

ORAL HISTORY TRANSCRIPT

GENEVA B. BARNES
INTERVIEWED BY GLEN SWANSON
WASHINGTON, D.C. – 26 MARCH 1999

[Ms. Barnes edited this transcript for the book “Before This Decade is Out...” Personal Reflections of the Apollo Program. This transcript was prepared by the author Glen Swanson and differs from the direct audio transcript from the oral history.]

SWANSON: Today is March 26, 1999. We are in the offices of NASA Headquarters, doing an interview with Geneva Barnes, Gennie Barnes, and this interview is being conducted by the NASA Johnson Space Center Oral History Project. This is Glen Swanson speaking.

First of all, Gennie, I want to thank you for joining me this morning on this interview. To start, I guess I'd like to just get some background information on how you became employed with NASA. How did you get started in this business?

BARNES: Well, I was working in the Postal Service at the time that I became interested in the space program. I was a secretary. John [H.] Glenn [Jr.] flew his Mercury mission, and I stood out in a misty rain on Pennsylvania Avenue, watching him and Lyndon [B.] Johnson drive down Pennsylvania Avenue in their parade that Washington, D.C., gave to welcome him. I went back into my office and called the NASA Personnel Office and asked if they were hiring secretaries, and they said yes.

I took my application the next morning to the personnel office, and I was on the payroll by ten o'clock. [Laughter] That was in the days when NASA was—they could do that sort of thing, you know. They [had the authority to add staff and could hire you on the spot, pending a background check, of course]... But that's how I came to work for NASA.

SWANSON: That was in about 1962?

BARNES: 1962.

SWANSON: And your first function, what area did you work at within Public Affairs?

BARNES: My first job was not in Public Affairs. I worked for a year in the old Office of Programs, which was headed by DeMarcus [D.] Wyatt, and it was part of Dr. [Robert C.] Seamans' [Jr.] staff. They were planning the lunar missions, how to get there and what might be found once [the astronauts] got there. He had a staff of engineers whose job it was to work on that.

I worked there for a year, and then I went to work in Public Affairs for [the late] Brian Duff... He had just been hired by NASA. He had been a newspaperman and he was brought in to head a section mainly of speech writers [to support] the administrator. But [he also coordinated some of] the administrator's public appearances [and traveled with him]. Later, Brian [and his staff began] handling the astronauts' public appearances [for special events and post flight activities]. So I ... absorbed a lot of what he was doing by helping ... put together these itineraries and speaking commitments.

SWANSON: When you say handling the public appearances, were you in the decision-making process?

BARNES: No, no, I was still a secretary. I remained a secretary, although as I worked in that office longer and it changed hands, you know, Brian moved on to something else and then Wade St. Clair came in... [However], I was working in other functions such as the protocol operations ... at the Kennedy Space Center [Florida] for the Apollo launches. We also [helped with] arrangements and set up transportation and that sort of thing for a couple of the

astronaut funerals here in Washington when they were brought here to be buried. C.C. [Clifton C.] Williams [Jr.] was one. So I was really branching out and doing more and more things than strictly secretarial work, and that's sort of how I [spent] most of my career ... at NASA.

I moved into what they called the professional [career] series, not that secretaries aren't [considered] professionals, but I moved into the Professional Series when I went to work for Neil [A.] Armstrong after the Apollo 11 world tour, and my job for him was to answer all of his public mail. He had a secretary who handled his public appearance requests, and I rarely got involved in that, but mainly my job was to answer the public mail.

After he left the agency, I floated around in a couple of other offices as a management analyst and administrative assistant and that sort of thing. Then I had an opportunity to go back to my old office where I had started in Public Affairs, and I [began] working on the Shuttle astronauts' schedules. I was hired [as an appearance coordinator and] to set up their appearances after they flew on the Shuttle [missions. Their public appearances began after the post flight debriefings and lasted about a month for the earlier crews]... I traveled with the first five Shuttle crews to [their hometowns and other] locations in the U.S., stayed with them until their appearances were over, and I worked from my office to schedule all their public appearances for headquarters, the post-flight schedules. The Johnson Space Center [Houston, Texas] also did a lot of their appearances, but we did the post-flight schedules up here.

That's about all I can think of.

SWANSON: We were talking earlier, one of the highlights of your career was after the Apollo 11 crews returned from the moon, you were involved with this world tour.

BARNES: Yes.

SWANSON: I was wondering if you could share some more insights and stories about that rather ambitious tour.

BARNES: Well, it was the first time, to my knowledge, that there had been a world tour for a crew of astronauts. There had been international appearances by astronauts, but to my knowledge it was the first time that a crew had been sent literally on a world tour. President [Richard M.] Nixon wanted to send this crew, the first crew that landed on the moon, to [share information gained from the flight with other nations and to share plans for future space exploration]... The State Department and some of [the President's] staff set about working on this project [with NASA]. My boss was the NASA mission director.

We did a lot of work to get ready for it. We spent a lot of time ... at State Department, putting together briefing books and proposed schedules which changed as we went along.

SWANSON: When did that start, as far as the initial planning or idea to get kind of an idea of what was involved in the planning of this?

BARNES: [As I recall], we started ... in early September. Late August, early September of '69, which meant we all had to get our shots, up-to-date shots, and we had to get all this information put together [to support the astronauts]. The State Department ... made the arrangements for the Air Force, ... Special Air Missions people to be involved, and we used the Vice President's plane for the entire trip. It was considered such good duty by the

presidential pilots that they split up the task, and one group took the first half of the trip and another group met us in Rome [Italy] and finished the trip.¹

We left Andrews Air Force Base [Maryland] ... on September the 29th, as I recall, and went to Johnson Space Center to pick up the astronauts and their wives. Bill [William] Der Bing [and Dr. Bill Carpentier were] the JSC staff [members] from there.² Our first

¹ The crew of the Presidential Aircraft assigned to the first half of the Giantstep Apollo 11 World Tour (from Washington, DC to Rome) included the following: Maj. David H. Shaw, Aircraft Commander; Maj. Lester C. McClelland, Aircraft Commander; Capt. Adolph C. Zerumsky, Navigator; S/Sgt. Walter Battic, Guard; M/Sgt. James H. Brown, Steward; S/Sgt. Larry N. Coleman, Guard; S/Sgt. Errol E. Devore, Guard; M/Sg. William W. Gibbs, Jr., Flight Engineer; T/Sgt. John R. Jester, Guard; M/Sgt. Larry L. Kerns, Flight Engineer; M/Sgt. Robert A. Koehler, Radio Operator; S/Sgt. Eugene L. Munger, Steward; S/Sgt. George R. Phillips, Guard; M/Sgt. Robert A. Rouse, Steward; M/Sgt. Darrell F. Skinner, Radio Operator; M/Sgt. Buddie L. Vise, Steward; M/Sgt. Doyle G. Whitehead, Steward. The crew assigned to the second half of the tour (from Rome to Washington, DC) included the following: Maj. Kenneth L. Cox, Aircraft Commander; Maj. Frank O. Pusey, Aircraft Commander; Maj. Robert W. Pollard, Aircraft Commander; Maj. Donald F. McKeown, Navigator; M/Sgt. William A. Scholl, Flight Engineer; M/Sgt. Donald E. Caton, Flight Engineer.

