

Oral History: Anton Vishio

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Interviewed by Mac Barrett '67

On How He Would Like to Be Remembered

Barrett: And finally, along these lines — not that you think in these terms and you probably don't — how would you like to be remembered?

Vishio: A what member?

Barrett: Remembered.

Vishio: Here? You know, that's another thing.

Barrett: Very few are part of this landscape for 45 years.

Vishio: Yeah, I know, I know.

Barrett: You can be as modest as you want.

Vishio: That's one of the negative aspects of the School that they were foolish enough to keep me for 45 years. I just keep thinking that headmaster after headmaster after headmaster constantly goofed in that fashion.

Barrett: Year after year.

Vishio: Yes. Baldwin's mistake was passed on to Mr. Finney, which was passed on and passed on. Poor John Schmick got stuck with me before he finally could get rid of me. How would I like to be remembered? I don't know. You know, I mentioned to you that I get upset and I get very saddened by the fact that my old friends aren't remembered. I think it's just the passage of time. That's life. If I'm not remembered, I'm not remembered.

And I make no claims to actually deserve to merit that, to be remembered. I think Mr. Finney does. I think Mr. Baldwin, having integrated the School, does. I think all the headmasters that I worked under, they deserve to be remembered, and I think most — the young guys, they'll have their own moment of glory, but I think those old timers that I was ensconced with, or ensconced among, luckily. Can you imagine that? I come to Gilman School — they said I was brash; I wasn't brash — they said I was brash, okay. And I come into this organization here, and I meet all these people that immediately, you know, humble you. Not 100%, okay. There was that occasional oddball, and I won't mention any of that, all right? But, I mean, my God. How fortunate can you be? Just from meeting Mark Moreford, who coincidentally had taught at this place in Baltimore, Maryland, had come to Ohio State...

Barrett: We're coming full-circle as we end here.

Vishio: That's true. Had come to Ohio State and suggested to us — one of his students and one of his friends, his tennis partner, his handball partner — suggested that I take a year at Gilman School. I'm cutting back. I remember going to the head of the department, Mr. Tichnor — not Tickner, but Tichnor. God, I didn't mention Reg! Can you imagine not mentioning Reg?! Another institution. How many remember Reg? That's what I'm saying. Why should I be remembered when they're not remembered. So I'm going to leave that question at that.

But I come to this school for one year. One year. And Mr. Tichnor, who's the head of the department at Ohio State, calls me, and he says, "You've got to take this job." The one he had offered me [at Ohio State]. And I said, "No, I'm going to go there for a year where I can spend my time writing." He said to me, his last words to me: "You'll never come back." It's exactly what he said. "You'll never come back." And I laughed. I said goodbye to my friends and said I'll see you in a year. And then it was two years, and then the headmasters, as I said, kept making that mistake for 45 years.

And I'll tell you the one who deserves the most credit for all that is sitting at home right now: my wife. She was the rock. She really was and is still today. If it weren't for Pat, all those times I came home just angry with something that may have happened or angry with someone —

I should have said: “angry at something that may have happened.” But I come home, and she’s there to say, “Stop. The kids are here. Okay? Let’s spend some time with the kids.” And that sort of did it for me. I can’t tell you how many times that Reddy and I exchanged words — out of respect, or who else? God, well, you name the teacher that I may have exchanged words with, and you’ll see what I mean. But, you know, that was part of the mystique of the School. You could do that and go back the next day, and it was a new day, and you were in the classroom. And you’re teaching one, two, three, four, five classes in a row. And then you have a study hall. And then you go out to athletics. And then you go home. And the day went so fast, it was unbelievable. It was almost you got there, 7:30, and there were already teachers there. You got there, and all of a sudden, I’m up the steps, I’m at home. Where did the day go? And that’s day after day, year after year. What a wonderful way to spend your life, Mac. I mean, how delightful.