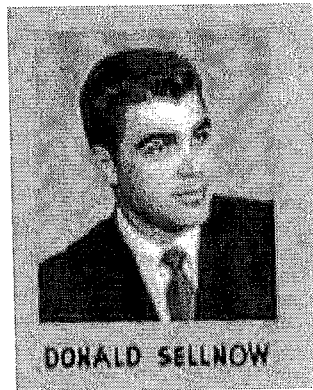


AN INTERVIEW WITH

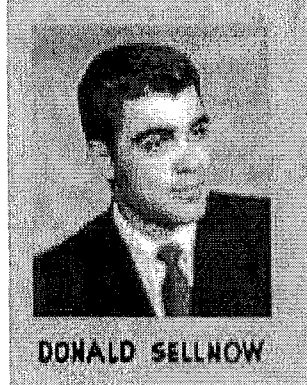


Prof. Donald Sellnow

By
Clark R. Schultz
Clark R. Schultz

Dean Brenner
Church History 332
April 12, 1999

ADDENDA



1. Blue Sheet = Preliminary questions
2. Gold Sheet = Addresses
3. Yellow Sheet = Selected Surveys
4. Cream Sheet = Interview questions
5. Green Sheet = Faculty inservice
6. Pink Sheet = Professor's favorite Passages

Church History—Pastor Donald Sellnow

History of the paper:

11-17-98

Since college I dreaded this day. I've heard the horror stories. The senior year church history paper has the reputation of being the biggest paper this side of heaven. This paper can make or break you. And now here it is coming down my row, the syllabus for Dean Brenner's class. Sure enough, there it is in big bold letters **Research Paper**. What was I to do? What was I going to research? I had some ideas, but fortunate for me so did Dean. I wanted to do an oral interview and he suggested that I interview Pastor Sellnow. He mentioned Prof. Sellnow's recent health conditions and that I should be aware of that as I begin to work on this project. So on the eve of the 17th of November I set out on my task at hand. At the advice of Dean, I called Pastor Eickmann to check on the health of Prof. Sellnow and his willingness and ability to do an interview. Prof. Eickmann told me that Prof. Sellnow would be up for the task, but I'd have to ask him first and let him decide.

11-18-98

I called the Sellnow residence and spoke with the Professor and he agreed to the interview. We agreed the best time for the interview would be over my Christmas break. Tentatively we thought the 29th or 30th of December would work. I told him I'd call or write closer to the Christmas holidays to set up a more exact time and date.

11-23-98

I typed and sent a preliminary survey to his home (See Addenda Blue sheet)

11-27-98

I begin to type up a survey to be sent out to family, former classmates, and NWC Professors. (See Addenda Gold sheet and Yellow sheets)

12-1-98

I mail the surveys. Dean advised that I include return postage to ensure some response.

12-3-98

I start to get the survey's back. With his survey completed, I also received a verbal tongue-lashing via, Harmon Lewis, from Prof. James Thrans. He told me that I had to wait 50 years after some one is dead to do a thorough report on them. I thought that an oral interview with Prof. Sellnow would be somewhat hard to conduct 50 years after his death, so I went ahead with the project despite his comments. (See Addenda Yellow sheet)

12-17-98

All of the surveys are just about in. Professor Plitzuweit and Pastor Treptow, email their responses to me.

12-18-98

I called Pastor Brokmeier to reserve a camera from LPS to use for my interview.

12-19-98

Instead of heading home for the holidays I decided to be a dorm rat and work on my paper. I organize the questions from the surveys I received back. I come up with 5

pages of questions for the Professor to answer. (See Addenda Cream sheet) I type up a form letter reemphasizing the interview date and other tid bits that will need to be covered prior to the interview.

Before I mailed the survey, I called the Sellnow residence and left a message about the questions to come. There is no one home to answer.

Later that night Mrs. Sellnow called me to inform me Prof. Sellnow was rushed to the hospital earlier that day. Things did not look good. His condition was worse than before. Mrs. Sellnow asked how I was doing on my project and she apologized about what was happening. I told her that my project was not as important as her husband's health. She herself requested that I send the survey. I was hesitant and said that I didn't want to be a bother at this time. She insisted I send the survey, thinking that it may even brighten up her husband's day. I wished her well, hung up the phone and prayed! Not for my paper, but for his health.

12-20-98

I take break from my paper and go to the Packer game to relax.

12-22-98

My parents awake me at 8:30 in the morning telling me I have a phone call. Wandering to the phone, I pick it up and on the other end there is a familiar voice, that says "Schultz, do you still want to do that interview?" I didn't know what to say, It was Professor Sellnow. I said that the paper wasn't as important as his health and he responded "The show must go on". He said that this interview is something he needs to do to brighten him up. He finished the conversation telling me that he and his wife will

work through the questions together. Again I hung up the phone and thanked God for answering prayers!! December 30th at 9:00 a.m. the interview time is set.

12-28-98

I call to verify his health and the interview time. He is still Gung Ho and is anxiously awaiting the day. I drive to LPS and pick up the camera and take it home to fiddle with it,

12-30-98

I purchase a hi-fi VHS tape from Como-Photo and head to the interview.

The interview was conducted in his den. He was very enthusiastic. On the video please take note of his tie. You will see it is a golfing tie.

About the interview

At first the interview was choppy. I apologize for anything I might have done to detract from the focus being on Prof. Sellnow. The interview runs about an hour and ½. I figured less is best. The interview was straight and to the point. Due to his health we stuck to the script, but not chronologically. (See Addenda Cream Sheet) I did not think to, nor did I want to speak to him in specifics about his illness. I wanted this video to project Prof. Sellnow as we remember him, a great teacher and friend.