² In addition to the flight crew for the Presidential Aircraft, those that went on the world tour included the following: the crew of Apollo 11 and their wives (Neil A. Armstrong, Janet Armstrong, Michael Collins, Patricia Collins, Edwin E. "Buzz" Aldrin, Jr., and Joan Aldrin), NASA support personnel (Howard G. Allaway, Public Affairs Office, Office of Manned Space Flight, NASA; Geneva B. Barnes, Secretary to the Director, Public Events Division, Office of Public Affairs, NASA; Simon E. Bourgin, Science Advisor to the U.S. Information Agency (USIA), Office of Policy and Plans; Dr. William R. Carpentier, Flight Support Officer for Apollo Preventive Medicine Office, NASA; Joan Carroll, Secretary to the Assistant Chief of Protocol, Department of State; William Der Bing, Deputy Chief, Special Events Office, Manned Spacecraft Center, NASA; Robert B. Flanagan, Senior Security Specialist, NASA; Richard Friedman, Information Officer for International Affairs, NASA; Joseph Kidwell, Protocol Assistant, Office of Public Affairs, NASA; Charles G. Maguire, Staff Assistant to Deputy Assistant Secretary for Operations, Department of State; L. Nicholas Ruwe, Assistant Chief of Protocol, Department of State; Wade St. Clair, Director, Public Events Division, Office of Public Affairs, NASA; Julian Scheer, Assistant Administrator for Public Affairs, NASA; Elton Stepherson, Jr., Special Assistant to the Area Director for the Near East and South Asia, USIA; William P. Taub, Visual Information Officer, Office of Public Affairs, NASA; Herbert Oldenbeg, Department of State; Thoreau Willat, Voice of America; Edward S. Hickey, Voice of America; Enrique Gonzales-Reguerra, Voice of America; Petro Luis Kattah, Voice of America.), and NASA security and public affairs people as well as White House advance men traveled ahead coordinating security, logistics, and last minute details on the schedules (O. B. Lloyd and Wlater Pennino, NASA Public Affairs and Advance Team; Frank Dukes and Arnold Garrott, NASA Security Officers; James Bertron, David Cudlip, Leonard Stewart, and Edward Sullivan, White House Advance Team).

official stop was in Mexico City [Mexico].³ We did that all in one day. We went from Andrews Air Force Base to Johnson Space Center, then Mexico City, which was a preview of things to come. [Laughter]

SWANSON: You didn't really have a rehearsal for any of this, huh? [Laughter]

BARNES: No, no.

SWANSON: I just was curious. I'm backtracking. The planning stage of this, you mentioned, appeared after the mission was completed. They had not talked about this prior to the actual mission?

BARNES: I don't know at what point they started talking about it. My boss [Wade St. Clair] and Julian Sheer, who was the head of Public Affairs for NASA at that time, were the people that were involved in talking to the White House ... and State Department people. The overall mission director was the Deputy Chief of Protocol for the State Department [the late Nicholas Ruwe], and I think there was a lot—of course, NASA had to agree to it before they could start any of the planning, but I'm not privy to when it actually started.

SWANSON: So their first trip was to Mexico.

³ The itinerary for the "Giantstep Apollo 11" world tour from September 29 – November 5, 1969 included the following stops: Mexico City, Mexico (September 29-30); Bogota, Colombia (September 30 – October 1); Brasilia, Brazil (October 1); Buenos Aires, Argentina (October 1-2); Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (October 2-4); Las Palmas, Canary Islands (October 4-6); Madrid, Spain (October 6-8); Paris, France (October 8-9); Amsterdam, Holland (October 9); Brussels, Belgium (October 9-10); Oslo, Norway (October 10-12); Cologne/Bonn and Berlin, Germany (October 12-14); London, England (October 14-15); Rome, Italy (October 15-18); Belgrade, Yugoslavia (October 18-20); Ankara, Turkey (October 20-22); Kinshasa, Zaire (October 22-24); Tehran, Iran (October 28-31); Perth, Australia (October 31); Sydney, Australia (October 31- November 2); Agana, Guam (November 2-3); Seoul, Korea (November 3-4); Tokyo, Japan (November 4-5); Elmendorf, Alaska (November 5); Ottawa and Montreal, Canada (December 2-3).

BARNES: Mexico City.

SWANSON: Again, it was pretty much the astronauts and their wives. Did they have any other friends or relatives?

BARNES: No.

SWANSON: It was just ... the staff members, support staff?

BARNES: Yes, the support people, three astronauts and three wives. Mexico City had an airport arrival ceremony [involving Mexican government officials and the American Ambassador, followed by a motorcade. That same day, there were civic events, a meeting with the President of Mexico, a news conference, and a reception hosted by the American Ambassador. All major events. this was to be the usual kind of schedule for the stops to follow]...

SWANSON: The countries that you decided for this trip, those were planned in advance. Did you have to make the preparations, the contacts, and so forth? Were there some countries that you had asked to go to and declined for some reason or another?

BARNES: You know, I don't know. I don't know. But the State Department put the system going by contacting ... American embassies in [the countries being considered to visit]. For instance, to go back to your question, I believe there was a plan for us to go to Israel and Egypt in the first proposed itinerary, but that was taken off, I presume for political reasons. I don't know. But we didn't go there.

The proposed stops were all planned out by the State Department working with the American embassies in a lot of locations. I don't know the process they used to take different countries off and add others. I just don't know how that happened.

Wade St. Clair, who was the mission director for State Department, would probably be able to answer that for you, because he was involved in all these meetings and discussions, and Julian Sheer, also. But Wade may have been the one primarily working on the nuts and bolts.

SWANSON: So the trip to Mexico was the first time.

BARNES: First stop.

SWANSON: Obviously you probably learned some things from the first stop, in anticipation of some of the other stops.

BARNES: Well, I think that we were sort of overwhelmed, and I don't really think we knew what was in store for us. ... There were [large] crowds everywhere [we stopped, but Mexico City was the first where we were exposed first hand to such large masses of people]... There was a lot of interest in the astronauts' [schedule]. Even up to the time that we landed there. I believe [local officials were trying to get their organizations on the astronauts' schedule]... There was ... quite an effort to hold down on the number of events they could do in one day, and I believe the people in the decision-making process, Wade St. Clair and the deputy chief of protocol, probably got a taste of what it was going to be like, [that is, being pressured to add last minute events]... I guess from that viewpoint we learned a lot of what was about to happen to us.

SWANSON: NASA hadn't really had any experience prior to this. I don't recall, did the Apollo 8 crew do a world tour?

BARNES: I don't think. No, they didn't do a world tour.

SWANSON: Just certain countries?

BARNES: I believe they just went to a few countries.

SWANSON: So this was pretty much new, then, in the NASA—

BARNES: We were gone thirty-eight days on this trip. It was the longest that any of the astronaut crews had been gone a consecutive amount of days.

SWANSON: In the tour that went, did they also include the capsule and a moon rock as part of this tour, or was it just the crew members? I was mentioning to you earlier about the photographs, but that might have been separate.

BARNES: This is what I had in my briefing book, of what they presented.

SWANSON: It was just one aircraft, though, right? They didn't have several other aircraft? It was just the Air Force?

