

Malin Burnham

Interview conducted by

Mary Walshok, PhD

August 10, 2015

SAN DIEGO TECHNOLOGY ARCHIVE



Malin Burnham



Mr. Malin Burnham serves as the Chairman of John Burnham & Co. Mr. Burnham is a private investor. Mr. Burnham serves as the Chairman of Burnham Pacific Properties and Chairman of Advisory Council of Sorrento Associates, Inc. He is the Founder of First National Bank at San Diego and serves as its Director. Mr. Burnham serves as Honorary Trustee of Sanford-Burnham Medical Research Institute. He is also a Trustee of The Burnham Institute. He also serves on the Dean's Advisory Council of The Rady School of Management at the University California, San Diego. Mr. Burnham is a former Director of San Diego Gas & Electric Company, Cubic Corporation, and Gen-Probe, Inc. Mr. Burnham is a former Trustee of Stanford University and President of America's Cup Organizing Committee.

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JONES: Mary Walshok, Ph.D.

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LOCATION: La Jolla, California

1 **BURNHAM:** My history as part of the Burnham family in San Diego, I suppose
2 starts in about 1905 when my grandfather John Burnham moved his family to San
3 Diego. And the reason he moved here was because he had an older brother by the
4 name of George Burnham who had previously come a few years earlier from
5 Minnesota to San Diego. And my grandfather bought into a small real estate
6 brokerage firm which was subsequently named John Burnham & Company, and it
7 was in commercial real estate brokerage, commercial insurance, and commercial
8 mortgage lending. And my father was a youngster of about seven or eight years old
9 back in 1905 when the family moved to San Diego.

10 Fast-forward to my birth in 1927. I had one sibling brother 18 months older – Peter –
11 and we grew up in the Loma Portal area of San Diego. Went to public grammar
12 school at the Loma Portal Grammar School, and then to Point Loma High School. I
13 did all six years at that time. I was the last class that did all six years at Point Loma
14 High School, because as soon as I went from the sixth grade – or the seventh to the
15 eighth, they started a new junior high school called Dana in the Point Loma area.

16 So I grew up in a middle-income family neighborhood you might say. When I
17 graduated from high school, it was in June of 1945, and I had intended to join the
18 Navy. The draft for World War II was still in effect, of course, because the war was
19 still going on with Japan in that time. And any event, I went on a sailing regatta in
20 the Star International Class of Sailboat. I was 17 years old and I had a crew by the
21 name of Lowell North who was 15 years old, and we took the train across the country
22 to New York City and into Stamford, Connecticut; and we were the youngest age
23 ever. To win the World Championship in this very competitive class. And I'm proud
24 to say that that record has never been touched since then.

25 On the way home, we took the train because airliners weren't flying in those days, or
26 even known. So we got about halfway across the country, somewhere in the middle
27 of Kansas, and the train stopped. It was the middle of August and we didn't know
28 why. It turned out to be VJ Day. The war was over in Japan; and we were met at the
29 Union Railway Station in Los Angeles by my mother and father, because driving
30 back-and-forth from here to LA was better than infrequent trains, or planes –

31 In any event, the first thing my mother and dad said, "Well, congratulations on your
32 victory," and number two, "You're going to Stanford, ah-ha." And I said, "But, Dad,
33 I'm planning on going to the service into the Navy like all my buddies have been
34 doing." "Well," he says, "the war is over and the draft will stop sooner or later, and
35 you don't need to waste time waiting for that to happen."

36 So my father had arranged [chuckling] in a few days through one of his Los Angeles
37 insurance contacts—a big Stanford booster—that I could be a walk-on; and that's
38 exactly what happened. In those days, there were few men in college versus women,
39 and the actual enrollment numbers were down during the war years, of course, and
40 so Stanford was—

41 **WALSHOK:** Eager to have good students. [Laughs]

42 **BURNHAM:** Yes. Well, and so they were accepting people like me that at least had a
43 good high school record. And so off to college I went. And Stanford was on the
44 quarter system, starting in September through December. And so, again, I had no
45 draft notice, so my dad says, "You're going back for the second quarter." "Okay, pop."

46 And some friends of mine talked me into going skiing at Yosemite. I had never skied
47 before in my life. And in those days, ski equipment were wooden skis and leather
48 boots, and no safety bindings or anything like that. Well, within one hour, I
49 succeeding in breaking my leg on the slopes; and that succeeded subsequently in
50 giving me draft deferment. And so I continued my education at Stanford, and soon
51 thereafter, the draft was over with and they weren't taking in young people like me,
52 and so in that regard, my college education was continued.

53 Now, I was the first of my family to go to university.

54 **WALSHOK:** Oh, really?

55 **BURNHAM:** I even beat my older brother because he was in the service. And so I
56 got started one year before he did, even though he was a year-and-a-half older. And
57 so what courses did I want to take at Stanford? In high school, my best subjects were
58 physics and math, so I decided I'd take an engineering curriculum.

59 And my dad was very supportive. He always had the door open for me to come back
60 into the business, but he never was pulling, he was just saying it was up to me what I
61 wanted to do. And as a matter of fact, he was very happy that I was taking an
62 engineering course because he envisioned that someday I could be the CEO of
63 Westinghouse or General Motors. And the more I thought about that, the less I liked
64 that idea; because the more I thought about it, the real estate business in San Diego
65 looked pretty appealing to me—the best place to live.

66 When I entered my junior year, I had to declare which discipline of engineering I
67 was going to major in. And since I then knew that I wasn't going to follow
68 engineering as a career, I decided to take an industrial engineering course; and
69 because I got some exposure to marketing and law and accounting and those types
70 of things, and a smattering of all of the three or four different disciplines of
71 engineering. And I will have to tell you that if I was going to do it all over again, I
72 would do exactly the same thing.

73 And why? Because that education, for me at least, taught me how to analyze; and I
74 could look at things and mentally take them apart—whether it's a building or a
75 project, a proposed project, or a person: "How do these things go together? How do
76 they tick?" and so on and so forth. And so that was a wonderful education for me.

77 **WALSHOK:** There are a couple of things you said Malin that I'd like to pursue
78 because I think they are relevant to the role you have played since the 1980s. You
79 mentioned that you were a competitive sailor and traveled to the East Coast—a big
80 deal when you were 17.

81 You mentioned your dad saying to you, "Well, you could be CEO of Westinghouse
82 one day." Was your family ambitious for you and your brother?

83 **BURNHAM:** Yes, I would say. I probably haven't used that word particularly, but my
84 mother and father were very supportive of my brother and me. I don't believe,
85 looking back, that they tried to so-call spoil us; but, again, neither had ever gone to
86 college, and they supported us. My brother was more of an outdoor-type person; and
87 also, he was a very good mechanical-type person.

