[00:00:03]

[MUSIC] You're listening to tell me your story where we connect to HLS staff on a personal level.

[00:00:15]

Hello everyone. This is Edgar Kley Filho from HLS human resource's department. My pronouns are he, him, his. Today we are talking to Russell Keys from the Facilities Management office who he'll you tell us about his life, how he is in disposition at HLS and the work he does. Thank you for joining us Russell, and please tell us your story.

[00:00:42]

My story? [LAUGHTER] Good to see you.

[00:00:45]

Good to see you too.

[00:00:47]

I'll just start at the beginning, I was born up on the North Shore in Lynn.

[00:00:51]

Yeah.

[00:00:51]

My mother was from Lynn, my father was from Sagas. My father's family has been there Swamp Yankees had met in New England for, I think by an onset since the 1600s.

[00:01:03]

Wow. So everybody from New England area?

[00:01:07]

Yeah. But my mother's family are much newer. My maternal grandfather's parents came from Ireland, and my maternal grandmother's parents came from Canada. I didn't speak English [OVERLAPPING] [LAUGHTER], and settled in Connecticut. My grandfather having to get down there to get a job and he met my grandmother and came back to Lynn and their family there.

[00:01:38]

Originally your family is Irish descendant?

[00:01:42]

My mother's side, for the Irish and French.

[00:01:44]

Irish and French?

[00:01:45]

Yeah. Catholics.

[00:01:46]

Wow.

[00:01:47]

My father's side of English Protestants. I'm not a good mix.

[00:01:51]

[LAUGHTER] Is it just say that because with my parents was the same. My mom's side was Roman Catholic, and my dad's side, were also Protestants. For my dad to be able to marry my mom, he had to convert to Catholic. Otherwise, my mom's parents would not allow which is adjustment there in terms of religion.

[00:02:14]

My father refused to do that, so my grandfather wasn't too happy about my mother married my father. I can relate to what went on in Northern Ireland in '60s and '70s

[00:02:30]

Their true story.

[00:02:32]

I lived in sagas till I was 11. I went through the fifth grade and then we move to Rally and my mother is still there. Almost 95 is still at the family homestead.

[00:02:44]

How was going to school earlier? I always like stories about the high school situation and how people feel about high school, and some people feel like was difficult, was complicated, it was bullying. How was your high school?

[00:03:00]

My high school was pretty much gray [OVERLAPPING] I didn't care for it one way or the other. I didn't do a whole lot. I got through it. I had decent grades and all that.

[00:03:10]

[OVERLAPPING] But didn't get in trouble, I know bullying and fighting, that kind of stuff.

[00:03:14]

No, I didn't have those problems. I just didn't care about. I was getting into music. I started playing the guitar when I was 11.

[00:03:22]

Wow. You learn on your own?

[00:03:24]

Yeah, I taught myself, my brother who's a year younger than me, was a prodigy player and so it was discouraging being around him. Because he could look at the guitar and play more than I could do after weeks of work. But I was playing. I started like 1963. It's like pre-Beatles because a lot of my friends [OVERLAPPING] they saw the Beatles on Ed Sullivan and that's what they wanted to do. But I was already planning for a year, but I got into it like everybody else. Everybody and his brother wanted to be in a band. They were selling guitars and department stores, and hardware stores, and the [LAUGHTER] drugstores, everywhere you look, there's a guitarist for sale, and it was a great time.

[00:04:09]

You're taught yourself how to play? Your brother as well?

[00:04:12]

My father started, my brother go in, but within a short time my brother was playing circles around my father and all his friends and he's still a great player today.

[00:04:21]

What was for you the biggest influence, you mentioned Beatles, but what else would it be, what you went through more? What drove you to it?

[00:04:29]

Well, I just wanted to play. I mean, the ventures were big. When I was learning. I had to learn all their tunes, instrumental dark tones, and stuff, and I was trying to play and the bands that came out and the British Invasion and all that. Then when I get to be 15, I was just really discouraged. I had been playing like four years and I couldn't. My brother was great and his friends were good. I switched to playing bass guitar by default.