BARNES: Just the one. And we had a gifts person, whose job it was to keep all these things straight and to make sure that the right gift got to the right country, you know, that the right

gift was unpacked in the proper country to get to the head of state or the representative that the astronauts presented them to.

I don't recall about the lunar samples. There may have been a dusting of the lunar samples given here and there, but I really don't remember how that was done, if at all. I think Wade St. Clair could probably answer that for you. [Dr.] Bill Carpentier when you talk to him, he might be able to shed some light on that.

SWANSON: So they spent a day in Mexico City and then they continued on.

BARNES: We went on to Buenos Aires [Argentina], I believe. No. Bogota [Columbia]. We went on to Bogota. Generally we were overnight in most of these places, [but] in Rome and Bangkok [Thailand], we spent three nights, but generally we were just overnight in all of these places. [Colonel Aldrin left the group in Bogota for a trip back to the U.S. for a speech in Atlantic City and rejoined us in Las Palmas (Canary Islands)].

SWANSON: Did they stay on the aircraft overnight?

BARNES: No, the State Department had arranged for a section of the hotel [where] we were to stay in, ... to be blocked off just for us, just for the ... astronauts, [their wives], and ... the staff people... We had a control center in each one of these little sections that we had office machinery to use, typewriters, copy machines, and we could assemble schedules and type up ... three-by-five cards that the astronauts liked to use with their notes on the three-by-five cards. I'd type those up. [We also had office space in the back of our aircraft.]

We tried to keep up with thank-you notes. We started in Mexico City, and after we left Mexico City, [Mr.] Armstrong had some things that he wanted dictated to people that he had met, he and his wife [Jan] had met, and I did some of those. But as we moved along, we

found that there were so many people to thank for so many things that we couldn't keep it up... We ended up just keeping a list [of people, their] affiliation, and the address. When the trip was over, the State Department and the local embassies prepared an appropriate thank-you back to the people.

I've forgotten what your question was. I think I digressed. [Laughter]

SWANSON: Oh, no, that's fine. That's fine. We were just talking about—I think the trip to the next country was Colombia.

BARNES: Bogota, Colombia. Brasilia [Brazil] was an unexpected—that was after Bogota—that was ... an unexpected stop... [The U.S. had suspended diplomatic relations with Bolivia and we weren't allowed to use a more direct route over Bolivia to get from Bogota to Buenos Aires and Rio de Janeiro. So after leaving Bogota, we stopped in Brasilia. We were there an hour and a half for] a refueling stop... We got a tour of the city in a bus. [The mayor and other] representatives from the local government ... met the astronauts in one of the official [buildings]. The two official buildings there are [shaped like saucers]. I couldn't get over that.

SWANSON: Coffee? For coffee, probably? The coffee bean?

BARNES: I don't know. I hadn't thought of that. You're right. After all these years, I hadn't thought of that. And the mayor and his delegation met the astronauts for an official welcome, and that was the extent of what we did in Brasilia. It was [straight forward] and uncomplicated. I think we were two or three days in Rio de Janeiro.

Then we got to the Canary Islands [Spain; located southwest of Morocco, Africa] from there, and we were already getting tired. People were starting to become ill. It just

started like one or two people with ... flu-like symptoms, and as we got on into Europe, everybody had been ill.

SWANSON: Including yourself?

BARNES: Including myself. I became ill in Madrid [Spain]. Two or three of us became ill in Madrid. In fact, there's a picture that somebody had of one of the—I believe it was one of the security detail was sitting on the curb in Madrid, had to get out of the car and wait for a medical person to come and take him to the hotel. When we got to London [England], Dr. Carpentier went on national television to deny that the astronauts had brought back a lunar sickness and that all the staff were [becoming ill as a result of being] exposed to this [illness]...

SWANSON: So it came out that you were ill and perhaps the reason was that they brought back some lunar bug?

BARNES: Some bug, yes. Well, I guess, in conversations that local representative embassy representatives would talk to embassy representatives ahead of us, and they would in turn talk to other people, and I guess that's how the rumor got started.

SWANSON: It's a reasonable one, because of all the precautions that were taken after they came back. They might have thought that there was something that slipped by or whatever.

BARNES: Yes. The time changes—we were involved with a lot of time changes and [trying to avoid local foods that would cause health problems]... Also, with that much closeness, you'd get on each other's nerves. We were staying together in the same part of the hotel, like

next door to each other. Then when we were flying from one place to another, we were all confined, a small—not a small airplane, but it got to be kind of small. [Laughter]

[I think that all of us] eventually came to look upon the airplane as being home [away from home and] we were always glad to get back [to] the airplane. [I know I was.] The crew would always welcome us like they were totally rested and ready to help us out with whatever we needed, ... cooked our meals, and waited on us. We could eat the food. We could drink the water. We could take a nap. [Laughter] That's what I remember.

SWANSON: You mentioned that it kind of got on other people's nerves during the time. Were there any incidents that you can recall that stand out?

BARNES: No, I don't think so, but there was—somebody very cleverly designed sort of a silly thing to break the ice, keep everything on the proper perspective, and they called it the "personality of the day." If you were caught being unkind to somebody or having a temper tantrum, you could assure that the next day you were going to appear in one of these write-ups. They were just humorous little things that were passed out once we got on the airplane [for the next stop and] made us laugh... [We were getting tired and] it just stood to reason that you were going to be [on the] edgy [side] sometimes.

SWANSON: Now, there was a press group, obviously, with you that wrote reports and news articles and then these were transmitted though the local embassies to the papers back home?

BARNES: Yes. We had two, I believe it was two, USIA [United States Information Agency] [advisors and four] Voice of America [VOA] [staff traveling with us]... [They were filing reports through their agency channels and the embassies were giving information to the local press. There were also news conferences at all of the stops. One of the VOA staff was a

motion picture photographer who recorded all the major events in all the cities. Before we left on the trip, there was some discussion about one or two press reporters being allowed to accompany us on the entire trip and flying on the plane with us. But this idea was scrapped.]

SWANSON: I remember seeing in one of the photographs you were talking about earlier that were taken on the tour, perhaps it was in the Canary Islands or it might have been in Zaire, that they were greeted by a group of local dancers. It looked like it was kind of an uncomfortable position, because the women were not clothed. [Laughter] I noticed that the photograph was very selectively taken from the back. I didn't know if that surprised anyone during your tour.

BARNES: [I believe] there was a social event in Zaire, an evening event, I think probably at the President's palace ... [where] there were dancers [on the program]. ...One of the aides to President [J. D.] Mobutu [Sese Seko] had an evening banquet [to] which all the staff was invited to and attended, and there were dancers there. None of them were women, [and as I recall, the theme of the dance was "Stalking the Lion."]. ... They were very gaily clad in their costumes and feathered hats [and it was quite impressive].

There was also [a more public] evening program ... where ... dancers [performed]... I [remember] Buzz [Colonel Edwin E.] Aldrin [Jr.] [leaping] over the guardrail where the astronauts were seated ... and started dancing [with members of the group]... [Quite a crowd-pleaser. The picture was in the local newspaper the next day.] [Laughter]

SWANSON: I notice also in some of the photographs that there were gifts exchanged, and you'd mentioned here some of the presentation items.⁴ Can you recall any interesting stories about some of the items and some of the exchanges that occurred while these gifts were presented to the officials?