88 And I never had an automobile of my own until my junior year in college. My
89 brother ended up having a little Ford pickup truck in high school. But why? Because
90 he was mechanically inclined. He could take the engine apart and put it back
91 together.

92 **WALSHOK:** A tinkerer, yeah.

93 **BURNHAM:** Yes. I couldn't do that today even. So he took a different path than I,
94 and our folks supported both of us and what we were doing. He also began sailing
95 the same time I did, but was less interested in the competitive nature of it than I
96 was. So, yeah, we had a very close family life.

97 Our biggest luxury in those days was a backyard barbeque for either a piece of
98 swordfish or a hamburger steak, and that was the top of the line for our family. And
99 we also had seven or eight guava trees in our backyard; and every spring, my mother
100 made guava jelly for the whole year's supply. Little things like that I remember. And
101 we were just down to earth type of people.

102 **WALSHOK:** But also, I have heard you speak about the values that your
103 grandfather and your father instilled in you in terms of what your responsibilities
104 were as a citizen of this city or of this country.

105 **BURNHAM:** Well, that's a good point, and I hadn't thought of it exactly that way as
106 my mentors. But as I think back, my father's [uncle] was George Burnham. He was
107 elected as a two-year term in the United States Congress. He was one of the
108 representatives of this area. That was public service. That was probably the first in
109 our family of any magnitude that I can remember. Again, this was before my time, so
110 I didn't associate with him.

111 And then my father was in the Navy during World War I. When he got out before
112 getting into business, he was a postmaster of National City. So there was a little
113 public service there as well. And so somehow that got instilled in my DNA – I don't
114 know how.

115 But I was always taught to do the right thing and be above board, and complete my
116 commitments, whatever they might be. And so I hadn't put all this together before,
117 but you're questioning has made me think about some of these things.

118 **WALSHOK:** When did you come back to San Diego? You graduated from Stanford
119 in...?

120 **BURNHAM:** In the summer of 1949. And I came back, and then a week later—after
121 graduating as an industrial engineer—I joined John Burnham & Company, named
122 after my grandfather, as I mentioned before, who died a year before I was born. So I
123 never knew either my grandfather or my uncle grandfather George. And so I came
124 back and entered the firm. I was the 11th employee at that time.

125 **WALSHOK:** Working for your dad?

126 **BURNHAM:** Working for my dad in John Burnham & Company, and I was paid a
127 magnanimous salary of \$225.00 a month.

128 **WALSHOK:** [Laughs] Those were the days.

129 **BURNHAM:** Those were the days. And I was also married. I had gotten married that
130 same summer of 1945, and –

131 **WALSHOK:** '45 or '49?

132 **BURNHAM:** Excuse me, 1949; the summer, I got married. And a year later, I had
133 two children, twins: boy and girl, John and Cathleen. And I had my nose to the
134 grindstone, obviously. I entered our company to learn the mortgage banking
135 business. As I said before, all of our work was in the commercial field. Well, not
136 entirely all of it; but most of it was in the commercial field, in mortgages, insurance
137 and real estate sales.

138 We represented the John Hancock Mutual Life Insurance Company out of Boston,
139 and I got started in the home-lending side of the business. I had a clipboard and a
140 tape measure, and I learned how to measure a house, draw the floor plan, and decide
141 how many square feet within the boundaries, and then what it was valued at – both
142 land value and building reproduction value; and that was my beginning. In those
143 days, the John Hancock would not make a loan on a home over \$10,000.00. And that
144 slowly got ratcheted up over the years.

145 One of the lessons that I learned early on was that the ground rules of business were
146 subject to change as time went on. And that was something that my father disliked.
147 He was concerned that we'd get started with a mortgage program and we'd be out
148 soliciting loans, and we could tell real estate brokers what the plan was, and a loan
149 that we could make, and how we could make it. And that went, well, good for about
150 15 months; and then the lender, John Hancock, would change those rules in some
151 way. They would say, "You can't do this, but I want you to do that."

152 Well, my dad – that bothered my father. Then after two or three cycles of changes – I
153 never will forget this – I decided that change was inevitable, and I had to be
154 accommodating to change. In fact, I finally learned to try to anticipate change so I
155 could get ahead of the curve. And I think that was one of my – well, one of my
156 successes in life was to do just that kind of, if you will, see if he could look around
157 corners as to what might be coming next. And so that was a valuable education for
158 me in the business world.

159 **WALSHOK:** And I think that is a useful example relevant to when we start talking
160 about the '80s and '90s, and the sort of sea change that took place in this region. But
161 there was an earlier change I want to talk to you about. You would have been a
162 young professional in your dad's company, and that was in the post-World War II
163 era: '54, '55, '56. And I'm curious if you have much of a memory of what was going on
164 then; because as you know in my book, we talk a lot about the role John Jay Hopkins'
165 General Dynamics played in getting General Atomics established on, what, 140 acres
166 on the remote Torrey Pines Mesa.

167 We talk a lot about the role the city council played in zoning what today we know as
168 the Torrey Pines Mesa for Light Industry and R&D. And it was in the late '50s, about
169 ten years after you returned, that Jonas Salk and Roger Revelle and all that
170 movement to build the Torrey Pines Research Hub up there, started to incubate. Do
171 you remember much of that as a young man, or was that just happening and you
172 were taking care of your family and your business?

173 **BURNHAM:** Well, that history is all well-known to all of us now. No, I can't say that
174 I was very aware of how this community was being built with a new foundation. But
175 what I do remember is that after the war, I was aware that Consolidated Aircraft
176 Company—who moved out here from Buffalo in the early '40s to build airplanes—
177 were the largest employer. They had 45,000 people working for that company during
178 the war building bombers. And then what happened, I remember very distinctly, all
179 of that went downhill to nothing. Consequently we had a lot of the well-trained,
180 educated people in that war effort – engineers and otherwise – and I do remember
181 that a number of those people started their own companies, like Walter Zable, Sr.
182 starting Cubic Corporation out of a little building over in Point Loma. My
183 neighborhood is where that whole thing started. And there were a whole series of
184 these new startup companies that were started in the late '40s and throughout the
185 '50s with people who had come to San Diego during the war effort, and wanted to
186 stay here and live here. And so I was certainly aware of that going on.

187 But now as I look back, two things that I think most people don't realize, and that is
188 that as we think of recently National Geographic has anointed San Diego as one of
189 the smart cities of the world. In fact, they only announced six of which we are the
190 sixth one, the only American cities, and why were we smart. They could have labeled
191 it "San Diego, a lucky city," because not only were we lucky, we were also smart.

192 Why do I say that? To me, while National Geographic didn't portray this as
193 important as I would, I think the two smartest things—lucky things that we have
194 done (and I had nothing to do with either one) was when the Navy decided to come

195 into San Diego Harbor and put a fleet here. And just think what has happened to
196 that.