[00:05:02]

Hendrix's best player and older heading, he said, why are you playing base? He was a guitar player while you playing base because there's no sense playing around this guy anyway, [LAUGHTER] playing guitar. I can relate to that. I switched to playing bass and I've been doing it ever since.

[00:05:17]

Until now, that's what you do?

[00:05:18]

Yeah.

[00:05:19]

You have a band? You play around Boston or?

[00:05:26]

All over and not so much right around this area. More outskirts like this weekend that was up in the Hampshire. A couple of different pants [OVERLAPPING] Last weekend. I'm in a couple of blues bands seems to be the thing lately in the last few years that I've been doing, it's kind of fell into it. I don't consider myself a blues player per se, but it's great music. But I just fell into it and doing the gigs and hanging out with the guys and all that.

[00:05:55]

Do you get that same feeling that everybody, when you listen to people talking, regardless of the audience. Going through a big crowd or it's more crowded, it doesn't matter. I think for people who play, it is really something intimate person loves. What person does.

[00:06:12]

Yeah. You always feed off a responsive crowd [OVERLAPPING] But I've got as much enjoyment playing for 10 people is 10,000.

[00:06:23]

[OVERLAPPING] But that is an energy coming. Why do you feel that?

[00:06:27]

If people are receptive, It's great. But I'm there to play the music and play with other I like to play with.

[00:06:37]

This one I think is interesting Russell because I think the musicians in general, or the artists in general, what fuels is they liked so much what they do. Of course, if there is a good energy, good response to what they're presenting, they are going to feed on that and I know [OVERLAPPING] But if it doesn't, they also feel I'm okay because that's what I like to do and I'm going to play right that's [OVERLAPPING] to me, makes music very satisfying. I think that's an interesting. And, in another aspect of people who know you, or knows you here in HLS. I know you since facilities. I knew that you played and that you were a musician. But a lot of people probably don't even suspect. Just see you doing [OVERLAPPING] your job and walk around and that's where I think people should know more about other folks. I know that there are other singers and players.

[00:07:34]

[BACKGROUND] There's a lot happening.

[00:07:36]

It's good to know about that other side of our employees as well. With that, when did you start at Harvard?

[00:07:46]

In October of '96.

[00:07:48]

'96?

[00:07:49]

Yeah.

[00:07:51]

Where did you start? What's your first job here?

[00:07:54]

My first and only job here has been Facilities Management.

[00:07:58]

Always Facilities?

[00:07:59]

Always. I guess, in Harry Potter terms I'm a pure-blood.

[00:08:02]

[LAUGHTER].

[00:08:04]

I've never left the department. It was always a great place to be, and I was happy to be there.

[00:08:13]

Just before Facilities, what were you doing? I just want you to know, it depends on what you were doing before, what made you feel like, "Oh, I'm going to join Harvard. I want to look for this job at Harvard."

[00:08:24]

I was working for a stonemason.

[00:08:28]

Stonemason?

[00:08:28]

Yeah, and that was interesting, and it was great and all, but it was seasonal.

[00:08:37]

I started looking around for other jobs. I had two kids and it's like I've got to grow up and get a real job. I started applying and gotten nowhere, and then about a year after I started doing that, my old buddy Jack Mason was working in Facilities, and he called me up and said, "There's a job opening up if you're interested." So I came down and interviewed and all that and that's how I got in. Jack stayed for another year and a half or so. When he left, Gene took his place, Gene O'Connor.

[00:09:13]

Gene O'Connor, wow.

[00:09:14]

Yeah. I've worked with Jean for a long time.

[00:09:20]

What was the main work that you were doing when you started?

[00:09:23]

My first job was a Maintenance Technician II, was the designation. I always tell people if you can tell me what I do here [LAUGHTER] I'll hire you because the title's never made sense to me. So I was that for a while, and then it changed, I think to Building Services Assistant or something, then it became Building Services Coordinator. I really don't know what that is. [LAUGHTER] I think somebody makes these up [LAUGHTER] and then has no idea what the job is, but that's okay.