What I learned from the interview

I found it to be a great honor to interview Pastor Sellnow. When one thinks of him, many thoughts come to mind. We think of the great golfer, with his various

“Masters tournament” looking sport coats. We think of him shooting off his starter pistol in class. We think of the class’s reaction of fear and heart failure as the gun went off. Then there are his famous pronunciation’s of different people through out history, for instance who could forget Warren G. Harding. His chapel talks were among some of the best and left lasting impressions on all of us. His booming voice in the classroom demanded and caught your attention. He truly was a great teacher and one of my favorites.

In my interview with Pastor Sellnow, I learned a great deal. I learned something that couldn’t be taught from a textbook. The phrase has often been used that you walk away with more than with what you came. That phrase certainly applies in this case. Pastor Sellnow was diagnosed last year with a tumor on his brain. With this, he retired from the ministry and moved to Watertown, sometime last year. Despite this illness Pastor Sellnow, still shows a continuing love for his Lord and his family and friends.

When I interviewed him, I saw a man not ravaged by a disease, but a man whose batteries where recharged. He was excited and ready to have the show go on. It was like we were back in class again. He had the same fire and enthusiasm as he always had. I went there with the attitude, I wonder how he’s doing or should I say something comforting or etc? Not so with this interview, Sellnow took the show, like a man takes the reigns of a horse and leads it. He showed no signs of slowing down. Seeing his confidence, gave me confidence to carry out the interview.

I learned that from day one, he had struggles in his personal life. He lost his father, when he was young, He contracted polio and that would stay with him for the rest of his life. In sight of these things Sellnow spoke of how he endured. His endurance

came from the Lord. The Lord put strong people in his life. His mother didn't baby him, she made sure he was treated like all the other kids. In sports, recreation or whatever, Pastor Sellnow never let his disease or other set backs get him down. He didn't use them as a crutch, but he worked, practiced and did everything twice as hard. Most people would have quit or let their life sink, Sellnow on the other hand, found his strength in weakness in the Lord, Jesus. In the interview he comments about his struggles, but how he was able to endure with his Savior's help. He and his wife are a model couple. I hope and pray to God that some day I find a love like that. Another strong person in his life is his wife, Ruth. Mrs. Sellnow is a registered nurse and she with the help of Hospice, have been helping to care for Professor Sellnow. Coming from the interview I see a man who loves his wife dearly and thinks the world of her. This is model for every Christian couple to follow. Prof. Sellnow also comments on the many other family, friends and teachers he had that influenced him. He even wrote a faculty inservice paper on this topic. (See Addenda Green sheet)

Through out the time I was putting together the surveys I learned a great deal about Prof. Sellnow. I sent out various surveys to his former classmates, who gave me some interesting stories and insights into Prof. Sellnow the student. I sent out surveys to his family and they shared stories from his personal life. Finally I sent surveys out to his former colleagues from Northwestern College and Prep. With the exception of getting a tongue lashing from Prof. Thrans, they all had stories to share. Some spoke of his being a great leader. Others spoke of his kindness and great love for others. In general all of the surveys, spoke very highly of Prof. Sellnow. I have included a few with this paper

and are there for you to peruse through. You too, will see how Pastor Sellnow has touched the lives of many.

Since the interview I have gained a greater respect for him. I see a man who loves his Lord his family and the people around him. He is truly a model for us to following in our ministry. Never once when I was with him or talked to him on the phone did he complain. He accepts each new challenge as a blessing from the Lord. To me, Prof. Sellnow will always be remembered as a great teacher, athlete, husband, motivator and a child of God. A child, who despite his illness, continues to touch peoples lives, but a child who also knows that the Lord has a place ready and waiting for him. He is a man I have grown close to in the short times we've been together. He has given me much strength and endurance for my future ministry.

In conclusion I'd like to share with you a sheet that Prof. Sellnow, mailed to me. Towards the end of February the Prof. condition worsened. Please take note of the Pink Addenda sheet. This came at the time he was being rushed by the EMS to the hospital for seizures. I opened this letter and cried, thinking to myself that with all that is going on in his life, he still has time to write and encourage me. Please read this letter and the passage sheet and may it be an encouragement to you as well.

Thank you Dean Brenner for suggesting and allowing me to do this. I did learn and walk away with a great deal. I hope you do too and that you enjoy the video. Prof. Sellnow wanted me to thank you as well Dean. He said this interview has made him feel worthwhile again.

Preliminary Questionnaire

In what year did you graduate from the Seminary?

1954

Please give me a summary of the places you have served, as well as the dates (if possible):

1954-1962: St. Paul's, Rapid City, S.D.

1962-1965: Christ, Menominee, MI

1965-1995: Northwestern College, Watertown, WI

1995-1998: Our Redeemer, Ladysmith, WI

Please send this questionnaire back to me at:

Thank You!!!

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1216 Hus Drive
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Pastor John Braun
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Mark Sellnow
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Hortonville, WI 54944

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Prof. Gerhard Franzmann
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Prof. John Schmidt
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New Ulm, MN 56073

Pastor Myron Kell
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Watertown, WI 53094

Pastor David Sellnow
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Lubbock, TX 79424

Pastor Richard Mueller
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Mission, TX 78572-7759

Prof. Earl "the pearl" Treptow
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New Ulm, MN 56073

Prof. Cyril Spaude
1048 Richards Ave
Watertown, WI 53094

Prof. Jerald Plitzuweit
RR. 1 Box U22
New Ulm, Mn 56073

The "Sons of Professor Sellnow" survey

What years did you attend Northwestern college?