197 Fast-forward to today with the Marines and Camp Pendleton, and so on and so forth,
198 we have in this region the largest military installation in the world; and that is
199 getting increasingly more important with all the turmoil that is going on in the
200 world. We have to be the stabilizer in this world, and part of it is coming right out of
201 San Diego.

202 Well, the second most important event was when the war was over and the La Jolla
203 Mesa had a camp—it was Camp...

204 **WALSHOK:** Matthews.

205 **BURNHAM:** Matthews had all of the acreage that is now the University of
206 California, San Diego. Now, that camp was a housing camp, a barracks camp for
207 soldiers going overseas or coming back; they were being processed in and out. And
208 just think of when the war was over, there was surplus land which was given to the
209 city of San Diego. Now, while I was here and starting in business in those years, I had
210 nothing to do with what happened.

211 Normally what would have happened is that the city of San Diego would have said,
212 "Okay, let's just extend the single-family housing division of La Jolla up the hill." My
213 answer is just think what San Diego would not have been today if that had
214 happened. So it was a lucky move on both sides, you know. And so to me, those were
215 great lessons to look back on; and that's what San Diego's all about today.

216 **WALSHOK:** I shared with you that in the archives, we have interviews with Clark
217 Kerr, and Pat Brown, and Roger Revelle, and Walter Munk; and they all talk about
218 the fact that the San Diego City Council, perhaps because the mayor had had polio,
219 and because of the influence of John Jay Hopkins and his advocacy for science as the
220 next frontier for the military, that that is what moved the city council to zone the
221 land. And, of course, they had to go to a public vote on every one of those: General
222 Dynamics, Salk, Camp Matthews.

223 Actually, they went for two votes on UCSD because they added Pueblo land to Camp
224 Matthews because Regent Pauly was being so difficult. And it's a terrific story of civic
225 opportunism, perhaps, but not just luck, I think. In Newport News, they didn't build
226 the research kind of infrastructure we have here. And so your comment about the
227 military is very interesting because it was also a lot of R&D in Point Loma and on the
228 Torrey Pines Mesa.

229 **BURNHAM:** Well, it was a wonderful decision that was made. In my opinion, from
230 my memory, there was no master plan that we had here.

231 **WALSHOK:** That is why I said opportunistic. [Laughs]

232 **BURNHAM:** Yes, it was very opportunistic. So we did one thing at a time, and the
233 next decision was quite related to the prior one.

234 **WALSHOK:** That's right.

235 **BURNHAM:** But, again, in hindsight, there was no master plan until much later.

236 **WALSHOK:** When people give speeches, particularly consultants, you have to have
237 a vision. You have to have a strategy, not exactly how San Diego happened. [Laughs]

238 **BURNHAM:** Well, it wasn't the way we started, but it is the way over the last 30
239 years I would say, at least three decades, that we had had a master plan in at least
240 the high-tech arena, and the education arena as to what we can do, and how we can
241 expand. If you think of each college that was added to UCSD, there was kind of a
242 master plan as to what was the next most important piece that should be added, and
243 so on and so forth. And I take that all the way up to one of the most recent pieces,
244 and that was the Rady School for Management.

245 I remember very clearly standing in a parking lot after we'd had a meeting in – I
246 believe it was Harvey White's office. There were four of us that left that meeting, left
247 him in his office, and we were out in the parking lot, and we were talking about,
248 Somebody said in that little group, "what we need here is some kind of a bridge
249 between two big engines of the university, which are related to the two engines in
250 the city on the private side, and that is high-tech engineering and health – and in
251 particularly, health science."

252 And someone else said, "Well, gee, maybe what we ought to do is have a graduate
253 school of business," which later got changed to management, rightly so. And so that
254 was a conscious decision of how people can take –

255 **WALSHOK:** Do you recall approximately when that happened? Was that in the
256 '70s? Was that in the '80s, '90s?

257 **BURNHAM:** No, no. Well, the school is now –

258 **WALSHOK:** Ten years old.

259 **BURNHAM:** Eleven years old, and I would say it was about three years before it
260 opened. So that was fourteen years ago, so 2001, I would guess, from that

261 conversation. We took that conversation to Bob Dynes, who was then chancellor,
262 and he smiled and liked it, and ended up getting Peter Cawley, who was then and
263 still is, the dean of the Institute for the –

264 **WALSHOK:** Yeah, IR/PS, in those days. Now Global Policy Studies.

265 **BURNHAM:** Exactly. But they asked Peter to do a little side duty and draw up a
266 business plan, with the help of other people, of course.

267 **WALSHOK:** Yeah. I happen to be on that committee.

268 **BURNHAM:** Okay. And so we drew up this business plan, and one of the best things
269 that I like about it is linking, again, the strong parts of the university with the strong
270 parts of our emerging economy, which was high-tech and innovation, and so on and
271 so forth. One of the best things we did was to say, "We expect at least two-thirds of
272 our entering students to have science degrees," because we want them to stay in
273 science. We don't want them to follow the top schools today and send –

274 **WALSHOK:** Send them into finance.

275 **BURNHAM:** Usually they send them to either Wall Street or consulting. And that's
276 fine, but that's not what we want.

277 **WALSHOK:** There's an interval here I'd like to ask you a little bit more about, and
278 that is the '60s and the '70s. And the '60s, as you will recall, were a very volatile time
279 in America, particularly '64 onward with the Vietnam War and all the student
280 protests on the campuses and whatnot.

281 Now, again, you're still a young professional with your family. And how did you as a
282 civic leader and a business leader perceive UCSD, and what was going on in the
283 Mesa? Did you have any opinions or views? Did you have any relationships with
284 people at the university or at Salk, or some of these other incubating companies?

285 **BURNHAM:** The answer is no, I had no contacts, I had no particular interests. All of
286 that got done by – not with my involvement. But let me tell you why and how I did
287 ultimately gravitate in that field.

288 And that was in the late '50s and early '60s. I was more and more taking over the role
289 of the head of our business. My father finally appointed me in about 1962 as the
290 President because he wanted to step down and retire from the business at age 65.
291 And so I took over, and growing into that position and afterwards. And at that time,
292 in the real estate brokerage field, and in the insurance brokerage field, national

293 companies in the United States were beginning to put branch offices around the
294 country, including San Diego.

295 Now, these people had much more clout and financing and experience than little ol'
296 John Burnham & Company. And we've always had, in our family and in our business,
297 our interest was one of quality versus quantity. We didn't have any ambition to be a
298 national company. We have always had an ambition to be a regional company and a
299 regional asset. But I was concerned with when Coldwell Banker, the biggest national
300 real estate brokerage firm, puts an office in San Diego, and then their counterpart
301 does the same thing two years later. How am I, little ol' John Burnham & Company,
302 going to survive?