[00:09:59]

It is a beautiful title. But then that is everything else in-between, what you do, in terms of.

[00:10:05]

Well, to sum it up perfectly, I was at some function somewhere, and I was doing something and Randy Kennedy was standing next to me, and I forget who was asking me something, but he said, "Can you do this?" Well, I said, "I do everything here but teach [LAUGHTER]." And Randy heard and he said, "But you do all the important stuff [LAUGHTER]."

[00:10:30]

That's true, and that's one of the things that when we are talking with other folks as well. That's the most important part of what we're talking, and you're trying to bring it to light, is everyone who do their job, and Kerry Anderson mentioned that as well. She said, "You know that job is well done when you were invisible, nobody noticed, but everything works well." It is nice to know, and it is true to that. But I really wish that people know the folks that make this place run, and well run, and have that story told. Because I think that's important. Professor Kennedy was right when he said, "Yes, you have a good job. You do what is right." In the beginning, when you started, it was more maintenance in general, or you are already dealing because I know that you work with the faculty.

[00:11:28]

It was kind of the same. I just walk around with a little tool bag or handcart, move this, hang that, fix that, get them this.

[00:11:39]

Going to the offices and see what they need.

[00:11:42]

You need the desk over here, okay, move it over there. And it's still a lot of that same thing. If it's moved, I can handle, I would do it. If it wasn't, I'd bring in a moving crew.

[00:11:56]

But I remember one thing that I always felt like you did so well. You do a lot of things, I know for sure, and you already mentioned that. But the arts that departments or professors ask, I know that you know the place where to send them or how to frame them and even hanging them is a different process. I always felt like instead of just, "Oh, I'll just put a nail on the wall and hang my picture there," with you is a different story. I have seen you work, and it is really, really nice to see how professional you are. With professors, when you started, do you remember more or less how many they were compared to today? Don't need to have example [OVERLAPPING] much less.

[00:12:48]

I know 70ish, I guess. There seems to be a few more now maybe, but I would never counted it up.

[00:12:54]

You attend, or you help with all of them, with the faculty that are here year-round, but also the visiting professors, whatever they are. The new professor coming, you are going to help with that.

[00:13:09]

Sure, I get them acclimated and set up and find out what they need.

[00:13:15]

What are good memories of faculty that you don't have here around and you had good experience with them?

[00:13:23]

I've met some pretty amazing people here. Archibald Cox comes to mind.

[00:13:30]

Interesting, Alice Brown, who takes care of Faculty who I didn't have a chance to meet, but she mentioned him.

[00:13:38]

Alice was close to Phil Heymann, and he was close with Archibald Cox too.

[00:13:43]

Yeah.

[00:13:43]

He and James Vorenberg who was great.

[00:13:46]

She mentioned that as well. What Archibald Cox used to do?

[00:13:53]

To me, was the epitome of a class lawyer, the real deal, big time brilliant legal guy, and he was wonderful. I did a lot of stuff for him, fortunately, before he passed away, and I was able to speak to his wife after he died, and she said, "There were two things on his dresser when he died, a picture of his grandchildren and your business card [LAUGHTER]."

[00:14:15]

Really, that's so nice [OVERLAPPING].

[00:14:17]

So I thought that was cool.

[00:14:19]

Yeah, it is nice.

[00:14:23]

Eventually, when you start working with them, you develop that relationship. Some of them are open, some are busier, I would say, not that they are not open, but sometimes they think they are too busy to be in the office or engage, and that. I remember having met Professor Ogletree and I need to talk to him, and he just said, "No, come to my office." And I was fascinated by, while we were talking, the calls that he received from ambassadors, from people in DC, just watching that regardless of what I need to talk to him, just being there and watching what's happening. He's assistant comes, "Someone called, and you need to do this, or you need to go D.C today."

