lot of time and energy.

N.P.

It does. It's hard for your wife too. She was, she does a lot of work too. Most people don't give their wives enough credit in that area because she has to preside at functions. She has to attend functions with you where she doesn't know a soul sometimes. It's very hard. So a lot of credit goes to her too, you know. And she looks back on it with a lot of, I think joy whether she admits it or not. As I say during the year it was half fear and a half panic because you really hadn't been used to seeing crowds of a thousand people at a time. You know, things like that or having to host large receptions and things like that. So it's hard. Hard work for a young lady.

P.I.

She did a fine job. I know Liz and I enjoy visiting with Liz.

N.P.

Yeah she's just down to earth people.

P.I.

She is very wonderful. And your children are wonderful too

N.P.

Oh yeah they're great kids. I've been blessed.

P.I.

You mentioned that earlier for the interview that you'd made a health change. Would you like to tell people about that?

N.P.

The hardest thing I ever did. Well what I'm doing is improving the indoor air quality. I stopped smoking for about a year and a half now.

P.I.

And that's one of the harder things you've done.

N.P.

Oh it's very hard. Anybody that says it's easy is spoken rope. It's very difficult, you know.

P.I.

I'm glad to hear it. You're looking very healthy.

N.P.

Yes I am looking very healthy. Putting on weight. You enjoy food more.

P.I.

Do you have any other comments that you'd like to make before closing remarks?

N.P.

You know, I guess the one thing that I was impressed about in ASHRAE, is the fact that the society is really people. It's a people business and if you didn't enjoy people you wouldn't enjoy the society at all because there's a great deal of camaraderie. It's like a family. I think as I mentioned in my inaugural area of the speech in there that that I had two families. I felt like I really did. One was my own family and one was my ASHRAE family. And I spent much more time with my ASHRAE family that particular year but nevertheless it is a family and people stick together and they work together and I'm just amazed at the camaraderie that comes about because of it. So that's one impression I have the society. I don't think we'll ever erase. The other one is the fact that we have a very dedicated staff. God bless

them because they really are dedicated and they really give you a lot of help during a time when you're really running. From writing your speeches to various groups, you know, arranging your travel, to doing all kinds of things for you that, frankly you never have time to do at least do it right. And everything seems to turn out pretty rosy in spite of whatever the president does to screw it up. You know the philosophy is give the direction, get the hell out of the way and let him get the job done. That's what we like to do and we had a good year, I thought. From a membership standpoint outstanding year. Financially, outstanding year. We came through the year very much under budget. The society had a very good growth year financially so that we can use that money in good ways, you know, for other programs and scholarships and things like that. I tried to set an example fiscally for the other officers. Lou Flagg and I, he taught me that, to spend the money like it's yours and you'll be a little more careful with it. And so we, I think did a lot in that regard to set a standard which it's what we ought to do. Get the most for the dollar. So it's been a fun year. I wouldn't give it up for the world. And I look back on it with fond memories for a long time.

P.I.

Well we appreciate you're taking the time today to come and be interviewed and share your thoughts and experiences with us.

N.P.

Happy to do it Pat, especially with you.

P.I.

Well thank you very much. We've been talking with Mr. Neil Patterson presidential member, 1993-94. I hope you've enjoyed listening to Mr. Patterson as much as I enjoyed talking with him.