303 I went around and talked to a half a dozen of my mentors in the business world here
304 in San Diego, people that were 10, 12, 15 years ahead of me in age and experience, and
305 they said, "Well, Malin –" what they basically told me was that I needed as head of
306 our company, I needed to have a better feel of the community, both the history and
307 current activities of what my competitors have.

308 And bear in mind, I've been here longer, because what happens when Coldwell
309 Banker would open an office here. They would bring somebody in from Memphis to
310 run this office for three or four years, and then that same person would graduate to
311 Chicago next. And so I had an opportunity here that they didn't have, and that is to
312 know the community better.

313 They said, "You have got to get out in the nonprofit world and the political world
314 and help these people; and therefore, it will come back to you in the way of opening
315 doors." That's exactly what I did. And after awhile, I had my next tier of managers
316 that do the same thing – get out into the community and join organizations, and
317 help build our community. So we could open more doors and get more phone calls
318 answered than our competitors.

319 **WALSHOK:** You are much admired, right, as a civic leader today. But what you are
320 telling me is initially, it was a business strategy.

321 **BURNHAM:** I was selfish; I wanted to survive. And that is exactly why I went out
322 and did all this.

323 **WALSHOK:** And that would have been in the '60s?

324 **BURNHAM:** That would have been starting in the late '50s and the early '60s when
325 this was happening.

326 **WALSHOK:** As all this change is happening in the ecology and geography of the La
327 Jolla Mesa – which we now call the Torrey Pines Mesa – you were moving into a
328 leadership role, and there were lots of national competitors. And you recognized,
329 "I've got to get more engaged and get my senior people more engaged."

330 **BURNHAM:** Absolutely, yes, so that we were better known. And not just in the
331 community in general, but we were supporters of the community that these other
332 people weren't as yet.

333 **WALSHOK:** And that worked for over 50 years.

334 **BURNHAM:** Yes. It is still working.

335 **WALSHOK:** Yes, yes. [Laughs] So would you – and I'm watching my clock because –

336 **BURNHAM:** I have got plenty of time.

337 **WALSHOK:** You are okay, good. I would like to ask you a little bit about your
338 engagements. And so you understand from where I'm coming: part of what we're
339 interested in in this archive is how dots connect. So when you talk to professors, as
340 we've done, like Jim Arnold or Harold Urey, or Jonas, or Roger – you realize they had
341 links and connections at Princeton, or in Washington, or at the U.S. Navy that
342 benefited the growth of the Mesa. And one of the things that I find interesting about
343 you, having known you for over 30 years, is how many connections you have – not
344 just inside San Diego, but externally.

345 Now, did that begin to happen in the '60s when you took over as CEO and San Diego
346 was a boom economy? Where did all of these connections that you are able to draw
347 on today, whether they are in Mexico City or New York or Midwest, when did that
348 start to happen for you?

349 **BURNHAM:** Well, I think probably these connections had to start when my
350 mentors told me if I wanted to survive in business, I needed to get to know the
351 community better than my competitors. And that was the neophyte era, but that has
352 simply grown over time until 1986 when I decided to sell my business interest to my
353 then managers and get 100 percent out of the business world and 100 percent into
354 the nonprofit world; and that has only grown since then. But I have always been
355 interested in connections.

356 And Roberta and I [laughs] – I mentioned to her this morning, I'm reading our daily
357 newspaper and I see that Frank Gifford dies. He was a great football player and also a

358 television announcer. Well, I said, "Honey, you remember when we met Frank
359 Gifford?" and she said, "I certainly do."

360 It was in early February of 1987 in the Le Cirque Restaurant in Manhattan where we
361 were having dinner with Dennis Conner and his wife, and we were hosted by Donald
362 Trump and his then wife. And who walks in but first – who is the clothing designer?

363 **WALSHOK:** Ralph Lauren or –

364 **BURNHAM:** Ralph Lauren. Ralph Lauren comes in and he says, "Hey, Ralph, come
365 over here. I want you to meet my friends." And so we stand up and meet a new
366 person because Donald then had the main center round table for dinner anytime he
367 wanted it. And then a little later on, who comes in: "Hey, Frank, come over here. I
368 want you to meet my friends," and that was Frank Gifford. This is aside from what
369 you might want.

370 **WALSHOK:** No, it is absolutely central actually.

371 **BURNHAM:** But it is all about connections. Now, by the way, the reason that we
372 were with Donald is because I had been calling on him for a year-and-a-half for
373 support for our America's Cup team, and he did support us financially. We initially
374 took to him a drawing of our next boat. We had about three boats in that campaign;
375 each one of them was designed to be faster than the prior boat. And we wanted
376 support to build this next boat, and so I took a picture of it with the name "Trump
377 Card." But it didn't take. He didn't want to get that much involved.

378 But, anyway, he did support us, and we were in New York for that occasion because
379 he, Donald, supported financially and underwrote a parade up Fifth Avenue with the
380 America's Cup; and on the lead float was the mayor of San Diego, the mayor of New
381 York, Donald Trump, Dennis Conner, Malin Burnham, and a couple other people.

382 **WALSHOK:** So from a historical point of view – I'm pushing you on this because
383 you are able now to tap into a national and an international network of influence;
384 let's be candid. And if I hear you correctly, you're saying, "That was more through
385 my sailing career than through my business career"?

386 **BURNHAM:** That particular contact, it was definitely all from a sailing standpoint,
387 but it also had to do with finances.

388 **WALSHOK:** Okay, because you know a lot of banking and finance people.

389 **BURNHAM:** Yes, I do.

390 **WALSHOK:** You are always dropping names with me, and I'm impressed.

391 **BURNHAM:** A lot of those people were in business. Some of those people were in
392 business; some were in philanthropy. So it was an easy transition for me to go from
393 business to get out of total into 100 percent in philanthropy because I'm talking to
394 different people about the same dollars.

395 **WALSHOK:** You are saying it was really in the 1980s when you began to expand this
396 network of connections.

397 **BURNHAM:** Yes.

398 **WALSHOK:** And it was because you made this lifelong, now, commitment to
399 philanthropy and supporting important institutions or programs for San Diego. I am
400 not trying to put words in your mouth here.

401 **BURNHAM:** No, I understand. I would like to go back to about 1981 when Roberta
402 and I decided to have our own small family foundation, because we wanted – I think
403 really the inspiration for that is that we wanted – we knew at that time we wanted to
404 always be in the philanthropic world somehow. So this was a way that we would
405 have an anchor, so to speak, and so we did form our little foundation; and for the
406 first 10 or 12 years, we gave a lot of small checks to a lot of different philanthropies
407 here in the San Diego area. And we got to thinking after 10 or 12 years, "Are we doing
408 the right thing?"