1978-1982

Did you have your father for any classes? Was his personality any different at home than in that of class? If yes or no explain please.

at that time Psychology was a senior year required course, which I of necessity took. I also took his American History elective as a junior. Personality was the same. He tended to use humor more in the classroom than at home.

What do you remember most about Pastor Sellnow as Professor? (strengths, weaknesses or admirable qualities)

Strengths - organization of material
interesting lecture style
Test questions (especially essays)

Weaknesses → Involving student discussion in each class period

admirable qualities → use of experiments and demonstrations

How did Pastor Sellnow influence your ministry?

He got me here — I sort of "backed into" ministry training by virtue of Dad's place as professor. It was an easy step to go to the prep school and college across the street. Once in the program, I became convinced that I should continue and enter ministry.

How would you describe your Father's working relationship with the NWC faculty, the tutors, and the students? What about with those outside the school?

He general had a good and amiable relationships with other faculty and was well-liked by students. He had a number of affable relationships with members of the Watertown Community (especially golfers!)

What would you consider a "good" question(s) that one might ask your father regarding his years as Professor at NWC?

Did your years of teaching psychology help you in understanding people better in daily life?

Compare the teaching ministry at the college with that of being a parish pastor. What aspects of each did you most enjoy?

What else (advice, more questions, stories from his home life) might help in conducting my interview?

You might ask him about personal or family struggles that he went through. It leave it up to him how much of personal life stories he'd care to share.

Say hello to Dad when you see him. I'm going to be at National Campus Rally in late December but won't have any time windows to get

*Thank you again for your time and willingness to fill out this out. If you have any questions or comments, feel free to write to me at the address above, or give me a call (414) 257 8936. Your prompt response is much appreciated. Otherwise my email address is Clarkyclark@hotmail.com

Sincerely,
Watertown that
with

Clark

DAVID SCENOW

What years did you serve as a Professor at Northwestern College?

1981-1995

What aspects of being a Professor were (are) the most enjoyable?

-Working with enthusiastic young Christian people

-Knowing that the goal of their training is serving people with God's Word

-Enjoying all the extracurricular activities, games, concerts, public programs

-Seeing the talents with which God has blessed my students and my colleagues on the faculty

-Being able to counsel students with God's Word

Least enjoyable?

-Inability to always inspire and set a proper example for my students

-Time pressures

What do you remember most about Pastor Sellnow as Professor?

Prof. Sellnow set the example of a faithful, Christian gentleman, father, husband and professor. He was deeply concerned about the welfare of our students and our school. His chapel messages were clear expositions of Scripture, properly dividing Law and Gospel, timely, interesting and relevant. And at the same time he knew how to have fun in a way that was God-pleasing. I never once heard him complain about his physical handicap. His presence in intramural bowling was enjoyed by students and faculty alike.

How did Pastor Sellnow influence your ministry?

-While I was a student of his at NWC, one of my goals was to someday be the kind of pastor I knew he must have been.

-While I was a professor at NWC, one of my goals was to be the kind of professor he was.

How would you describe Pastor Sellnow's working relationship with the faculty, the tutors, and the students? What about with those outside the school?

His relationship was good with those both inside and outside the school. His positive example, friendly words and Christian concern

were uplifting.

What would you consider a "good" question(s) that one might ask pastor regarding his years as a Professor at NWC?

-What common traits did students display throughout your years as a professor?

-In what ways did students change during your years as a professor?

-What is your fondest memory?

-What is your worst memory?

What else (advice, more questions, stories) might help me in conducting my interview?

John Schmidt
MLC

The "Former Colleague of Professor Sellnow" survey

What years did you serve as a Professor at Northwestern Prep? At LPS?

NPS - 1966 - 1995
LPS - 1995 - 1997

What aspects of being a Professor were (are) the most enjoyable? Least enjoyable?

most enjoyable: Teaching the classes
Interacting with the students
Counseling

Least enjoyable: Dealing with discipline problems
Faculty meetings

What do you remember most about Pastor Sellnow as Professor? (strengths, weaknesses or admirable qualities)

Tremendous grasp of subject matter.
Clarity of presenting subjects & bringing it to level of students.
Centrality of Gospel in preaching & simplicity of message.
Friendliness with colleagues & students.
His great sense of humor.

How did Pastor Sellnow influence your ministry?

We were classmates. N/A

(over)

How would you describe Pastor Sellnow's working relationship with the faculty, the tutors, and the students? What about with those outside the school?

Very good relations (cf. above - friendliness)
Greatly respected outside the school - athletic relations
with other schools.
Respected in congregations he served full or part time.

What would you consider a "good" question(s) that one might ask pastor regarding his years as a Professor at NWC?

A good "handle" would probably be to ask about his service with and under NWC's last four presidents: Kowalke, Toppe, Voss, Braun.

What else (advice, more questions, stories) might help me in conducting my interview?

Clark, you should remember that "history" is not objectively and definitively written until 50 years after the events and since I am still living, your project is somewhat premature. But oral history is interesting and can help preserve records which might otherwise be lost. I'm not going to "lose" any stories about my good friend & colleague. But good luck in your search.

Jim

*Thank you again for your time and willingness to fill this out. If you have any questions or comments, feel free to write to me at the address above, or give me a call (414) 257 8936. Your prompt response is much appreciated. Otherwise my email address is Clarkyclark@hotmail.com

Sincerely,

Clark

The "Former Schoolmates of Professor Sellnow" survey

What years did you attend school together?

Sadly, only one, 1953-54, his last year, my middle year, at Sew.
(He graduated from NWC in 1950; I came as a fr. in fall of 1950.)