[00:15:08]

No restaurant Charles. He was great. I got to know him really well. Did a lot of work for him in his office. I hung a lot of, not only photos and artwork, but his honorary degree collection. I finally said, "Charles, we're going to be on the ceiling [LAUGHTER] if you don't hang up any more stuff." But his wife wouldn't let him bring any of it home so [LAUGHTER] we had to keep it in his office, and we used to rotate things. Charles was awesome.

[00:15:38]

With time, you felt like they would just say, "Hey, I need something hung on the wall, just come and figure it out." They didn't have much of [OVERLAPPING].

[00:15:46]

That didn't happen too much. I always got them involved because I wanted them to be happy with it, and what had priority. A faculty don't hang too many degrees up. Their regular degrees. They hang up a lot of photos and artwork and [OVERLAPPING] kids at work or family at work or something. Andy Kaufman has a whole office of his mother's paintings because his mother was a well-known painter in New York. I hung a bunch of stuff. Every time Randy Kennedy writes a book, which is all the time [LAUGHTER], he gets the cover picture blown up into a poster, and he's got them up. That looks really good in his office. So they like [OVERLAPPING].

[00:16:39]

You have a chance to be in these offices with these big-name faculty when people, probably a lot of people, never have a chance to see. It is interesting to see from one to another what the preferences are and what they do.

[00:16:54]

It's interesting like if you move their books, you see what, like I had to get some stuff for Richard Parker once, and I found that he's got a bunch of Western books [LAUGHTER] and so am I. So we hit it off on that, and he gifted me a book one time and stuff. You find out little things. Some just have law books, but some have other things that show their interests.

[00:17:19]

Russell, you're touching something that I also, I hope someday we have something in that nature that we bring now, and I have a chat with other folks about this too, exactly that. I think staff and students, in general, see these faculties that I know that they are famous, they are brilliant professionals, brilliant lawyers working around here. But you always see them in light of almost a superstar style, so high there. You were mentioning something that I would love to know more about certain faculty to bring them down to the level of a regular human being, what kind of books they like. You just said this professor loved Western that you also like. You are a regular staff working and helping them with certain services, and you find out that you have something in common. That brings them in a level that you feel like, okay, you have a connection there, and you talk about that, right?

[00:18:20]

Sure.

[00:18:21]

I think others the same way. I would love to hear from them; what kind of series they watch, movies that they like, music that they like, to have that kind of a connection. Were you able to talk to people, faculty in general, and find out? I'm not asking you to [LAUGHTER].

[00:18:40]

No. What comes to mind was Alan Stone. Dr. Stone just passed away recently, but he was a big Shakespeare nut. He was seriously into that, and I used to ask him questions and stuff like that. Besides Shakespeare, I'd go knock on the door and he says, "Come in." I say, "Dr. Stone, I need a piece of advice," and he's a psychiatrist [LAUGHTER].

[00:19:08]

Best translation of the Divine Comedy. Which one should I get and he'd go off on a thing and he'd have tips.

[00:19:14]

Knowledge in the area that's completely different from the law. [OVERLAPPING]

[00:19:18]

Nothing to do with work and here for all. But he had all that stuff right at his fingertips and he was more than happy to share. I got a lot of good insight from him.

[00:19:30]

That's brilliant. Others that you can remember in some aspects, in terms of a preference, or they were good lawyers or brilliant lawyers but have a different hobbies, for example. Do you find out any lawyer or any professor or faculty that were a painter?

[00:19:49]

I know Bob Clark writes music.

[00:19:52]

Writes music.

[00:19:52]

Yeah, I guess years ago when he was teaching, he would sometimes do a little performance. [OVERLAPPING] A little synthesizer or something. That's what I heard, but I know he writes and records music.

[00:20:04]

You see, those are really interesting things to learn from them. The different aspects separating the lawyer from the person that has all those hobbies. In terms of law school, since we started until now, of course, grew in terms of the size and the staff and everything else. What is the difference that was relevant for you in terms of the?

[00:20:32]

Far as the staff.

[00:20:33]

No, in general. I think your a view of what the campus was at that time to what it is now. Is that good take in terms of.

[00:20:45]

Its definitely expanded. The clinical program is expanded WCC.