BARNES: [Most of the staff were not included in the official state receptions where gifts were exchanged]...

SWANSON: When you went to Germany, Berlin, was that particularly memorable? I remember seeing one of the photographs of the crew members on the wall, I believe it was, the Berlin Wall. I don't know if there was a speech made or a presentation or something at that point. Do you recall?

BARNES: [The staff was included in] the motorcade [through the city, en route to city hall and there was a stop there for astronauts] to visit the wall... [We passed a couple of check points and saw a Russian tank at one]... The astronauts were accompanied there by ... the mayor and the [U.S.] embassy people. [The astronauts made brief remarks at the wall,

⁴ There were three major items for the astronauts to present to heads of state and other dignitaries during the Apollo 11 world tour. These included the following:

- Replica of the plaque left on the moon mounted on a walnut backing. A plaque was presented to the leading official at each city.
- Replica of Goodwill Message disc left on the moon, eight-power magnifying glass and framed photograph. These were presented to the signers of each of the individual messages that were contained in the original message disc. Nations on the Apollo 11 World Tour that provided goodwill messages include on the message disc were Argentina, President Juan Carlos Ongania; Australia, Prime Minister John Gorton; Belgium, Baudouin I, King of the Belgians; Brazil, President Arthur Da Costa E. Silva; Colombia, President Carlos Lleras Restrepo; Congo, President J. D. Mobuto; India, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi; Iran, Mohammed Reza Pahlavi Aryamehr; Italy, President Guiseppe Sarget; Japan, Prime Minister Eisaku Sato; Korea, President Park Chung Hee; Mexico, President Gustavo Diaz Ordaz; Netherlands, Juliana R.; Norway, King Olav R.; Pakistan, President A. M. Yahya Khan; Thailand, Bhumibol Adulyade, King of Thailand; Turkey, President Cevdet Sunay; United Kingdom, Elizabeth R.; Vatican, Pope Paul VI; Yugoslavia, President Josip Broz Tito; Canada, Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau.
- Color photographs from the Apollo 11 mission autographed aboard the aircraft for presentation to other dignitaries (i.e. ministers, ambassadors, mayors, etc.)

mentioning a young man who had recently been shot leaping to freedom, and they signed an official visitors book.]

SWANSON: You mentioned in your comments previously, too, that you had a rather short stay in Brazil when you went.

BARNES: That was the hour and a half. That was the hour and a half I was telling you about when we just stopped and had a tour of the city and the astronauts were greeted by the mayor. However, in one day we flew from Paris [France] in the morning, and to Amsterdam [Netherlands] for a lunch that the astronauts spoke for, spoke at, spoke during, whatever. Then we went from there to Brussels [Belgium], all in one day. We landed in Brussels in the evening, and I believe the astronauts had an event that evening after we arrived, after having been on the road all day.

I don't know how they kept up, frankly. They were the ones that were on the front lines, they were the ones making the appropriate remarks and the speeches to the heads of state. [As if the rigors of the world tour itself weren't enough, two of the astronauts, Colonel Aldrin and Colonel Collins left the tour to complete appearances elsewhere—one previously mentioned, to Atlantic City by Colonel Aldrin. Colonel and Mrs. Collins had rejoined us in Berlin after a side trip to Genoa, Italy, where he received City of Genoa Colombiana Medals and an International Institute of Research award.] We were doing our best to keep up with them.

As we traveled, we would get cables from cities like two or three stops ahead of us that would have the [proposed] final schedule. One of the jobs that I did was to go through the cables and pick out what was being planned [ahead at the next stops]. Then Wade [St. Clair] and Nick [Ruwe] would [review and give a thumbs up or thumbs down to what was being proposed].

...We were always saying we [needed] a rest stop, [but] we had one true rest stop. That was in Rome. The American Ambassador [post was vacant at the time of our visit and the embassy was opened] ... to us for the afternoon. We used the swimming pool and the tennis courts and just lounged around ... and ate [American] hamburgers and hot dogs and potato salad. [Some of us toured the catacombs under the embassy grounds]. That was a true rest stop.

[We] had another what [was] called a rest stop in Belgrade [Yugoslavia], where the astronauts started off on a duck shoot with the representative of President [Josip Broz] Tito. I believe it was his Deputy Prime Minister. The astronauts' wives were taken on a hydrofoil trip down the Danube [River], and the rest of us were put in [cars and] buses, including the Air Force crew and all the support group, we were put on buses and taken on a driving tour of the countryside. We all ended up for lunch at [a] country [lodge and we were] served ... a seven-course Serbian lunch, including a roast pig and slivovitz. Have you heard of slivovitz? It's the ... national drink, I guess you'd call it. [It's served] in little teeny glasses [and burns as it goes down... [One sip is sufficient, just to say you've experienced it].

SWANSON: Hundred and fifty proof or whatever. [Laughter]

BARNES: Something like that. [Laughter] That luncheon lasted until like four or five o'clock in the afternoon. As we were leaving [the] lodge, my boss [told me that he had] gotten word that the chefs at the hotel have [obtained] the ducks that the astronauts shot and [were] dressing them for dinner. We're having them for dinner, and we need to get people out of their rooms and into the dining room." ...After having all that food for lunch [we had to attend] the duck dinner. And [we] couldn't say no [lest we offend] our hosts... [Most of the traveling party appeared for dinner. That entire day was an experience I'll never forget.]

SWANSON: What was the longest flight or duration that you had between stops?

BARNES: There were two flights. There was one from Bangkok [Thailand] to Sydney [Australia] all in one day, with a two-hour stop in Perth [Australia], where the astronauts [were] in a motorcade, and [made remarks at an official greeting hosted] by the city officials... We started out early in the morning from Bangkok and ... landed [in] Sydney around midnight the same trip, same day. The Prime Minister of Australia met us there, met us in Sydney.

The other [flight that comes to mind] was from Tokyo [Japan] to Andrews Air Force Base with a refueling stop at Elmendorf Air Force Base in Alaska. Originally, the plan was ... [that] we were to be given a two-day rest in Hawaii before flying back [home after we were finished in Tokyo]. We were flying to Houston to drop off the astronauts and then flying from there back to Andrews, but President Nixon wanted to take his family on a vacation and their plans were to start fairly soon. So we had to fly straight from Tokyo to Andrews Air Force Base in one leg. That was quite a tiring experience.

SWANSON: Obviously it's difficult to plan for the elements, as far as weather.

BARNES: Yes.

SWANSON: Did that creep in at all as far as your flights?

BARNES: I don't think so. No, now that you mention it, I don't recall any problems. I'll probably think of something after I leave. I haven't thought about a lot of these things for years.

SWANSON: It's been a while.

BARNES: For thirty years I haven't really thought about these things until I heard from you.

SWANSON: Just going through some of the outline that you'd given me previously here, you mentioned one of the more memorable experiences, as far as the sheer number of people. Can you relate that story, that greeted the astronauts at one stop?

BARNES: We were in Dacca [East Pakistan], and as soon as we approached the airfield, you can see all these people at the airport waiting to see the astronauts. The crew had to land the plane, had to shut off the engines as soon as we landed, because the crowd broke through the restraints and came running out onto the field. ...[Since we could not approach the terminal], the cars [were sent out to the plane] to take us on the motorcade to the hotel. And it was a hot day. [A very hot day.]