What aspects of going to school together were the most enjoyable? Least enjoyable?

" We had little personal contact - but I enjoyed his
irresistible good humor and interest in others.

What do you remember most about Pastor Sellnow as Professor? (strengths, weaknesses or admirable qualities)

Visiting his class as a member of the NWC Bd. of Control.
His ability to make American history live with personal
insights into historical personages like presidents.
His interest in people was obvious from this, and what
made them tick.

How did Pastor Sellnow influence your ministry?

None directly. But his joy in the work was obvious.

(over)

How would you describe Pastor Sellnow's working relationship with the faculty, the tutors, and the students? What about with those outside the school?

From the one class I visited, good rapport with the students as pastor at St. Mark's in Watertown, where he was/is a member, Joe appreciated his interest in / constructive practical advice re: congregational matters. He currently attends Bible class and sometimes "throws in" a valuable insight, though never over-doing his participation.

What would you consider a "good" question(s) that one might ask pastor regarding his years as a student of or of his days as a Professor at NWC?

What did he consider the most important thing he could do for his students?

What else (advice, more questions, stories from schoolboy days) might help me in conducting my interview?

I had just one direct, personal contact with Don during school days. From May - July at the end of my middle year at Sem I filled a vacancy at Rapid City/Sturgis, S.D. This became Don's first call, when he & Ruth arrived. Ruth took one look at me (I'd lost 10-20 pounds that hot summer in a vacant passage without a ~~fringe~~ refrigerator. She promptly started feeding me huge meals.

Don meanwhile insisted I stay 3-4 days and fill him in on all I'd gleaned re: the people there - where they were coming from, what their needs were. It again reflected his intense interest in and concern for people.

Wayne R. Kell

*Thank you again for your time and willingness to fill this out. If you have any questions or comments, feel free to write to me at the address above, or give me a call (414) 257 8936. Your prompt response is much appreciated. Otherwise my email address is Clarkyclark@hotmail.com

Sincerely,

Clark

The "Former Colleague of Professor Sellnow" survey

What years did you serve as a Professor at Northwestern College?

1966 to 1995, the year of Amalgamation

What aspects of being a Professor were (are) the most enjoyable? Least enjoyable?

1. Watching the young men learn and mature on their road to preparing for the ministry.
2. Seeing how something that was "all Greek" to them could become a workable language.
3. The fellowship of my colleagues on the faculty and the friendship of the students who are still dear to the heart.

Only least desirable aspect of being a professor was the "grind" of daily correction of 60-75 Greek/Hebrew papers.

What do you remember most about Pastor Sellnow as Professor? (strengths, weaknesses or admirable qualities)

Strengths/admirable qualities:

- wholehearted dedication to the Lord's work
- true interest in and concern for his students, even the "trouble-makers"
- proper balance between a conservative Christian faith and academic scholarship
- excellent preacher and teacher, i.e., able to impart the truths he wanted to teach in a clear and effective manner
- had a good rapport with both students and faculty
- accepted a physical handicap without complaint or excuse

Weaknesses: only one: he regularly beat me in bowling.

How did Pastor Sellnow influence your ministry?

1. In the example he set before me while we both were students at NWC, excelling in the classroom, athletics, music - all in spite of dealing with a physical handicap.
2. In his example as a colleague on the NWC faculty: hardworking,
(over)

uncomplaining, always with the students' and the Lord's interests first in his mind and heart.

How would you describe Pastor Sellnow's working relationship with the faculty, the tutors, and the students? What about with those outside the school?

I have already referred to Prof. Sellnow's relationship to me, and that applies to the rest of the faculty. He had their respect and trust. He was not shy about speaking up on issues of great concern, yet he could easily accept the majority opinion in non-essential matters. His keen sense of humor was appreciated by all. Members of congregations in which he preached regarded him highly both for his delivery as well as his content.

From what I was able to learn from the students, they too held him in high regard. Agree?

What would you consider a "good" question(s) that one might ask pastor regarding his years as a Professor at NWC?

What made you leave the pastoral ministry which you loved so dearly and come to NWC?

What else (advice, more questions, stories) might help me in conducting my interview?

Why do you, Prof. Sellnow, regard the liberal arts program so highly in the preparation of future pastors in WELS?

*Thank you again for your time and willingness to fill this out. If you have any questions or comments, feel free to write to me at the address above, or give me a call (414) 257 8936. Your prompt response is much appreciated. Otherwise my email address is Clarkyclark@hotmail.com

Sincerely,

Clark

*Personal greeting
C.W.S.*

The "Former Colleague of Professor Sellnow" survey

What years did you serve as a Professor at Northwestern College? I was installed January 1987 & served till NWC closed in 1995.

(I also served as an instructor on the NWC faculty for two years, 1982-84.)

What aspects of being a Professor were (are) the most enjoyable? Least enjoyable?