[00:20:49]

Yes.

[00:20:50]

That's not a small thing.

[00:20:52]

You remember, I think people, a lot of these new folks who never imagined I was mentioned at HR talking, when you had the, it was Jarvis Street. Jarvis way.

[00:21:05]

Jarvis Street went through from Mass ave to Everett Street.

[00:21:09]

In that would pass by, I can't remember. It was Pound.

[00:21:13]

There was the Ukranian. The Pound was Bigger. It stuck out. There was the loading dock on Pound.

[00:21:19]

Yes.

[00:21:20]

Harkness stuck out and then there was the Ukrainian Center and Baker house and those live in Wyeth hall and then the parking garage, that stuff is all gone to make room for WCC.

[00:21:30]

That's what I was trying to figure out. Would come from the come from Mass ave right after Pound where we went between pound and WCC now. It would have a little way out. Where the guards booth is right now?

[00:21:50]

Went all the way to Everett Street. You could drive right through it.

[00:21:53]

Yeah. Would come from Mass ave and make a curve. I think that's what I'm trying to figure out is where the guards booth right now is that would go on?

[00:22:03]

That was the street.

[00:22:04]

The street right there. Then pound would have the loading dock, which was always interesting to see the trucks trying to maneuver and figure out what to do. Then you had the Ukrainian House that right now is 1637 dorm.

[00:22:20]

Move those down the street.

[00:22:21]

Then you have Baker.

[00:22:24]

The Carriage House.

[00:22:26]

Carriage House, which are 3 and 5 Mellen St. right now. We're moving from here, and stay there. Then in the very corner where the bookstore is, was Wyeth. Or it was it garage already?

[00:22:40]

There was the garage and Wyeth Hall.

[00:22:42]

The Garage was above?

[00:22:44]

The big above-ground garage.

[00:22:46]

Yeah. Because Wyeth was a dorm that was completely taken down.

[00:22:51]

They took it down. They took the garage down. The Broadway Street garage, that garage looked the same. They were probably built around the same time.

[00:23:01]

One thing that was funny, I was telling someone else as well. That garage never made sense to me in that sense. Well, it was a garage, yes. But when I was working landscape and going up because you had to clean the snow and frozen place and everything else, that we're closer to the outside part of the garage would be all full of snow, depends on the storm that would come was really interesting to see that. To imagine that all of that are gone to create what it is now, WCC, that's a huge to have an academic building for. Pound Hall that lost.

[00:23:39]

They cut a classroom off and the mail room off.

[00:23:43]

The events.

[00:23:45]

The events was up there. Ropes Gray room they took that all out.

[00:23:50]

That taken out to give space for the quadrangle, what we call now. They have a plaza for the students.

[00:24:01]

In terms of departments in general, Russell is the same process. Departments asked for help?

[00:24:11]

It's changed the real technical things, the work order system and stuff like that. But that's basically some people call in the people at the front desk like, well, you used to do take the work orders and assign them to whomever [OVERLAPPING] that's supposed to get them, you know, yeah.

[00:24:29]

But there is also the relationship. We end up meeting people, getting to know. You enter almost in every department and every faculty office around campus.

[00:24:42]

That's what I've always thought was one of the great parts of my job was that I get to go out and see everybody, meet everybody. I guess the mailroom guys get out. I get up a lot. People are stuck right where they work every day. Their office or their workstation or whatever, that's where they work. It's amazing how many people just know their building or just know their co-workers in their area.

[00:25:08]

Yeah.

[00:25:10]

Whereas I've been blessed to use the whole campus.

[00:25:13]

Because you could go and see everyone.

[00:25:15]

Dorms too, students too. I used to have a lot of friendships with students years ago.

[00:25:20]

You helped a lot with accessibility.

[00:25:22]

Yeah.

