

Log

Interviewee: Wayne Curtis
 Interviewer: Michael Rawlings
 Transcriber: Evan Cordulack
 Interview Date: October 25, 2008

:10	Wayne Curtis, Class of '82, member of GALA for 20 years
:32	Wanted to be involved with project because of importance of recording stories
1:25	Grew up in Northern Virginia (near Fredericksburg)
1:55	Realized he was gay in his teens
2:20	The College of William and Mary was a home where learned about how to live life
3:00	Williamsburg was conservative, but was a support system
3:24	Was a singer, so joined William and Mary Choir, through choir finds friends to learn about gay community at W&M
4:12	Came to W&M in the fall of 1978
4:34	Gay group on campus, didn't want to get involved, while he never hid who he was, didn't confront people either
5:26	First experience with another man was in the community of the choir
5:50	Men who sang were in short supply, so went straight into the choir [women spent at least a year in the chorus]
6:13	Starts to grow a circle of gay friends through choir
6:35	This community became more overt, talks more openly about being gay
7:10	Met first boyfriend, Eddie Carroll, through the choir in October/November of freshman year
9:25	End of that relationship, didn't have another close relationship like that again in college
10:30	What would Eddie want to be remembered about him?
10:54	Carroll was a free spirit
11:15	He had always been cautious, from a small town, once had a taste of real freedom, he wasn't willing to go back
12:13	HIV and W&M: subscribed to a magazine that covered gay issues, didn't think it would be in eastern Virginia
13:33	GALA
13:47	His friend, Michael Rogan went to a library conference in the 1980s; learning about others that were forming alternatives to existing alumni associations
15:31	Got involved while living in Boston; first board member who wasn't from DC/Virginia
16:05	Moved back to Chesapeake area and wanted to get more involved
16:46	Adapting organization to changes in students
17:23	Changes in how gay people, pressures has meant alumni are looking for different support role from GALA
17:55	Getting to know others in the group had been positive, people who were at W&M during other time periods
18:27	Steven Snell-got to know him in the late 1980's

19:15	Need a strong will like Stephen's to get this organization like him; first time anyone tried to organize an alumni association outside the college; people were hostile towards him
20:23	Have to admire his tenacity
20:51	Stephen Patrick-was at W&M as a graduate, museum
21:37	Keen intellect and deep drive
23:00	Relationship between Swem Library and GALA
23:40	Image of W&M as a place where there were a lot of gay men, college did not want to admit this community existed or organized a gay alumni group
25:00	Finding first entry into the W&M system
25:31	To find first department that would work with gay alumni; found that at Swem
26:40	Using library to help understand yourself
27:17	Started talking to Swem Library in 1992
27:40	Discussion about what to name the fund; became the Richard Cornish Fund at Swem Library named after the first person executed for a same sex relationship in North America
30:00	Fundraising efforts of GALA "woke up" a lot of people in Williamsburg; made them realize that an alumni constituent group would get alumni back in the W&M organization
31:12	Fund is now at \$100,000
31:30	Proved to college that GALA members are team players
32:40	Membership; didn't keep good records at the beginning
33:30	Because of self-identification possible that more people came out to the events, he didn't sign up as members
34:00	Total members of around 600 people
35:00	Still a lot of prejudice and people still are afraid of having their name associated with the organization
36:00	Activism: anti-discrimination at W&M, ABC lawsuit
36:45	GALA helps reunite and make peace with W&M
37:00	Expansion of membership categories, inclusion of corporate and friends categories, increases giving levels
38:22	Grant program for student groups, supporting students
39:50	20 th anniversary of GALA: shift of atmosphere at the College; liberal president in Gene Nichol; 20 th Anniversary Dinner was the first time any president came to an event; President Nichol challenged GALA to become even more active
42:02	Built connection to Department of History through Boswell Lectures
42:55	Built bridges to Department of English
43:45	Impact of this on acceptance and membership; felt that College administration was treating membership as part of the College community
45:45	W&M student groups
46:00	GALA isn't going away
46:30	Loss of number of people over the years; in the last 2 years lost vital members of the organization; beginning to see a changing of the guard
47:54	Hope that people don't take for granted what it took to get us here