Most enjoyable: serving in the gospel ministry
helping to prepare future ministers
teaching and ~~trying~~ to know the students (you too, Clark)
working with (learning from, getting to know as friends) some great guys on the faculty (like Don Sellnow)
studying some subjects I enjoy (Greek, Latin, & above all NT)
Some features of campus life (homecoming, winter carnival, graduation and related celebrations each May...)
having a schedule with some flexibility in it (I like the rhythms of the weekly and annual academic calendar)

Least enjoyable:
correcting papers
some committee meetings
trying unsuccessfully to persuade the Synod not to amalgamate colleges
grading

What do you remember most about Pastor Sellnow as Professor? (strengths, weaknesses or admirable qualities) I always appreciated his trust in the Lord and the way he expressed it from the pulpit, in the classroom, and elsewhere. God gave him a good mind and he used it well to find ways of making American history and psychology more interesting and relevant than they might otherwise have seemed. He always came across as someone level-headed, kindly, and with a good sense of humor. The thing that struck me most was his preaching. A few others on the faculty may have been better scholars with more penetrating and profound minds, but I looked forward to hearing Don preach as much as I looked forward to hearing any of the other good preachers at NWC. That was because Don had a wonderful confidence in the message he was bringing. It didn't feel he had to impress you with something you never thought of or come up with a dramatic or surprising way of expressing things. He was confident that the message didn't need that kind of help, and he made his hearers glad to hear the kind of meat and potatoes preaching he offered. It's not that he preached in a completely predictable or worn-out way. He obviously spent time on his sermons and chapel addresses and put some good thought into them. But the dominant impression I got was: Even if I've heard this text or that point of doctrine many times before, Don had a simple, clear, down-to-earth way of bringing it home to you so that you really were glad to hear it.

How did Pastor Sellnow influence your ministry?

I'd repeat a lot of what I said in the preceding. I could add that he showed how a person could model a pastoral heart in an academic setting. Also, I don't know much more about psychology than what I learned in his classroom. But it has served me well.

(over)

How would you describe Pastor Sellnow's working relationship with the faculty, the tutors, and the students? What about with those outside the school?

He got along well with everybody as far as I could see. He could speak his mind candidly in faculty meetings, and not everyone would agree at all times, but we always respected his opinion even when we disagreed. - I remember when my wife and I came to NWC after I accepted the call in 1986. Don and Ruth took us out to dinner and made us feel welcome. It was a delightful evening - I still remember some of the conversation five years later. I also

What would you consider a "good" question(s) that one might ask pastor regarding his years as a Professor at NWC?

- ① While he was a prof there were some big curricular changes, also what is his opinion of them in retrospect? -
- ② What advice would he have for the future of pastoral training in the WELS?

What else (advice, more questions, stories) might help me in conducting my interview?

- Ask him about fishing or golfing.
- I always enjoyed hearing stories about the generation of profs under whom he studied, or the ones who were his older colleagues when he started out on the NWC faculty. You might strike pay dirt if you ask him who his most memorable teachers were, or if you ask for stories about EEK, Rusty, or Doc Pete.
- I always admired the way he handled his disability from polio. He might not mind telling you about what it was like.

and told me stories from his early days. I enjoyed it very much. Some of the difference in years between us didn't matter largely because Jon had a great sense of humor and a great sense of friendship.

*Thank you again for your time and willingness to fill this out. If you have any questions or comments, feel free to write to me at the address above, or give me a call (414) 257 8936. Your prompt response is much appreciated. Otherwise my email address is Clarkyclark@hotmail.com

Sincerely,

Clark

Happy interviewing! Give my warmest regards to Don & Ruth!
Love, Richard

Clark R. Schultz
December 29th, 1998
CH Interview
(Rev. Donald Sellnow)

Pastor Donald Sellnow- "Professor" at NWC ('65-'95)

Interview Agenda:

- I. Introduction
- II. Biographical Info.
- III. The ministry prior to '65
- IV. Years as Professor at NWC (1965-1995)
- V. The ministry after 1995
- VI. Concluding remarks

Introduction:

(Identify Professor, topic of interview, date, etc.)

Biographical Info:

- 1) When and where were you born?

- 2) Please tell us a little about the Sellnow family—How would you describe your childhood/early adult years?

- 3) How were you influenced to study towards the pastoral ministry? When did you know you wanted to be a pastor?

- 4) Who were some of your most memorable teachers? Why were they memorable?

The ministry prior to 1965:

- 1) What was your reaction to hearing "Rapid City South Dakota" at Call day, 1954?

- 2) What were some of the challenges you had to face in your early ministry?

- 3) Discuss your feelings about the need for the WELS to break with the Missouri synod.

- 4) Any fond memories of your two parishes that you'd care to share with us?
- 5) What advice can you give to those who will be receiving their first call to the parish in May?

Years as Professor at NPS/NWC (1965-1995)

- 1) What was your initial reaction to receiving the call to come to Watertown?
- 2) What made you leave the parish ministry, which you loved so much dearly to come to NWC?
- 3) What were you called to teach? How did your role change over the years?
- 4) You served as Professor at both NPS and at NWC. How many years did you serve at NPS and what was the transition like from being a Prep Professor to a college Professor?

You had the honor of serving under four presidents at Watertown. What are your memories of each of them?

- 5) Speaking of presidents, You taught American history. How did you acquire your love of that subject?
- 6) You also taught and will be remembered the most as the "Psych" professor. How did you feel Psychology and religion are related? In what ways did it help you to understand people better in your daily life? Or what are your thoughts or experiences in dealing with the inner ear?
- 7) On the topic of religion what are your memories or thoughts on preaching in chapel?

- 8) How did supply preaching at St. Matthew's in Oconomowoc, strengthen your service as a NWC Professor?
- 9) While at NWC there were some big curricular changes what is your opinion of them in retrospect?

Why do you regard the liberal arts program so highly in the preparation of future pastors in the WELS?

- 10) What common traits did students display throughout your years as a Professor?

In what ways did students change during your years as Professor?

- 11) Which former student has surprised you the most as far as effective service in the ministry?

12) You coached golf at NWC. Where did your love for that begin? Any memorable experiences from coaching?

13) What are your thoughts on the place of sports in the school life in the preparation of Pastors and in life in general?