409 And we asked a lot of questions, thought about it, talked to different people, and we
410 decided we would be better off if we gave bigger checks that could make more of a
411 difference to a smaller number of recipients. And in order to do that, we decided
412 that, you know, "What areas are we mostly interested in?"

413 And we picked two that we have been pretty consistent in ever since. (I am talking
414 about the early '90s when we were having this conversation.) And those two areas
415 are education and health. In education, all the way from pre-kindergarten, up to
416 graduate school. And in health, on both sides, both health care and health science.
417 So that's where probably over 80 percent of our interests and efforts are still in those
418 two areas, because we can't cover the whole waterfront.

419 We have been very satisfied that, yes, we have been able to make more of a
420 difference. And, personally, we can get involved, which also helps to drive some of
421 these efforts.

422 **WALSHOK:** This is for the historical record, not for gossip. I think you know I'm
423 doing some work with the Lilly Endowment on wealth-creating events, you know –
424 sells of companies, mergers, IPOs that enable individuals to create family
425 foundations or invest in Jewish family foundations or community foundations. Were
426 there some events in your life that allowed you to build the corpus of this foundation
427 that from a historical point of view might be important?

428 **BURNHAM:** You mean the financial corpus?

429 **WALSHOK:** Yes, because usually that is what happens. [Laughs]

430 **BURNHAM:** As a matter of fact, going back in my early days of philanthropy, the
431 biggest obstacle I had to overcome – and I don't know exactly how to describe it. But
432 it took me a half a dozen tries before I could ever sign a \$1,000.00 check to some
433 philanthropy. I couldn't quite – my hand was shaking. I couldn't get there –

434 **WALSHOK:** You had to grow into it. [Laughs]

435 **BURNHAM:** Yes, I had to grow into it. I had to break the ice in a way. And I find out
436 that a lot of people have the same hesitancy: "Hey, I don't know anything about
437 philanthropy, and giving money away was not the way I grew up," and so on and so
438 forth. So I started very, very small and very, very timidly in that regard. And so it has
439 been an educational series of steps as to what we have done and why we have done
440 it. And we are very satisfied that we have done it the right way.

441 But we also had to learn a long time ago how to say no, and hopefully in a gracious
442 way. Just so we can focus and stay within our own financial ability. And _____ to go
443 on mental ability; we don't just write checks and walk away. We want to help them
444 in other ways as well.

445 **WALSHOK:** Now, 1982 from the point of view of the archives is a really important
446 year.

447 **BURNHAM:** Okay, let's get back to that.

448 **WALSHOK:** And I really appreciate this background because it gives us a sense of
449 you as a family and you as a man. Now, you and Roberta had already determined
450 that health and education were important?

451 **BURNHAM:** No, not in 1982.

452 **WALSHOK:** No, okay.

453 **BURNHAM:** Let us back up. In '81 I think we formed a foundation; 10 or 12 years
454 later was when we said, "We need to focus instead of spreading."

455 **WALSHOK:** Okay.

456 **BURNHAM:** Okay.

457 **WALSHOK:** And it wasn't until '86 that you left the company, right, and retired?

458 **BURNHAM:** Yes, '86 we sold to my managers, to my five or six managers all my
459 business interests. But in '82 was when I first got introduced to the health science
460 world.

461 **WALSHOK:** Okay. That's what we're going to talk about for another half hour, if
462 that's all right.

463 **BURNHAM:** Yes.

464 **WALSHOK:** And when I come back in ten days I think, what I hope we can really
465 talk about is stem cells and Sanford Burnham Prebys and all of that. I still want to be
466 in the 1980s.

467 **BURNHAM:** How did I get started?

468 **WALSHOK:** How did you get started in that world?

469 **BURNHAM:** Well, it was not my doing.

470 **WALSHOK:** Okay.

471 **BURNHAM:** First of all, bear in mind that I've always lived in the Point Loma area.
472 My office has always been downtown. I have generally been thought of as a central
473 city type person in my interests, including political, and so on and so forth.

474 My business has always been downtown based, and my office still is based
475 downtown obviously. Well, in 1982, I got a call from two friends of mine who were
476 on the board of then La Jolla Cancer Research Foundation.

477 **WALSHOK:** Who were those individuals?

478 **BURNHAM:** Broderick. What was her name?

479 **WALSHOK:** Oh, Betty Broderick?

480 **BURNHAM:** Well, it's close. It's kind of a nickname of Broderick.

481 **WALSHOK:** I'll find it.

482 **BURNHAM:** We'll find it.

483 **WALSHOK:** I'll find it.

484 **BURNHAM:** And then Bob – no, not Bob Cheverton. But he was a competitor of
485 mine in the insurance world.

486 **WALSHOK:** Not Trepte.

487 **BURNHAM:** No. It was Cheverton Insurance.

488 **WALSHOK:** Cheverton Insurance.

489 **BURNHAM:** Cheverton. Cheverton.

490 **WALSHOK:** Cheverton.

491 **BURNHAM:** Correct.

492 **WALSHOK:** We'll find that name too.

493 **BURNHAM:** Okay, yes.

494 **WALSHOK:** These were two people you knew?

495 **BURNHAM:** Yes, I knew them well – more socially probably, or civically. And they
496 called me and said, "Malin, we'd like to interest you in coming on the board of the La
497 Jolla Cancer Research Foundation." And I said, "Wait a minute, I don't know
498 anything about cancer. I don't know anything about the technology; I don't know
499 the science."

500 I said, "It has never been in our family. I don't have any emotional ties to it." And I
501 said, "And why do you want me?" and they said, "Well, everything about the La Jolla
502 Cancer Research Foundation," in which they were on the board of, "is all about La
503 Jolla." I said, "What do you mean?"

504 "Well, all the scientists live in La Jolla, the attorney lives in La Jolla, and the banker
505 lives in La Jolla and we are too narrow. We need to spread the base. And you are an
506 outsider from La Jolla and that's why we're calling you." And I said, "Well, okay. Why
507 don't I come out and take a look."

508 They made arrangements for me to come out to the institute building and meet the
509 founders: Bill and...

510 **WALSHOK:** Lillian Fishman?

511 **BURNHAM:** Yes.

512 **WALSHOK:** Oh, my goodness.

513 **BURNHAM:** Bill and Lillian. The Fishmans. And so she worked in the laboratory
514 and he was a scientist, and it was an interesting story in that – I'll get back to what
515 happened. But the interesting story is he had an NIH grant, and he was at Tufts
516 University in the Boston area, and he felt that he wasn't getting the university
517 support over and above his NIH grant. And as we know, you can take these grants
518 and move to another qualified institution.