As I understand it, when you drive in a motorcade, you're supposed to keep almost bumper to bumper, to keep people from being able to squeeze in between the cars and thereby disrupting the motorcade. But as I mentioned, there was absolutely no crowd control. The engines started to overheat in the street on the way to the hotel. One of the security people for the wives came back to the car that I was in and told us they were taking our car for the wives. We had to get out of the car, in all that humanity, and look for another friendly place, another car, which was hard to find, because the crowds had gotten in between all the cars. Essentially, the drivers were on their own to try to find their way without following the car in front of them.

We finally found a [car] to get into, and we were sitting on each other's laps, ... crammed into the back seat of this little car. [That was probably the hairiest experience. I was down right scared. I thought what if I can't find another car to get into what am I going

to do? you just don't know what you'd do.] The astronauts' car [also] overheated, the engine—I don't understand the mechanics, but apparently when ... [engines overheat, you can turn on the heater, allowing the engine to go a further distance instead of stalling]. Their driver turned on the heat and took a shortcut through a soccer field in order to get to the hotel. It was kind of hairy...

Then, of course, in India, in Bombay, a lot of the staff didn't get to go to that outside ceremony, which is just as well, because it was very, very hot there. The embassy estimated the crowd to be about a million and a half people. The pictures, the pictures that I saw, you could see the heat rising, literally rising, kind of like a cloud and the humidity. That was an outside ceremony hosted by the local government officials. Dakar, I believe they estimated that to be about a million people. A lot of people.

SWANSON: Continuing on, maybe you could relate some of the stories also here that you encountered at, I think it was Kinshasa [Zaire].

BARNES: Kinshasa.

SWANSON: Zaire.

BARNES: Yes. There was like a twenty-five-mile drive from the airport to the place where we were staying. They had us billeted in a compound of villas which President Mobutu had [ordered to be] built for an Organization of African States [OAS] conference [and] the compound was adjacent to the presidential palace and his offices. The crowd control there was totally opposite from what we found in Dakar, because the policemen had these huge whips, and if somebody stepped off the curb to get into the path of one of the cars in the

motorcade, or tried to get into the astronauts' car, they would use the whips on people and they, of course, scurried back up on the curb.

The compound where we were staying, there was a private zoo which the president owned, which was near those grounds, and you could hear the animals, especially at night.
[Laughter]

SWANSON: A lot of this was televised also?

BARNES: Most of the arrivals were televised live... [In some of the cities, a national holiday had been declared on the day of the astronauts' arrival.]

SWANSON: Tehran [Iran], apparently you had an interesting encounter with a visitor.

BARNES: Yes. [Laughter]

SWANSON: Tehran, Iran.

BARNES: Yes. The staff was invited to go to visit the vault where [all of] the [Shah's] [Mohammad Reza Shah] ... family crown jewels [were] stored. The vault doors are on a time lock. [The vault was opened] especially for us, but I believe they were still time-locked. [Anyway], we were cautioned not to touch the glass display cases or not to put our foreheads up against them or touch them in any fashion. But somebody did, and the alarm started going off and these heavy doors started closing, and the security guards and the police were doing their best to hold the doors open while we all scurried out as far as we could go.

SWANSON: So they all made it out?

BARNES: We made it out, yes. [Laughter]

SWANSON: Avoided an incident. [Laughter]

BARNES: Cut our little tour short, though.

SWANSON: So apparently you were warmly received in every spot that you went.

BARNES: Everywhere.

SWANSON: There weren't any occasions where you received protests because you were representing the United States, as well, for whatever political reasons were going on. Obviously, [the] Vietnam [War] was still going on at that time.

BARNES: I don't think we did. I don't think there was any ugliness. If there was, it was kept—the crowds were kept a good distance away from the official ceremonies for the astronauts, but I don't recall any. I don't know if anything even came up, but that's something that Wade St. Clair might be able to shed some light on, or Bill Carpentier might know of some of that, too.

SWANSON: It must have been impressive going to these different countries in the President's plane, the Air Force One, or the backup, because it has the painting, the presidential seal and so forth. Did you get that response from others, too, just seeing that aircraft arrive?

BARNES: Yes. In fact, one of the embassy people told me that [he was at the airport for] one of our evening arrivals. He said when we approached the airport, [he saw] the plane [with the Presidential seal and] the American flag [imprinted on the plane] ... it just gave him goosebumps. It was an impressive plane. When the trip was over, we all gathered under the seal and had a group photograph made.

SWANSON: They would play the *Star-Spangled Banner*?

BARNES: At one of the briefings at the State Department, we were told that whenever you're coming, we used the back of the plane to leave the plane, and the astronauts and their wives and a couple of the senior staff would use the front. In Berlin, we were coming, and I believe we had to switch planes in Berlin. I believe we couldn't land at Templehauf with the Vice President's plane, and I think we had to switch over to a smaller plane. But at any rate, it still had the American flag on the tail.

But as we came down the back steps, and I was one of the people coming down the steps, and the band started playing the *Star-Spangled Banner*. We were told in the briefings that whenever you heard the *Star-Spangled Banner*, no matter where you were or what you were doing, you must stop ..., face the flag and put your hand over your heart, and we did. [One of our embassy people said they picked that the scene was picked up on live television.]

SWANSON: Just a response.

BARNES: It was a good patriotic feeling.

SWANSON: Were you allowed to take any essentials with you, or were those all provided pretty much on the plane? Were you allowed to take personal items, luggage and things like that?

BARNES: We were allowed to have one suitcase to be stored in the hold of the plane.

SWANSON: One suitcase?

BARNES: One suitcase and a hang-up bag. Now, the hang-up bag could either be up front in the cabin with you, or in the hold [and a briefcase]... I was able to smuggle in my wig box, because in those days [wigs were the rage and they] really came in handy [when it wasn't convenient] to find beauty shops... But at any rate, we [lived out of] a suitcase, a hang-up bag, and a briefcase [for the entire 38 day trip].

[One of our staff, Herb Oldenburg, had to important] job ... to get the [right] luggage to the right room at the hotel when we got off the plane. He and his people would also collect the bags early in the morning on the day of departure to get them to the airport. So it sort of became a game of Russian roulette, whether to pack your bags and put them [outside your room] the night before [a flight], or whether to take your chances that you're going to get up early enough to get ... your bags out. But I generally put mine out at night and kept out what I was going to wear the next day, and stuffed my [nightclothes] in my briefcase. [Laughter]

But when we were in Sydney, I was dragging my bags out into the hallway, about two o'clock in the morning. I used my raincoat as a bathrobe, because I wanted to save room in my suitcase for souvenirs. So I used my raincoat, my all-purpose coat, for a bathrobe. I was dragging my bags out into the hall in my raincoat and my hair up in curlers and in my bare feet. There was no one there when I opened the door and looked out, but I heard this

Australian voice behind me say, "Good morning, young lady." I turned around, and it was the Prime Minister. [Laughter] He'd been to a social function down the hall and was walking by on his way [out of the hotel]...