[00:25:23]

Accessibility office also for students who need a piece of furniture that's more proper for their needs, or a desk or whatever it is. So you move from either on campus or sometimes even for if they needed, they live off campus for in terms of accessibility, accommodations, what it is. I think that's the magic part of the job that you do, is this human connection that is hard to think how we have Fridays at 4, you have the events that you create, an on-campus, dinners or the staff luncheon. But I always feel like because of there is not much of a connection. Every department tends to stay on their own. Facilties in their own block and DOS and their own block, HR.

[00:26:14]

With the staff lunch, you'll see people sit with their programs. I rarely do that.

[00:26:19]

Because you have the chance to know everywhere.

[00:26:22]

When Bill Murray Bowen was head of HRIS didn't make fries at 4:00 every day. I thought that might help.

[00:26:27]

[LAUGHTER] It would have been nice. Can you imagine? It was odd. That let's have fries at Monday to Fridays at 4:00.

[00:26:36]

That didn't really leave the drawing board. [LAUGHTER] But I tried.

[00:26:40]

That was I believe, a project that everybody would say, oh, that's a good idea. Let's try to do that.

[00:26:46]

Well, if they put it to a vote, I'm sure it would have gotten a good number.

[00:26:50]

[LAUGHTER] If they vote on that one, I'm pretty sure that would be a winner project. It's just how you think in terms of budget and the finance aspect of it. How much or the time, right? Everybody is going to leave it for. When I was in facilities, I used to get get there early. Well, it was 8:00-4:00.

[00:27:14]

Right.

[00:27:15]

But I used to be there earlier. Then Fridays at 4:00. I would say. Great. You have Fridays at 4:00. I'm about to leave to go home. [LAUGHTER] Some folks are going to have two hours or an hour, most of the people are 9:00 to 5:00. Some folks are going to have a good time, a free hour there. I cannot have that part. I always felt like why don't you do 3:00-5:00, then everybody has, but then the other person to have the two hours anyways. But it is at least a good event for people to get together and see and enjoy some time. Thinking about music did you meet other folks inside of campus throughout the years that would be also artists playing.

[00:28:06]

Yeah.

[00:28:06]

Have a chance to?

[00:28:07]

Yeah, sure. There's a few still here now. You know Brad Connor?

[00:28:11]

Yeah. That's true.

[00:28:12]

Ben [inaudible 00:28:12] when he was here, he retired but Steve Foot, David Langlois.

[00:28:18]

Yes.

[00:28:19]

They're all players.

[00:28:20]

Steve Foot used to be part of a band.

[00:28:22]

He still is.

[00:28:23]

He still is?

[00:28:23]

Those guys still play.

[00:28:24]

Who is the other one that you said?

[00:28:26]

Dave Langlois.

[00:28:29]

My God. Why am I blanking on this.

[00:28:34]

Ken Lafler who left to go east.

[00:28:38]

Ken who played for you?

[00:28:40]

No, he's got his own bands. He's still playing quite a bit.

[00:28:43]

But I think Ken played for someone's goodbye party.

[00:28:47]

I think he did something at God, no.

[00:28:53]

I can't remember. But was virtual because you cannot be together and he played some very good music. [OVERLAPPING]

[00:29:00]

I'll think of it if I don t try. Lisa Dealy going away thing. He did a song for her.

[00:29:08]

Yes, that's true. Because that's the only time I said, what Ken Lafler, a finance guy that's playing?

[00:29:14]

That's the thing. He goes in the phone booth and comes out a different person.

[00:29:20]

It is really cool to see. The same thing that you were talking here in terms of other aspects of the human side of everyone, regardless of their profession, what they do.

[00:29:33]

The Suttons, Patty and Brian Sutton over in the library, they play instruments. There's a lot of people that do stuff like that here.

[00:29:39]

Who are other folks without saying age or anything. But in terms of a long-term that you remember that issue around from the same time as you? Diane?

[00:29:53]

Diane, yeah.

[00:29:56]

Susan Salvado and Yvonne Smith.

[00:29:59]

Yeah.

[00:30:00]

Long timers. Diane John Holleran. They've been long time. John Arciprete has been here a long time.

[00:30:06]

That's true. Used to be faculty support. Debbie Gallagher.

[00:30:13]

Debbie Gallagher. Yeah.