519 They, at age 62, packed up the family car – and I'm giving you this because I think
520 it's important to how I related to them – drove out to California and knew nobody.
521 Started in San Francisco, finally worked their way down; and when they got to La
522 Jolla, they said, "This is it." They rented an apartment, a two-bedroom apartment in
523 downtown La Jolla. Put the laboratory in one bedroom; that's how they started in
524 1976.

525 **WALSHOK:** That is a great story.

526 **BURNHAM:** Six years later is when I get contacted. So I go out, and now we are in a
527 regular lab building up on La Jolla Mesa, now Torrey Pines Mesa, and I meet them
528 for the first time, and then several other scientists. And they showed me all around
529 and talked to me about what their approach is, and so on and so forth. Well, I saw
530 something there that I liked, but I couldn't describe it for many years later; and it
531 was probably seven or eight years later that I finally understood the word. And the
532 word of what I saw was collaboration.

533 **WALSHOK:** Interesting.

534 **BURNHAM:** And I'll get back to that. But it was all about collaboration. Now, what
535 do I mean by that? In those days, science or a scientist was working in a vacuum
536 where the scientist didn't want his or her neighbor to know what he or she was
537 doing because they might "steal my secrets." That was well-known in those days as
538 to how science was developed.

539 And these people were exactly the opposite. They were open-minded. They were all
540 about family and networking, and people worked together. There were no siloes,
541 there were no secrets. I liked that. And I said, "Gee, this is an eye-opener for me for
542 what I've known about, read about science," and so on and so forth.

543 I said, "Okay, I will come on your board." And that's how I got my toe in the water,
544 and learned a little bit at least about science and how it was done, and so on and so
545 forth. And so, as I say, the rest is history.

546 I liked the Fishmans and so I joined the board in 1982 when the organization was 6
547 years old. Today is 33 years later. So it has been a great ride.

548 The other interesting thing about my career with the organization is that I have been
549 part of a series of stepping stones. Back then, La Jolla Cancer Research Foundation
550 had a budget of approximately \$3 million, and there were 32 people involved –
551 scientists, and the lab people, and so on and so forth. And, of course, today, we've
552 got a little over 1,100 people involved. We have a branch in Orlando included in that
553 number, and we are in the current fiscal year about \$145 million in revenue and
554 expenses. And we have had a series of wonderful things that have happened.

555 The thing that makes me most proud is our scientists. Over the years and in recent
556 years especially – and John Reed was all part of this analysis – they believed in the
557 very discoveries we have made in our little institution. By the way, we have been
558 primarily responsible for about three different drugs in the cancer world. Most of our
559 advances have helped somebody else advance whatever they are doing.

560 But our people estimate that our contributions to cancer in particular are part of
561 saving at least a million lives a year. And that is pretty darn important. And as I
562 remind people, there are not too many institutions or organizations that you and I
563 can be part of that can make a difference to the entire world – very few. And so what
564 is now the Sanford Burnham Prebys Institute has given me more satisfaction than
565 any other one-organization project in my whole life.

566 **WALSHOK:** Can we talk, to finish off this morning's conversation, about your first
567 ten years on the board? Because at this point, you and I are acquaintances, and
568 eventually friends because of the San Diego Dialog and CONNECT, and the San
569 Diego Foundation, as your philanthropy and leadership expands.

570 But I remember that one of the contributions I think you made was to diversify the
571 board early. In other words, you didn't just stop with Malin Burnham from Point
572 Loma. So talk to me about your first five to ten years on the board, what you think
573 are three or four of the most important contributions you made.

574 **BURNHAM:** Well, obviously, that was a growing period. We were a single focus,
575 and that was cancer only. As we talked to potential philanthropists, I learned early
576 on that many were not just interested in cancer. They say, "Well, what are you doing
577 in heart, cardio work?" or, "What are you doing over here?"

578 **WALSHOK:** Diabetes.

579 **BURNHAM:** Diabetes, whatever it is. So I began to learn the importance of some
580 diversity. I still think focus is a great tool in our lives in various stations. But there
581 has to be an equal balance – not an equal balance, but a fair balance I should say.
582 And so that is how the organization has evolved.

583 However, I have always been very, very protective of what I call the DNA of the
584 organization and what I call the same DNA of the life sciences in San Diego. And
585 right to this very day, I'm outwardly protective of keeping our DNA intact where the
586 DNA of life science world has to do with that one word we talked about earlier –
587 collaboration. And I am totally against any outside organization, regardless of who
588 or where it is, I mean outside of San Diego County, that would have – that could
589 dictate decisions that would lessen our DNA.

590 And, again, even if it's not involved with the Sanford Burnham Prebys Institution,
591 but involved with the San Diego life sciences DNA, I'm going to use my voice
592 because of our colloquialism, because of our fact that we are a large small city, and
593 that we're close together. That is how the Sanford Consortium got born, we had all
594 these assets that could come together.

595 **WALSHOK:** Well, I'm going to keep pressing you on the growth of what became
596 the Burnham Institute because it's an anchor institution; and how it grew I think has
597 a lot to do with your leadership. Now, I recall two things because you recruited a
598 couple of friends of mine to be on the board. And then you and Roberta made what
599 was then a life-changing gift. I think it was \$5 million?

600 **BURNHAM:** Well, yes. It turned out to be \$10 million, but it started at \$5 million.

601 **WALSHOK:** Can you reflect back on those early days of helping to build the board
602 and making that leadership gift that changed the name of the institute?

603 **BURNHAM:** Well, first of all, I have always tried to keep my ego in check. Perhaps
604 some of my friends don't think I've done enough checking of my ego. But I try to
605 keep it in check. For that very reason, for instance at now Sanford Burnham Prebys,
606 when someone like Danny Sanford comes along with a very substantial gift, as well
607 as what Conrad Prebys has done, no way am I going to stand in the way of adding
608 their name, very important names to the institute. So back to my early days –

609 **WALSHOK:** The early days – pivotal, pivotal for the institute.

610 **BURNHAM:** The early days: I became chairman of the board the first time – oh, my
611 gosh – probably in the second year that I was involved. And my interest was in
612 spreading the base, particularly in San Diego; and so I brought more people on the
613 board that were outside of La Jolla, outside of medical research, and so on and so
614 forth.

615 **WALSHOK:** Any particular names that you recall that would be good for us to just
616 note historically?

617 **BURNHAM:** I'm drawing a blank. But, yes, they were there. And I'm trying to think
618 of the people.

619 **WALSHOK:** And, again, we can find them. But this would have been '84, '85, right?

620 **BURNHAM:** Well, Hal Sadler was one, for instance, that came aboard as he is an
621 architect in a leading firm in San Diego; and they did some work for us. But, again, it
622 was finding people – leaders in the community that were outside of the medical
623 research arena and outside of the La Jolla village area, again, just to spread the base.
624 So, yes, I could go back as well.