SWANSON: He didn't have a camera, did he? [Laughter]

BARNES: No. [Laughter]

SWANSON: Front-page news. [Laughter]

BARNES: No. [Laughter] I wasn't at my best. But I thought where in the world could you meet the Prime Minister of Australia under those—they were very casual people, the Australians. I enjoyed meeting those people. They were very nice.

SWANSON: So obviously the food and the water and the time change and everything, eventually would catch up. I mean, any people who have traveled, just knowing jet lag on a single trip, and having to get used to the food, and sometimes water, and whatever other things that they need. Eventually the illness kind of passed? Did they have medication that they could take? Did you have a doctor on board that could help?

BARNES: The flight surgeon—let's see. He was ministering to us as best he could with the supplies he had. I believe we had anti-diarrheal medicine and we had the usual things. But I lost twenty-five pounds [during the trip].

SWANSON: Was that common with the other members, too?

BARNES: One of the astronaut wives had lost a lot of weight, too. The State Department and health people would say to us, "Don't eat anything that you can't peel," which is a standard they tell all the tourists. "Don't drink the water." You were always bound to slip up somewhere along the way and do something you shouldn't do. It sort of took its toll, you know. The metabolism, I guess, had gone haywire. We probably would have been a good study, a microcosm of all the things that can happen to you on jet lag, going from one time zone to another and not eating properly, not getting enough rest. The flight surgeon finally said to us, "Eat when you're hungry and sleep when you're sleepy," because we weren't used to a lot of the time changes and going to bed at the proper time and eating your meals at the proper time. It was sort of catch-as-catch-can by the time the trip was over.

SWANSON: Sounds like, in retrospect, looking at everything that went into making Apollo 11 happen, this was probably one of the most difficult things for the crew members to have to work with. They naturally were uncomfortable around the public, and now suddenly the world's population is being laid at their feet.

BARNES: Yes.

SWANSON: Did you get that feeling?

BARNES: It [must have been] very difficult for them. As I mentioned before, they were always on the front lines of everything that was going on and people were looking to them to say inspirational things. I believe it was very difficult for them. It must have been, because they were called upon to make speeches and remarks at every place that they had a public appearance. I don't know the guidelines for what the scheduling people use on how many events they were allowed to do in one day.

I know when I started working with the Shuttle astronauts, I tried to keep the major events to like four a day, and a couple of informal things mixed in, in one given day. But I don't know what they were using, what the State Department people and my boss and the embassies were using as guidelines for how many public appearances they could do in one day.

SWANSON: Obviously, with all the customs from the different countries that you visited, words take on different meanings and there are some things we take for granted that we don't think would be offensive to others. Did you ever encounter a trip-up in some function where it was an honest mistake, either something that was said or a custom that wasn't followed?

BARNES: No. No, I don't. I do know that, I guess, when you're flying on a commercial airliner that there are some restraints, and as you land in each country, I guess they spray the aircraft for any kind of insect or anything that might be brought in from other countries. I'm not sure how that happened, how that works, but I know that because we were using the Vice President's plane and because we were who we were, the astronauts, that is, all the countries waived any kind of customs inspections. We had one guy who carried all of our passports and he would, just as a courtesy, give the passports to the right person upon arrival, and they were just stamped and just given back to him.

In Australia, when we landed in Perth, the local officials insisted on coming aboard and spraying for tse-tse flies. Nick Ruwe, our State Department guy, was highly offended that they would do that, but they insisted on doing it anyway. So we were told when they came aboard to inspect the plane ... we [should] just sit there and stare at them. [Laughter]

SWANSON: That seemed to work, huh? [Laughter]

BARNES: That seemed to work. [Laughter] That was the only thing I recall. Probably other things would come to mind if I had a chance to think about it some more.

SWANSON: The astronaut wives, many times they would get overlooked in all of the celebrity events and so forth that were going on. Did you get any stories, reflections that you recall on this trip? It must have been hard for them also, because if the astronauts were reclusive, the astronaut wives in many cases were even more so. Did you find—

BARNES: No, not really. In addition to doing appearances, appearing with their husbands, they were also scheduled for separate events in themselves. They would work in press conferences by the wives where the local press would just ask them questions. They were very open and very—

SWANSON: Supportive?

BARNES: Supportive and responsive.

SWANSON: Did they have separate functions, too, that the wives of the heads of state, they participated in?

BARNES: I believe so. I know in Rio de Janeiro, the ambassador's wife hosted a yacht tour around the city with the astronaut wives and myself and the State Department secretary, just the women. Again, Wade St. Clair would probably be able to tell you more of the things that they were—on my notes, on my marginal notes that I kept in my briefing book, I don't recall a whole lot of separate events.

SWANSON: On the return, you mentioned earlier they arrived back and then gave a report to the President.

BARNES: Yes... [There was a White House ceremony on the day we returned, November the 5th. During the ceremony President Nixon officially welcomed the astronauts back to the U.S. from the world tour where they shared the successes of the Apollo 11 mission with people in other countries. The astronauts presented the report, along with their letter, summarizing the report, to the President. The support staff and our families were also present during the ceremony.]

SWANSON: Were there a lot of gifts that were presented to the astronauts as part of their tour?

BARNES: There ... [was an official gift exchange at each stop. Most of the items were turned over to the State Department. Special permission was obtained from Congress to allow the astronauts to keep some of the things.]

SWANSON: Do you recall any unique items in particular that were presented that come to mind?

BARNES: [I think one of these was the gift from] the Shah of Iran, [which was a small] Persian rug [with] the Apollo 11 insignia woven ... into the center of it...

SWANSON: Well, after all this is done, did the astronauts then have an opportunity to take a real vacation? [Laughter]

BARNES: I'm sure they did. [Laughter] [However, about] a month after that, they [were sent] to Ottawa [Ontario] and [Montreal [Quebec]] Canada. Apparently, [these stops couldn't logistically fit] into either the beginning of the trip or the end of the world trip. ...[They] were received by the Prime Minister [of Canada, Pierre Elliott Trudeau] in Ottawa and did appearances there [and in Montreal].

SWANSON: That's all very interesting. I'd heard of the tour that the astronauts presented, but, until now, really never knew how massive an effort, a project that was. Buzz Aldrin, I think, mentions it in a book that he wrote shortly after. It was called *Return to Earth*.

BARNES: Yes, I have a copy of that.

SWANSON: In fact, he had some problems afterwards. I wonder how much this affected him, if there was any sign at the time of what was to later happen.

BARNES: Well, from my own personal viewpoint, I know when [the] trip was over, [I was glad to get back home to my family]. I had three children [who at the time were three (Paul), eleven (Susan), and thirteen (John)]... My [ex-husband] and the children met me [at] the White House [for the welcoming ceremony]. When we left to go get the car from the parking garage, all of a sudden it dawned on me, there's nobody bringing me [an official] car [right away. Reality had set it.] [Laughter]

SWANSON: You got spoiled. [Laughter]

BARNES: I was just worn out. And when we got home, I didn't even unpack my bags. I just sat down in a reclining chair and sat there all night... The whole time [we were traveling, the

adrenaline was at its peak and I could not rest from being afraid of missing the wake up call, afraid of missing the plane]... All of a sudden, everything is down. You don't have to wake up at a certain time the next morning, you don't have to pack a bag to put out in the hall.