[00:30:14]

That's long time as well, right?

[00:30:16]

Yeah. Kathy McGillicuddy.

[00:30:19]

That's right. Professor Tribe.

[00:30:22]

She worked for Larry Tribe.

[00:30:23]

Worked for Larry Tribe for many, many years.

[00:30:26]

There's still a few holdouts.

[00:30:28]

Someone in OPIA? OPIA or oh my God, I can't remember the number and the name right now. But yeah, I would love to chat with those folks as well through here. I had a chance to talk to Yvonne and that was a fantastic conversation in terms of how much that happened and what changed. But I will start to Daryl Muranaka from Faculty Support services. And like you, Daryl stayed in Faculty Support and he stayed there for all the time. You started with Facilities and stayed there. I know that some folks in Facilities, Diane, I'm going to say John. I say John Arciprete, John Holland came from real estate.

[00:31:17]

When I started, Franklin Limenti was the director of Facilities.

[00:31:24]

Okay.

[00:31:24]

Then he retired and we got John Sarno for a couple of years and then John Arciprete came in. When he came from real estate, he brought John Holleran and Becky, and Diane with them to augment the group and they're still there.

[00:31:42]

In the beginning, Russell, Facilities, was it smaller as well in terms of employees and the amount of work or how was it?

[00:31:51]

No, about the size, we had housing then. We had Dan Murphy, a housing officer.

[00:31:59]

Then later passed on to Marika, right?

[00:32:01]

To Marika, yeah, and Dan left. Marika came in with John Sarno when Frank retired. She had worked with him at Newburry College. Yes. There might be a couple more people now, I guess.

[00:32:20]

Wow, that's completely different. Now, talking to you, I remember we had both mail rooms, we had the staff and dorms mail room.

[00:32:31]

John Lathrop run the dorm mail room. [OVERLAPPING]

[00:32:35]

He was here a long time. That was separate from Holmes. [OVERLAPPING]

[00:32:39]

Holmes and I remember at the time, I think for all of the dorms, at least Gropius, I'm 100 percent sure that they used to go and put the Gropius had the slots right

[00:32:53]

Gropius had the grates built-in.

[00:32:54]

Yes.

[00:32:55]

With the combination locks.

[00:32:56]

Exactly.

[00:32:57]

They were there when they built the building.

[00:32:59]

Then they used the dorm.

[00:33:01]

They delivered the room.

[00:33:02]

Delivered for all those mailboxes.

[00:33:05]

Once they went to WCC it was students came to get their mail at that point.

[00:33:08]

And then changed everything and then they both meet rooms combined and came into one only.

[00:33:13]

Yeah.

[00:33:14]

John Lathrop after he retired or he worked for a while for the parking service, right?

[00:33:22]

Yeah. I haven't seen him for ages.

[00:33:23]

No, he left again.

[00:33:24]

He left again?

[00:33:25]

Yeah.

[00:33:26]

He used to be a pastor as well.

[00:33:27]

He's a pastor as well. He writes books.

[00:33:30]

Wow, yeah.

[00:33:31]

Was a good man. I liked him a lot.

[00:33:33]

Yes, he is.

[00:33:35]

What else, Russell, in terms of why you were doing now?

[00:33:43]

I know that you're retired and you left.

[00:33:45]

I left the end of June '21.

[00:33:49]

'21. But you miss us so much.

[00:33:53]

Yeah, I miss a lot. [LAUGHTER] We bought a house out in Western Mass. We're out visiting one of my sons who lives in East Hampton and we had some time to kill and we found this house and we want to buying it.

[00:34:05]

Nice.

[00:34:05]

It's a fixer upper and that's what we've been doing. I thought, that's my new job. Then recently I was in Cambridge and I stopped in and they said, "Hey we got something open for a few weeks if you're interested." [LAUGHTER] I thought it was great because I get to see people again. When I left in '21 during COVID, it was Zooms and no personal goodbyes. This has given me a chance to really see people again and it's been great.