625 **WALSHOK:** Well, and those are names we could find. But we're talking '84, '85, for
626 the record.

627 **BURNHAM:** Yes. And so we'd end up with a majority of people that were non-
628 scientific people. And they weren't all philanthropists, but they were different people
629 from business interests or other interests that could help grow and give more
630 recognition to the public for what this little outfit was really all about. So
631 collaboration was what I've always promoted; diversification, bringing some other
632 folks involved, ultimately expanding—now we have four different types of science
633 that we concentrate on.

634 The first one that we added was infectious diseases – inflammatory and infectious
635 diseases. And then we added – well, cardio and obesity, and those types of things. So
636 now we have those four different focuses.

637 We also, of course, expanded down in Florida, now going back about 11 years when
638 we started that interest down there. So it was a slow – I didn't have an overall game
639 plan or overall drawing as to what we were going to do.

640 **WALSHOK:** But help me with the gift, because that gift was, you know, for an
641 observer who sort of follows how the area was evolving – that was a very important

642 private gift to basic science, kind of pivotal in our history. I can't even remember the
643 date you made it, but I think it was in the '80s and it was, at that time, a very big gift.

644 **BURNHAM:** Yes. At that time, it was then Year 20 of the organization. So 20 plus
645 76-

646 **WALSHOK:** '96. Wow, okay.

647 **BURNHAM:** 1996. I was still on the board, but the two leaders of the board were
648 Tom Page and Kenny Golden, and-

649 **WALSHOK:** And Tom Page was CEO of SDG&E, and Golden was a major
650 construction company.

651 **BURNHAM:** Yes, correct. And they were some of my mentors, if you will, back in
652 those days. One was the chairman and the other was vice chairman of the board at
653 that time. And they came to me and they said, "It's time that we start building an
654 endowment for this organization." And I said, "I agree."

655

656 And so that was the start of the conversation. And they then went to Walter Ames -
657 not Walter Aimes...

658 **WALSHOK:** Not Sable?

659 **BURNHAM:** No. Walter - oh... He lived in La Jolla in those days. He never married.
660 He was in the social scene - you've known him.

661 **WALSHOK:** I know who you mean, yes.

662 **BURNHAM:** And he came out of Texas in the oil -

663 **WALSHOK:** Right, right.

664 **BURNHAM:** Walter...

665 **WALSHOK:** Again, we'll get his name.

666 **BURNHAM:** Okay. And he was on the board, he was probably 15 years older than I,
667 and so the leadership, Ken and Tom, decided to go to both of us at the same time -
668 independently, but at the same time; one day apart or whatever. And they said,
669 "Here's what we need to do. We need to start building an endowment. We would
670 like each of you to commit to \$5 million in connecting gifts."

671 So we start out with a \$10 million endowment. And turned out that Walter – he
672 started in Coronado and ended up in La Jolla – but I'll get there.

673 **WALSHOK:** We will.

674 **BURNHAM:** Anyway, he told them quickly that he would commit to his \$5 million
675 on one condition, and that is the organization be named Burnham, after the
676 Burnham family.

677 **WALSHOK:** Oh, my goodness.

678 **BURNHAM:** And we weren't talking about renaming at that time. We were talking
679 about the fact that we had to build an endowment. And so that put a lot of pressure
680 on me, and I took 90 days. I said, "Let me think about this, about the naming."

681 I was prepared to make the gift, but I wasn't sure I wanted my name on it. Why? And
682 this is where I've used this concept I guess other places as well: "Let's look at the
683 potential negatives. What if we were part of the discovery of a new drug that killed a
684 whole bunch of people? Or, what if we had a chemical spill in the laboratory that
685 raised a lot of damage?"

686 **WALSHOK:** Interesting. So all those things were going through your mind.

687 **BURNHAM:** Absolutely going through my mind. And so that's why I wanted 90
688 days to think about this. So I asked a lot of my mentors and people that I knew well,
689 even outside of San Diego, including people in Kansas City; I remember a family
690 there. Well, it really came down to the fact that most everybody said, "The reason
691 that it's important that we use our name is because it puts a seal of approval like the
692 Good Housekeeping –"

693 **WALSHOK:** It is a validator.

694 **BURNHAM:** Yes. "The Good Housekeeping seal of approval that other people
695 accept, and they will follow along in our footsteps to get involved." And so I said,
696 "Okay, you've convinced me." So that's what happened.

697 And Walter did not want his – for two reasons. One, he was never married. He didn't
698 have a family, he didn't have a business, and he came out of Texas–

699 **WALSHOK:** Not as well-known as you, your family name.

700 **BURNHAM:** Exactly. So he wanted the family name to do the right thing for the
701 institution. And, as I said, it put a little extra pressure on me.

702 **WALSHOK:** Terrific story, Malin.

703 **BURNHAM:** We each put up the \$5 million. And later on, I grew mine to a \$10
704 million family contribution over a period of time.

705 **WALSHOK:** Now, I'm trying to remember history; you and I share this history. As I
706 recall, Dick Atkinson, who was then chancellor at UC San Diego, and for many years,
707 a professor and leader at Stanford University also drew you into his sphere when he
708 came in '84. Do you want to share with me a little bit about your relationship with
709 UCSD? Because, eventually, you co-chaired, right, our 25th anniversary fundraising.

710 **BURNHAM:** I forget exactly how and why I got involved with the university, other
711 than the fact that I was deeply committed to education. And, subsequently, I've been
712 helping five different universities, I guess, in San Diego County, plus one further
713 north.

714 **WALSHOK:** Yep. [Laughs] That little campus we don't talk about.

715 **BURNHAM:** Some of us don't talk about. Anyway, I clearly remember a meeting
716 that Chancellor Atkinson called regarding what the next 25 years –

717 **WALSHOK:** Yes, that sounds right.

718 **BURNHAM:** Okay. We were coming up for a 25-year anniversary at the university.
719 So he had two questions to this group. And he pulled a group of probably at least 30
720 people together sitting around a table, and I would say half of them were insiders
721 and half of them were community people. And the two questions were: "What
722 should we do to celebrate our 25th anniversary?" and, "What should we be doing –
723 that we're not doing – over the next 25 years?"

724 So we talked about those two items, and I never will forget when we got onto the
725 second item, Dick had about three different things that he threw out that we should
726 consider adding to pieces of the university for study, and one of them was an
727 architectural school. And when he came to that, I stood up, took my shoe off, and
728 pounded it on the table like the Russian leader who did the same thing previously
729 and I said, "Why in the world would you want to do that? We have no expertise in
730 architecture. Why don't we go do something where we've got expertise." And I forget
731 what that led to now, but it was –

732 **WALSHOK:** I think it was IRPS.

733 **BURNHAM:** It could have been IRPS.