SWANSON: And risk encountering the Prime Minister of Australia. [Laughter]

BARNES: Right. [Laughter] It was like you'd really come down, and it took a couple of days to get yourself back to the functioning level.

SWANSON: To return to Earth. [Laughter]

BARNES: To return to Earth, as Buzz Aldrin would say. I believe that he did speak of some problems that he had after the lunar mission, where it was a letdown, and I can see why if you were training all those months for such an undertaking as that and it's over. What do you do after you go to the moon? But on a smaller scale, speaking for myself, I could see that I did have a down time, a couple of days there where it was hard to really get back in the real world.

SWANSON: Was there an assessment of the tour afterwards inside of NASA to see if this was something that they wanted to do again? I know you mentioned that the Apollo 12 crew took a similar trip, not as extensive, but they also took a trip, too. Did they use kind of a lessons-learned from this?

BARNES: I'm sure they did. I know that there was a feeling after our trip was over, that the United States had gained a lot of benefits by having them go meet public people, as well as the heads of state, and that we had gained support for the space program. After the Apollo 12

flight, there was a similar world tour for them. I believe those were the only two that were done.

SWANSON: Were you involved on the 12 tour?

BARNES: The staff people were from my office, the same office that went to support that. My boss' deputy was a NASA representative and his secretary was the NASA secretary that went.

SWANSON: But you didn't have to pull another tour of duty as far as actively going to these different countries on that tour?

BARNES: Oh, no. Oh, no, no, no. I couldn't stand to do it again. [I'm glad that I was given the opportunity to take part in such an adventure.] It was really quite unique and a wonderful experience and one that I never would have had, had I not worked for NASA. I mean, I never would have dreamed of going to all these places. I'm glad I did it, but I wouldn't want to do it again.

SWANSON: You mentioned that you handled some of the correspondence with the astronauts at that time. Did you actually look at some of the letters and review the letters that would come in from the outside, or were you handling basically correspondence, just follow-up correspondence?

BARNES: On that mission, on that trip, I was just handling follow-up correspondence, thank-you letters and helping the State Department with some of their clerical things after the trip was over. But after the trip was over and Neil Armstrong was assigned to headquarters as the

deputy associate administrator for aeronautics, I went to work for him as a public affairs assistant and answered all of his public mail in his role as an astronaut. He had a secretary who supported him in his job as the deputy associate administrator and handled any invitations he got for public appearances. My job was to prepare responses to his public mail.

SWANSON: Since you worked with Neil after this, as you mentioned, can you share anything? He's always been somewhat of an elusive character with the Apollo 11 crew, very quiet, very to himself. Can you share any moments or interesting anecdotal stories about working with Neil Armstrong?

BARNES: Well, no. I don't know that you ever really get to know him. He was very supportive of me while I was doing that job. There was a lot of mail, and anything that came in that I thought deserved his special attention and people would want him to sign certain things that they'd send in, or they'd ask him for special inscriptions on photographs. I had my own office and I would line these things up on a table in my office. At the end of his work day as the deputy associate administrator, he would come in and sign all those things. He wouldn't merely sign them, he would write "To John, With best wishes." He was very—

SWANSON: So you would read the letters or whatever.

BARNES: Special mail and special letters that I didn't want to try to handle, I would take to him. I had a regularly scheduled meeting time that I would review these things with him. But every day, at the end of his work day, he would go in and sign all those things. He was very conscientiousness about doing that. I enjoyed working for him. He let me handle my

job, and I would go to him if I could foresee any problems with answering a specific type of mail and get his decision on what he wanted done.

SWANSON: Do you recall any interesting letters that he had received that come to mind either from schoolchildren or professionals? I imagine he got all different kinds that you would have to screen.

BARNES: Well, people were always asking him for monetary donations. They were always asking him for items that they could auction at celebrity auctions. I remember we got one request from a group in his home state, in Ohio, who wanted him to send them the toenail clippings from his left foot. That was the first human foot to step on the moon. They wanted to auction them off. [Laughter] Also a sock that he might have worn on that foot, certified by him that he had worn it on his left foot.

During that time, too, all three of the astronauts had received a lot of mail from the public, and gifts. His gifts were stored out at the NASA warehouse in Alexandria on Fern Street. During this time, his wife, Jan, and I went through everything that was stored out there in that warehouse to catalog it, what it was and where it came from. They were sent to his museum in Wapakoneta. It's run by the Ohio Historical Society.

I had an opportunity to go to that museum after he had left NASA. When I was on my way on a vacation trip, I stopped in Wapakoneta and met his parents, and they took me on a tour of the museum. So I had an opportunity to see some of these items that his wife and I had cataloged. They were on display at his museum. I believe that Mike Collins probably had his items sent to the [National] Air and Space Museum [Smithsonian, Washington, D.C.], where he was the director for a few years. I don't know what Colonel Aldrin did with his.

SWANSON: You mentioned that later that you moved on and became administrative secretary to the associate administrator for aeronautics and space technology. One of the highlights here was that you acted as one of the chaperons or counselors for this international youth science tour. Tell us a little bit about that.

BARNES: The State Department and NASA and the *Reader's Digest* sponsored a science competition in various countries, and the winners of those science competitions were brought as a group to this country for a tour of the scientific facilities.

SWANSON: What was the subject? It was an experiment that they had to perform? Was it a space-related theme?

BARNES: You know, I don't know. I don't recall. That was in 1972. I don't really recall how they did it in each country. Well, frankly, this probably should be off the record, but they say in some of these countries, the teenager—the age group was fifteen to eighteen. The rumor was—well, it wasn't exactly a rumor, but some of the representatives were close relatives of the reigning monarch of these countries, so it may not have been a real competition at all in some of the places. I probably shouldn't—

SWANSON: Okay, we'll scratch that.

BARNES: Yes, scratch that.

SWANSON: We'll expunge that from the record.

BARNES: But I don't know how they conducted the scientific experiments that won these competitions for these kids. My group, we had about eighty in the group, and I was one of the chaperons. We had a group of two chaperons for a group of twenty people. We were gone like two weeks.

SWANSON: So NASA basically hosted them?

BARNES: Yes.

SWANSON: And they visited the different centers?

BARNES: We went to Marshall Space Flight Center [Huntsville, Alabama], the Johnson Space Center, and another facility in Boulder, Colorado, at Lawrence Livermore in Los Angeles, [California], the Lawrence Livermore Labs, and Oakridge, Tennessee. I can't remember some of the other places.

SWANSON: You mentioned later in your career with NASA that you basically from around 1980 on, it looks like, until your retirement in '94, that you worked with the astronaut appearances. Tell us a little bit about that capacity. I know from the public's perspective, there's always requests that come in from people in different states that want an astronaut to appear at some function. How, typically, did that work and some interesting stories that you had during the rather long portion of your career working in that capacity?

BARNES: After Neil Armstrong left, I kind of wandered around the agency in different jobs, and there was an opening in this job back in the office that I started out in years ago in my first public affairs job, which was, organizationally speaking, the same office. There was an

opening in that office, and I went back into that same office, this time as a scheduling officer for astronaut appearances. At that time, some appearances were being done out of the Johnson Space Center and some were being done at headquarters. I worked with Jean Marinetti [phonetic] on the astronaut appearances that were handled at headquarters.