14) What are or were your thoughts on Amalgamations both prior to and after it took place?

15) What should be adjusted in the preparation of future pastors according to your experience?

16) What advice can you give for recruiting and training the next generation of workers?

The ministry after 1995:

- 1) From Professor to Pastor at Ladysmith was quite a switch. How did you adapt? Did you have to relearn anything?

- 2) Was it difficult having to work with a New translation of the Bible and Hymnal and Catechism than when you started in the ministry?
- 3) What are your thoughts of the seeming loss of respect in the ministry?
Where does the fault lie?

Conclusion:

- 1) What do you cherish most and remember most about your ministry?
- 2) For those who will be watching this what encouragement do you give to students, Professors and Pastors as we enter the 21st century?

Lighter side Questions?

When did you start bringing the starter pistol to class? Any memorable student reactions?

Did you ever meet Philip Zimbardo?

Could you give us one of your world famous pronunciations of Warren G. Harding, Teddy and the rough riders.

Have you ever been squeezed like an orange?

What are boom booms and yum yums?

One of your former colleagues wanted me to ask you "you really didn't believe Woodrow Wilson was a great man did you?"

Dr. John Johnson gives his love

Who was the worst golfer or fisher you'd ever seen?

Pastor Free wants you to give him and Daniel Malchow a call sometime.

Otherwise starting with Prof. Frederick and the rest of the MLC gang they all send their warmest greetings to you and your wife.

Pastor Donald Sellnow- "Professor" at NWC ('65-'95)

Interview Agenda:

- I. Introduction
- II. Biographical Info. *RC 54-62*
- III. The ministry prior to '65
- IV. Years as Professor at NWC (1965-1995)
- V. The ministry after 1995 *1995-98*
- VI. Concluding remarks

memo 62-65

Introduction:

(Identify Professor, topic of interview, date, etc.)

Biographical Info:

1) When and where were you born?
March 8, 1928 Embarrass, WI (Waupaca County)

2) Please tell us a little about the Sellnow family—How would you describe your childhood/early adult years?
Born 1928 - Eve of Great Depression

about 2 weeks after my father's death in a railroad accident, warm loving home. Great mother Super Older brother

3) How were you influenced to study towards the pastoral ministry? When did you know you wanted to be a pastor?
By pastors, teachers & peers. By about the 8th grade.

4) Who were some of you most memorable teachers? Why were they memorable?
Blessed by a number of teachers did consider memorable. of these I've chosen four - one each from years in [High school] prep, college & sem. Some are familiar to you: Mr. Wm Keller whom I still remember; Dudley Rhoda was German Prof. N.P.S. Elmer Kressling taught English & U.S. History at NWC; Carl Lawrenz whom I had in O.T. studies & Catechetics at sem. Memorable in common knowledge.

The ministry prior to 1965:

- 1) What was your reaction to hearing "Rapid City South Dakota" at Call day, 1954?
Had no idea of where it was. One classmate from SD said "That's in God's Country" (& he was right) "You'll love it."
- 2) What were some of the challenges you had to face in your early ministry?
Trying to establish mission congregation, serving a second congregation 32 miles away (served there in a RENTED Episcopal church).

3) Discuss your feelings about the need for the WELS to break with the Missouri synod.
It was VITAL IF WELS WAS TO REMAIN FAITHFUL TO THE SCRIPTURES.

*see additional notes **

4) Any fond memories of your two parishes that you'd care to share with us?
*Many adult confirmations. Many babies + children Baptized.
Work with servicemen at Ellsworth Air Force Base.*

5) What advice can you give to those who will be receiving their first call to the parish in May? *LOOK FORWARD TO IT WITH AN OPEN HEART + A WELCOME ATTITUDE FOR THE FUTURE.*

Years as Professor at NPS/NWC (1965-1995)

1) What was your initial reaction to receiving the call to come to Watertown?

SHOCK.

2) What made you leave the parish ministry, which you loved so much dearly to come to NWC? *The opportunity to have a role in training the next generation of pastors for the WELS.*

3) What were you called to teach? How did your role change over the years?

*Psychology + U.S. History.
more electives offered -*

4) You served as Professor at both NPS and at NWC. How many years did you serve at NPS and what was the transition like from being a Prep Professor to a college Professor? *Some times simultaneously -*

You had the honor of serving under four presidents at Watertown. What are your memories of each of them? *ALL were GIFTS OF GOD TO NWC + the WELS. Carter + Toppe stand out in my mind. ... served longest under him.*

5) Speaking of presidents, You taught American history. How did you acquire your love of that subject? *In large measure from Dr. Kriessling*

6) You also taught and will be remembered the most as the "Psych" professor. How did you feel Psychology and religion are related? In what ways did it help you to understand people better in your daily life? Or what are your thoughts or experiences in dealing with the inner ear? *Psychology is the study of man,*

his nature + his BEHAVIOR. The ministry is a people profession. The better we know people the better we can serve them. Psych. provides invaluable insights in getting to know what makes people tick. Psych. can help the pastor bring the word of God effectively to the sinners for whom it is intended.

On the topic of religion what are your memories or thoughts on preaching in chapel? *A Tremendous experience.*

8) How did supply preaching at St. Matthew's in Oconomowoc, strengthen your service as a NWC Professor? Kept my hand in preaching ministry Big Preaching for 22 yrs. made me feel I served a congregation

9) While at NWC there were some big curricular changes what is your opinion of them in retrospect? They were necessary -

(Biggest) in late 80's - gen'l Psych became required Soph course & Electives were added in Developmental & abnormal psych - all 20th Century (European) American required & US electives added US early American & Civil War Hx. Why do you regard the liberal arts program so highly in the preparation of future pastors in the WELS? Our pastors are to be all things to all men & Lib. Arts helps them to do this. We want a knowledgeable clergy.