[00:34:42]

But it's also, I think Russel, you always have to imagine that you are not how you say, everybody can be replaced in terms of what they do.

[00:34:53]

Sure.

[00:34:53]

Because that's the nature of a profession and everything else. But I think they tell a story in terms of what you did here, the mark that you left here, and how much connection and job well done that you always did. I think it is a difficult thing for someone new to come and to jump right in and have that single response that people used. I cannot even imagine how many times. Oh, Russell, you do it. Russell can do it. That, Oh, no, Russel can do this. So many different aspects of what you do that- Like you said, the title is this. But what I do can be very much in everything, like you mentioned the professor again in the beginning. I think this is proof of fantastic work that you always did, your relationship with departments and faculty and everybody else, that's on you. To come back, of course, joking about you miss everything back here, whatever other reason that might be behind this but just say that that's a proof of work well done, the job well done that you did. [LAUGHTER] we still need you.

[00:36:12]

That's nice. A quarter century of my life was here.

[00:36:21]

I'll never forget that. I'll never cut that off. I always think of this place as a part of me and I'm a part of it, whatever. It was a great place.

[00:36:34]

It's interesting how people might not understand or have a different view. It depends on what their goals are there. But I have the same feeling. I started here with landscape in 2003, came to Facilities into 2005.

[00:36:49]

I asked you to help me move stuff.

[00:36:51]

Yes.

[00:36:51]

When you were in landscaping.

[00:36:53]

I don t know. There is a sense of, I don't know, pride and how much you like, what you do. People that you meet and all the relationships that you create here that makes a complete difference in terms of your goals and what you think in life. I really liked everything that I did and I can tell you. I tell everyone I liked what they did in landscape. I learned a lot there. I was a Water Spring company manager in Brazil. I never liked to have heavy-duty kind of work. My dad would be laughing about the stuff that I learned and how to do here. When I my first job, do you know how to use a lawnmower? Never saw that in my life. I didn't have that in Brazil. I don't. But if you show me, I think I can learn. I really enjoyed. The facilities was the same. The phone and the emails, how much you connect with people through the front desk work. You go straight to their offices. I on the other hand, was on the phone and the emails, and you create that connection relationship. I think that's real and that's exactly what you said. We are connected to work that we do and we enjoy that a lot.

[00:38:17]

I didn't like everything I did every day sometimes, but overall, at a great job.

[00:38:24]

Yes.

[00:38:25]

I'm glad and proud to be part of the university.

[00:38:31]

The memories.

[00:38:32]

Oh, yeah.

[00:38:33]

Isn't that amazing for us to be in the offices of these brilliant lawyers that we were talking about and you see them on TV. I see Professor Tribe all the time on TV commentating something. I say, my goodness, I was passing by this professor on the hallways.

[00:38:52]

Sure.

[00:38:53]

I see them in events throughout Harvard and people just see them on TV in a distance or whatever it is. That's another amazing part.

[00:39:02]

My wife and I were out to eat a couple of weeks ago in East Hampton. I'm just sitting there, look up at the screen. There's Mark Wu. I say, I know him.

[00:39:11]

Yeah. That's the really amazing things that to be working in a place like this. Even these students.

[00:39:18]

Sure. How many students you see throughout the years and then you see them one that comes to mind when I was in facilities and I tell people, Joe Kennedy, he used to go there to ask keys for dorms. I used to see him from Holmes hall.

[00:39:35]

He was in BSA.

[00:39:36]

Then going to the 23 Ever Street for the work that he did there as well and coming back. Wonderful kid, very nice. Then some other congress men out of nowhere, they are somewhere doing different things. It is a very vibrant place I believe to be proud of and you're right. But in general, I think you are as a coworker, wonderful person. I always admire everything that you did. I am really happy that you accept the invitation to come and talk. I wanted to have you, Yvonne, are amazing folks that has history here and a lot to say. [MUSIC] Thank you very much, Russell.

[00:40:20]

Thank you. It was a pleasure.

[00:40:22]

For everybody that are listening to us, this is it. Until our next time, see you then. Bye bye.