Beginning with STS-1, I not only scheduled the appearances for the first five Shuttle crew members as a crew, I scheduled them from my office, but I also traveled into these various locations with them or meeting them at the locations where they were to do appearances. That would last—I would have them for close to a month, schedule them for appearances that had come in, requests that had come in from various organizations. I'd always schedule a hometown visit. So every time a Shuttle crew was announced, I'd automatically go look for their biogs [biographies] and find out where their home towns were so I'd know where I'd be going next. And I was traveling about two weeks out of every month.

Then in 1984, there was a reorganization of public affairs officers in the Office of Public Affairs, and I was sent to International Relations, co-located from Public Affairs. My job was to schedule astronauts for international appearances. So once again, I got to work with local American embassies and consuls and consulates.

SWANSON: You had a lot of experience by now.

BARNES: Yes, and USIA people, on sending astronauts to different countries to wave the flag and get the most mileage that NASA could get out of them, frankly. I guess the astronauts sort of resigned themselves to the fact that part of their job was to, you know, do public appearances and say nice thing about NASA. I tried to make it as easy for them as I could, but a lot of them didn't like that part of the job, but knew they were committed to do it.

I enjoyed it, even though I was traveling a lot. I didn't travel in international relations, I just sort of didn't want to go to different countries and not be able to speak the language and try to get things done like you can here in the United States. I didn't object to traveling in the United States. I enjoyed that. I enjoyed meeting the local folks in all these home towns and working with the mayor's committees. The mayors always set up committees to plan the days, the events for the astronauts. They all wanted to do the right thing for the astronauts. We would do appearances that NASA could also get some mileage out of, and it was quite an interesting job.

SWANSON: So if you included the first five, I can't help but be a little bit partial to Jack [R.] Lousma, who is from Grand Rapids [Michigan].

BARNES: Oh, he's a wonderful guy. I went to Michigan twice with him. We went once to Lansing, he spoke to the legislature, and we also went to Grand Rapids for about a week's worth of appearances in Grand Rapids. Oh, he's really a neat guy, very easy to work with. He's one of these people who would say, "Tell me what you want me to do and I'll go do it," and point him in the right direction.

SWANSON: I guess one thing I somewhat overlooked and we'll come to a little bit of a close here, is that you worked in the background with the astronauts in making them look good and making their appearances come off smoothly and so forth. I really haven't had a chance to address what your feelings and thoughts were about the Apollo Program specifically, and Apollo 11. Now that you've had a chance, especially being retired, to kind of step back a little bit and take a breath and reflect on the event as a whole, what are some of your thoughts on that achievement?

BARNES: Well, I worked the protocol part of the Apollo 11 launch and it was really quite mind-boggling to see. We were at Cocoa Beach [Florida] for like a week ahead of the actual launch day, and people were already gathering to witness the launch. ...The evening before the launch there were people sleeping on the beaches [and] sleeping in their cars, because there were no more hotel rooms. [Some spent the night] sitting in chairs in hotel lobbies. The [motel and restaurant] marquees at Cocoa Beach, the hotel marquees were all saying, "Good luck, Apollo 11"... There were a lot of [well known] people there for the launch. You just couldn't help but feel that there was something big happening, you know, and you were just glad to be a part of it.

My family went down for that launch. I remember when it took off, when it lifted off the pad, I couldn't help but think, what are they really going to experience once they get there? Are they going to get back? Because despite all the things you'd heard [about the mission being] carefully planned and they knew what to expect and everything was going to go according to the flight plan, I sort of had a feeling in the back of my mind, well, what if? I thought, the eyes of the world are focused here in Cocoa Beach at the Kennedy Space Center. I guess it wasn't the Kennedy Space Center at that time.

I just felt ... glad to be a part of it and I wanted my children to see it [and to share the experience with me]. My youngest child was just two and a half, and he vaguely remembers, because of the launch sequence, when it starts to lift off [with all of the noise and] smoke. ...My two older ones [will] never forget it. [I know I certainly won't. This was such] a significant [event] for the United States and for NASA, and I [felt privileged to have had a very] small part on it.

SWANSON: It looks like you had a pretty significant part, especially with this world tour going off when pretty much the eyes of the world were looking at the crew members and trying to be part of the event as a whole.

BARNES: It was overwhelming. That part was overwhelming. Especially when we realized what we'd gotten ourselves into. [Laughter]

SWANSON: Are there any other comments that you'd care to share, part of the interview here that I may have overlooked or stories that you would care to share?

BARNES: No, I think that we've pretty well covered it. I enjoyed my work with the Shuttle guys, also, and women. I got an opportunity to know them on our travels, and I really enjoyed getting to know them and to work with them. They're all very distinct personalities. I felt like I was sort of earning my keep with scheduling the things that could benefit NASA and the astronauts, as well, help us with our budgeting process. We always included members of Congress in all of our public appearances.

In fact, with the STS-1 crew, John [W.] Young and Bob [Robert L.] Crippen, Jake [Edwin Jacob] Garn invited them to Salt Lake City, [Utah], and the Mormon Tabernacle Choir sang for them for an evening appearance there.

SWANSON: I guess this is probably maybe a good comparison, having participated in this tour for Apollo 11, which was pretty much the peak of the Apollo Program, and then coming back with Shuttle, arranging similar tours and visits, did you notice a change in the public's attitude toward NASA, spaceflight in general?

BARNES: No, I didn't, because there was an awful lot of requests that were coming in for the Shuttle crews. We really couldn't do them all. We were very popular, still. Now, I guess I read stories, you know, and some of the questions that the astronauts would get on the road were sort of like, "Why are we spending all this money to go into space?" They always had

good answers, but I guess during the Shuttle days you saw more of those kind of questions than you did, for instance, on the world tour with the Apollo 11 astronauts. I guess people's priorities had started to change.

But I was very sad when we decided not to continue to send flights to the moon, because it seemed like all of my NASA career I'd heard stories of how we were planning to colonize the moon and use it for a stop-off to other planets. I never could really get it straight in my mind why we weren't looking that far into the future that we would not continue. It never dawned on me that we should not continue on with it.

SWANSON: You being much more closely associated with it, it seemed all the more crazy, I guess, why we had all this technology and we just kind of let it go.

BARNES: Let it go, yes. It's sad. I think it's sad. I know one of the speech writers years ago, in response to a similar kind of question, made the analogy of what if Queen [Isabela] had told Christopher Columbus, "Well, we need this money for public housing"? You know, there's always going to be problems with the welfare system and people that don't have money, and you have to set your priorities, I think. I think that at that time, NASA was only getting like two cents out of the tax dollar, so I don't think that's too much to ask.

SWANSON: Especially with the Apollo Program, the response that you got overwhelmingly from the world.

BARNES: Oh, yes, from the world.

SWANSON: It's like it would be the farthest things from our minds at all.

BARNES: And the spinoffs that we've gotten from later missions just boggles the mind.

SWANSON: Well, I think we'll come to a close, unless you have anything else that you would be interested in sharing, Gennie, to this interview. I see that our time is up, so thank you very much.

BARNES: Oh, thank you. I was glad to participate.

[End of Interview]