10) What common traits did students display throughout your years as a Professor? (1) Respect for God's Word - appreciation of their fellowship of faith at NWC.

In what ways did students change during your years as Professor? Later years - more students worked OFF campus to a greater degree. Marriages

11) Which former student has surprised you the most as far as effective service in the ministry? There are a number of "late bloomers" who've done a terrific job in the ministry.

12) You coached golf at NWC. Where did your love for that begin? Any memorable experiences from coaching? Began in Prep school. My brother gave me my first set of golf clubs. A number of conference championships. ALL DAY golf trips to tournaments. Having the old golfers back from the SEM.

13) What are your thoughts on the place of sports in the school life in the preparation of Pastors and in life in general? VERY Important. I was privileged to serve as Faculty Athletic Bd. Chm. for a number of years. I feel Sports Teaching Cooperation, patience + learning to take your lumps.

14) What are or were your thoughts on Amalgamations both prior to and after it took place? Didn't like it. nor do we need counsel

15) What should be adjusted in the preparation of future pastors according to your experience? Schools are doing a good job currently. some tweaking perhaps and major changes

16) What advice can you give for recruiting and training the next generation of workers? (1) A pastor needs to remember that he is not just a pastor but a recruiter of future pastors. (2) Needs to look for qualified people early. (3) Est a scholarship program in his congregation (4) encourage students

The ministry after 1995:

1) From Professor to Pastor at Ladysmith was quite a switch. How did you adapt? Did you have to relearn anything? I enjoyed the opportunity to get back into parish ministry. Had to learn to cope without secretary. This reminded of problems of marriage + family that plague pastors. - great D. Paul

2) Was it difficult having to work with a New translation of the Bible and Hymnal and Catechism than when you started in the ministry?

Yes - No we got used to it - good issue

3) What are your thoughts of the seeming loss of respect in the ministry?

Where does the fault lie? A Reflection of what is in society in general + in the home in particular. Loss of respect for authority in general

Conclusion:

1) What do you cherish most and remember most about your ministry?

The opportunity to preach the Gospel REGULARLY. Adult unstructured classes. Wonderful people to hold up the Prophet's standards.

2) For those who will be watching this what encouragement do you give to students, Professors and Pastors as we enter the 21st century?

The ministry is still the Greatest profession on Earth.

Lighter side Questions?

When did you start bringing the starter pistol to class? Any memorable student reactions?

Can't recall exact start - prob said late 1960's. Some many were highly agitated + wondered why I pulled such a dumb stunt. When there was no... in my mind

Did you ever meet Philip Zimbardo?

No - not in my mind

Could you give us one of your world famous pronunciations of Warren G. Harding, Teddy and the rough riders.

1920s that Ohio

Have you ever been squeezed like an orange?

skinner
What are boom booms and yum yums? *← a reward (positive reinforcement)*
Behavior that is reinforced or rewarded TENDS to repeat.

One of your former colleagues wanted me to ask you "you really didn't believe

this is Prof. James Northals! We differed on this - Wilson was a
Woodrow Wilson was a great man did you? *of course we all know that*
Dr. John Johnson gives his love *wilson little*

Who was the ^{Best} worst golfer or fisher you'd ever seen?

(GOLF) 1. SAM SNEAD - Poetry in motion
(Fishing) 2. Dr WELS - Ice for water - Prof Pitzgawert of Okla
Pastor Free wants you to give him and Daniel Malchow a call sometime. *incl. current man*

Otherwise starting with Prof. Frederick and the rest of the MLC gang they all send their warmest greetings to you and your wife.

FACULTY INSERVICE - 8/13/92

GREAT TEACHERS I HAVE HAD

I have been blessed with a number of teachers I would consider great or at least near great in both WELS schools and in secular schools. But the ones that stand out especially for me are people who taught within our system. God has given our church body some excellent teachers at all levels who may well serve as our role models.

From the many good ones at whose feet I sat, I have chosen ~~four~~³ - one each from my years in Christian Day School, Prep, College, and Seminary. Most of you are familiar with most of them. They are: Bill Hellermann, my 7th and 8th grade teacher at Trinity, Neenah; Dudley Rhoda, my German teacher at NPS; Elmer Kiessling, who taught me English and US history at NWC; and Carl Lawrenz, whom I had in OT studies and catechetics at the Sem.

What makes these four stand out in my mind? Why do I remember them as great teachers? I think that there are a number of things that characterized all of them and that make them stand out as special in my mind.

1. They were knowledgeable. They knew their stuff. You were eager to get them as teachers because you knew you were not just going to put in time in class but really get something from them.

Bill Hellermann taught my older brother, and my brother was so impressed with him that he had me visit the 8th grade classroom when I was still in the primary grades. I think that every kid in school looked forward to sitting in Bill's classes. He knew his stuff and got you excited about learning.

Dudley Rhoda, whom I had all four years in Prep, knew his stuff, which was primarily German. Doc Kiessling knew English

and history. ^{Carl} Pee Wee Lawrenz knew Genesis and catechetics. And you didn't need to have any of them very long before you knew that they had a lot to offer. They did their homework. They came to class prepared. They kept up on what was going on in their field. They did a lot of reading. They knew their stuff.

2. They projected enthusiasm for the subject matter and teaching. [This is one of the criteria for effective teaching suggested in a recent (12/91) issue of THE TEACHING PROFESSOR. It certainly fits every good teacher I have known, including my four greats. Not only did they know their stuff, they were enthusiastic about it. And that enthusiasm rubbed off on their students.