734 **WALSHOK:** The Pacific Rim.

735 **BURNHAM:** Yes. Or, it could have been CONNECT, or it could have been whatever.

736 **WALSHOK:** Well, CONNECT had begun incubating then.

737 **BURNHAM:** Okay, all right. But, anyway –

738 **WALSHOK:** Yes, interesting.

739 **BURNHAM:** What we need to expand the university studies should be in something
740 that relates to what our abilities are.

741 **WALSHOK:** Interesting.

742 **BURNHAM:** Yes. And to start an architecture school – it could have even been a law
743 school, now that I think about it.

744 **WALSHOK:** Yes. That probably was also on the list. [Laughs]

745 **BURNHAM:** Yes, it was on my "no" list; I never will forget. And everybody stood up
746 and kind of agreed.

747 **WALSHOK:** You are not being metaphorical? You literally took off your shoe and
748 hit the table?

749 **BURNHAM:** I did, absolutely. Took off one shoe and pounded because that was
750 the–

751 **WALSHOK:** And then you agreed to co-chair?

752 **BURNHAM:** Well, that was a few years later.

753 **WALSHOK:** Okay. [Laughs]

754 **BURNHAM:** That was 15 years later. And then I agreed to co-chair along with Irwin
755 and...

756 **WALSHOK:** John Morrer I think.

757 **BURNHAM:** No.

758 **WALSHOK:** No?

759 **BURNHAM:** I had Irwin and John Morrer, and then what's her name...

760 **WALSHOK:** Pauline.

761 **BURNHAM:** No. At the University – who's the library named after?

762 **WALSHOK:** Oh. Geisel.

763 **BURNHAM:** Geisel. She was an honorary chair, and we were the working chairs, the
764 three of us. I never will forget a picture – I think it was on the front of San Diego
765 Magazine of the four of us handing out dollar bills to each other, or something – I
766 forget what it was all about. Yeah. So and then –

767 **WALSHOK:** But that was the late '80s. So by the late '80s in this town, you were
768 becoming identified as an advocate and champion for science, research, health. I
769 mean look who you were hanging out with – Irwin, who had just started Qualcomm
770 by the way, you know. He had sold Linkabit by this time. And John – that was before
771 he was chair of the Board of Regents.

772 **BURNHAM:** That was 30 years ago when Qualcomm and CONNECT were started.

773 **WALSHOK:** You're right. All of that stuff was happening around the same time.
774 You are correct. And so from a sort of technology history point of view, you were one
775 of the early hard-chargers, the only guy from Point Loma, from downtown.

776 **BURNHAM:** Yes.

777 **WALSHOK:** [Laughs] And I think what we're going to do is close our conversation
778 today and start – if it's all right with you – with 1989 to today, the various activities
779 to which you contributed, including UCSD's 25th anniversary, which was pretty
780 pivotal in helping set new directions up at UCSD. And then we will talk about the
781 growth of Sanford Burnham – and you are bringing Denny in. And then I'd really like
782 to zero in on the pivotal role you all played in building stem cells and stem cell
783 capability. And that'll probably take about 90 minutes, if you're okay.

784 **BURNHAM:** Yes, I'm okay.

785 **WALSHOK:** Good. I think we've done what we can do today.

786 **BURNHAM:** Okay. And so normally, a private club – golf club, sailing club,
787 whatever – would just assess their members for the new improvements we have.
788 That's a normal procedure. Well, in this case, they went for the first time; and I had a
789 meeting with the commodore and the vice commodore, which they've explained
790 what they were doing.

791 And on this new building, there's going to be a sailing center for the junior program.
792 And they came to me because – they flattered me to say that, "We've got a list of five
793 people and we're starting with you." And I said, "Oh, yeah." [Chuckling]

794 **WALSHOK:** Yes.

795 **BURNHAM:** And, anyway, I kept saying at that first meeting to myself, "Why me?
796 Why me?" So I said, "Look, give me a couple of weeks and let me think about this,
797 and so I'll get back to you."

798 Well, I started thinking, Mary, about, "What did I learn between the age 10 and 15
799 when I was in the San Diego Yacht Club sailing program?" first of my family that
800 ever had a boat, and, "What did I learn besides how to steer a sailboat?" And I
801 started putting some words down and some concepts – which is this paper I'm going
802 to give you. And I said – I labeled them "My Virtues and Values."

803 **WALSHOK:** So, for the record, Malin and I started talking offline about the
804 expansion of San Diego Yacht Club; and it was in that context that we're coming
805 back to where he developed some of his core value that affected how he's worked in
806 this community lifelong.

807 **BURNHAM:** Correct. And so about five years ago was when I agreed, when I agreed
808 to put up half the cost of this new building, which they have subsequently named
809 the Malin Burnham Center for – Sailing Center – Malin Burnham Sailing Center.
810 And, by the way, as an off-note here: our yacht club, like other clubs around the
811 country – or some do, they keep track of longevity of membership. And every time
812 somebody leaves or dies, you move up another notch or whatever.

813

814 Well, a few years ago, I was Number Two, and Roberta says, "I'd rather you never be
815 Number One." And I said, "Why?" She said, "Because there's no future."

816 **WALSHOK:** [Laughs] There's no future in being Number One.

817 **BURNHAM:** But I am Number One as of a year-plus ago. But, anyway, that's beside
818 the point.

819 **WALSHOK:** Do you want to read that list of your virtues?

820 **BURNHAM:** I came up with what I call values and virtues. I've now gotten them
821 down to virtues of excellence, which apply to anybody in any light. And not
822 necessarily in order, but: "Plan ahead." In other words, set personal goals.
823 "Commitment." In other words, take responsibility.

824 "Hard work," meaning be prepared. "Dedication," meaning never give up.

825 "Teamwork," meaning everyone contributes. "Play by the rules," meaning be honest,

826 ethical, and fair. And, lastly, "Follow through," meaning take action to achieve your
827 goals. And that's the way I look at life.

828 **WALSHOK:** Great. Well, thank you for this. And you've taken action both in
829 leadership and investment, and it's going to be interesting to talk about '89 on.

830 **BURNHAM:** Well, it's kind of fun to reminisce –

End of Interview

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The San Diego Technology Archive (SDTA), an initiative of the UC San Diego Library, documents the history, formation, and evolution of the companies that formed the San Diego region's high-tech cluster, beginning in 1965. The SDTA captures the vision, strategic thinking, and recollections of key technology and business founders, entrepreneurs, academics, venture capitalists, early employees, and service providers, many of whom figured prominently in the development of San Diego's dynamic technology cluster. As these individuals articulate and comment on their contributions, innovations, and entrepreneurial trajectories, a rich living history emerges about the extraordinarily synergistic academic and commercial collaborations that distinguish the San Diego technology community.