3. They had the ability to give what they had to give, to empty themselves and fill up their students. They were not only smart but had the ability to teach. And although some of them may not necessarily have been the greatest in terms of total knowledge, they had the ability to give what they had in an effective way.

Dudley Rhoda, for example, was not the brainiest prof on the faculty in my day, but he was a tremendously effective teacher. ^{charlie} [Pee Wee] Lawrenz, whom I had in his early years at the Sem, was not the intellectual giant of the faculty at that time, but he, too,, could empty himself and fill up his students.

4. In order to best give what they had and to arouse and maintain student interest, these great teachers were ready to try new approaches. [I remember Bill Hellermann starting a German class in the 8th grade for interested students. I remember Dudley Rhoda teaching us German by having us read Harder's books about the Apache Indians in German and discussing them in class,]

and we ate it up.

5. They had a sense of humility and humanity. Tho they were all knowledgeable and competent, they were not perfect, and they were the first ones to admit it. Students like teachers who are human, who don't know it all and even goof on occassion and are ready to admit it. They don't like teachers who think and act as if they are God.

An article in the May 92 issue of THE TEACHING PROFESSOR listed 10 rules for good profs to follow. One of them was this: "Don't come across as an omnipotent and moniscient Mikado-like Pooh-bah -- the Lord High Everything. It's okay to say that you don't know something," p. 6. All of the great teachers I have had were ready to say they didn't know something.

6. They had a sense of humor. It was fun to be in their classes. You could and did laugh out loud. All four of my great teachers had great smiles, and when I think of them, I tend to see them smiling. All four of them could and did laugh - also at themselves and their own goofs and gaffes.)

Their sense of humor also enhanced their teaching. I can still remember Doc Kiessling talking about the Mugwumps in the election of 1884. They were the Republicans who switched sides and supported the Democratic candidate Grover Cleveland. Doc helped us to forever remember the Mugwumps by defining them as people who had their mugs on one side of the fence and their wumps on the other.

7. They cared about their students. You were never just a number or a name to these great teachers. They cared about each student and let him know it. They demonstrated genuine interest in ^{their} each student. And they emphasized ^{the} positive.

by getting to know them, by being fair & impartial, & by recognizing their successes &

Good teachers do that. They emphasize the positive. They let you know that you are competent that you can do it. They not only point out weaknesses but especially emphasize strengths and recognize their students' successes.

I remember Doc Kiessling regularly reading parts of student papers in class that he felt were good. He never said whose paper it was, but you knew if it was yours. And he didn't only read from the A students papers but also from those of the lesser lights.

I remember Dudley Rhoda and his very evident care about his students. He took the time to talk to us in class and outside of class like the sons he never had. He invited us into his home at a time when profs didn't usually do that. He not only taught us German, but he also gave us a desire for the ministry.

And that brings me to my final point:

8. Great teachers have an effect on student career choices. This is another commonly accepted criterion for measuring excellence in teaching. Did the teacher do a good job? Look at his students and see what they are doing with their lives.

All four of my greats not only taught me all kinds of good things ^{about readin, ritin, rithmatic and religion.} All of them from Hellermann to Lawrenz encouraged me to enter the ministry. They were all good recruiters. *

[The learning that went on in their classrooms, under God's blessing, produced a host of faithful and effective servants of the Word for the church.]

Bill Hellermann, Dudley Rhoda, Elmer Kiessling, Carl Lawrenz - may God give us more like these four. 3

* and in our worker training, especially, that's not only good for the students but also for the church.

2/27/99

Dear Clark,

Enclosed are some passages from
the Psalms that I have found
especially helpful in times of trouble.
May they be the same for you and
yours.

God's grace is sufficient for us
and His strength is made perfect in
weakness.

In Christ,

Prof. W. L. Brown

PASSAGES FROM THE PSALMS

1. I will lie down and sleep in peace, for you alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety. 4:8
2. May the Lord answer you when you are in distress. May he give you the desire of your heart and make all your plans succeed. 20:1,4
3. The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. 23:1
4. The Lord is my light and my salvation - whom shall I fear? 27:1
5. A righteous man may have many troubles, but the Lord delivers him from them all. 34:19
6. O Lord, do not forsake me; be not far from me, O my God. Come quickly to help me, O Lord my Savior. 38:21,22
7. Why are you downcast, O my soul? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God. 43:5
8. God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Be still and know that I am God. 46:1,10
9. Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you will honor me. 50:15
10. Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions. Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will turn back to you. 51:1,10,13
11. Cast your cares on the Lord and he will sustain you; he will never let the righteous fall. 55:22
12. When I am afraid, I will trust in you. 56:3
13. Praise be to the Lord, to God our Savior, who daily bears our burdens. 68:19
14. Yet I am poor and needy; come quickly to me, O God. You are my help and my deliverer; O Lord, do not delay. 70:5
15. He will call upon me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble, I will deliver him and honor him. With long life will I satisfy him and show him my salvation. 91:15
16. Hear my prayer, O Lord; let my cry for help come to you. Do not hide your face from me when I am in distress. Turn your ear to me; when I call, answer me quickly. 102:1,2
17. Praise the Lord, O my soul; and all my inmost being, praise his holy name. Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits - who forgives all your sins, and heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the pit and crowns you with love and compassion, who satisfies your desires with good things so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's. 103:1-5
18. Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to your name be the glory, because of your love and faithfulness. 115:1
19. Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever. 118:1
20. I lift up my eyes to the hills - where does my help come from? My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth. 121:1