

SCA Past Interview Series: George Burgess (May 6, 2023)		
Start Time	End Time	Text
00:00:00:00	00:00:40:16	Hello, I'm Glen Gravlee I'm a longstanding member of the Society of Cardiovascular Anesthesiologists, which has assembled a task force that is doing oral histories of SCA leaders past and present. I'm pleased to be with George Burgess today. Also, life, nearly lifelong member of the SCA, served on the board for almost 40 years. If I'm correct in my math, and also as a past president of the Society of Cardiovascular Anesthesiologists.
00:00:40:18	00:01:33:02	George, good morning. Good morning. When we're here in Portland at the Celebration 45th annual meeting of the Society, and we will be conducting several of these interviews today and going forward in the future, several more. George, let's just start with the beginning of how you what inspired you to become an anesthesiologist. Well, I found that in my training with our wonderful professor, Dave Brown at University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, and then with subsequent in my fellowship year with John Hedley right at Beth Israel Hospital, Harvard in Boston, that they tended to guide me, I think, and mentor me to try to do the best that I could for some of the most ill patients
00:01:33:04	00:02:03:05	and most complex patients that were presented in the operating rooms. That led me as much to respiratory care and cardiac care and surgical patients. They were instrumental in my pursuing that line. So you did your residency at the University of North Carolina? Yeah. And then a fellowship here. Okay. And was your fellowship, your exclusively cardiac anesthesia was a mix of anesthesia and intensive care.
00:02:03:08	00:02:30:22	It was a mix of intensive care and anesthesia and also some. I was in the research lab as well for some some time. And John Hedley White also had me as a coauthor of a book on respiratory care, along with Tom Seeley and Malcolm Miller and and him. And that was published after just after I left the fellowship here.
00:02:30:25	00:02:55:23	Certainly Dr. Hedley White was a was a legend in his own right. Yes, he was. Yes. So you didn't actually do a fellowship specifically in cardiac anesthesia, it sounds like. No, I did not. Okay. And then from there to the Ochsner Clinic directly or from there, I went on. Actually, I went on the faculty and staff of the hospital at Beth Israel.
00:02:55:24	00:03:20:25	Yes. Okay. For a short time then I found that because of some illness in my family, grandfather. Actually, I had to move back to New Orleans to take care of him. So I then went to the clinic on the faculty. On the staff there at New Orleans. Is where you grew up? Yes. Yes. Now, at so this were early seventies, mid seventies, 75.
00:03:20:28	00:04:03:26	1975 was when I wound up in New Orleans. And were you a member of the critical care team, the cardiac NSC? Was there a cardiac anesthesia team? How did that work? Well, I was there with three other people who were might be called junior faculty, who wound up being doing most of the cardiac work. I don't know that we call ourselves a team, but our desks were all very close together in cubicles in the same room, and we wound up usually being assigned or volunteering for most almost all of the cardiac cases after a while.
00:04:03:28	00:04:35:00	I have the impression that in the in that time period, the cardiac anesthesia case assignments and sub specialization was almost more informal than formal. That fit your understanding or. Yes, I think it's a good description. Absolutely. So fellowship was not required. It just was kind of an interest that was pursued and kind of evolved into subspecialty. Yes, that's correct.
00:04:35:03	00:05:00:29	What led to the formation of the Society of Cardiovascular Anesthesiologists? 78, I guess it was. Well, it started earlier than that. And approximately the interest started in about 1976. So I'd been there a year. I'd come from Boston. I was aware of another group called the Association of Cardiac Anesthetists, spelled in the Boston manner. And with the dip fund.
00:05:01:00	00:05:35:08	Yes, as usual. And as a result, and after we were doing so many of the cardiac cases at Ochsner in New Orleans, I thought we should contact that group. And so after sometime in 76 or early 77, I wrote to Ed Lowenstein and and Skip Ellison and said, We understand you have this group. We also know that it's a fairly limited group and number deliberately limited in number.
00:05:35:11	00:06:19:24	Would you be interested in opening the group up and having us apply for membership or seek membership? That was the initial thought process and then we received in 77, 1977, early, very nice replies that indicated that the group was going to stay a limited number of people. I think it was maybe in 30 or 50. I really don't know that much about it at that time and suggested that it would be fine if we wanted to start a different group that had open membership, that is membership that would be open to anyone who would apply, who might meet certain criteria.
00:06:19:26	00:06:54:12	And that was the. I think a very cordial reply and one that actually was very encouraging to us. So we didn't jump right away and do anything. What what happened next was that assay was having its annual meeting in New Orleans in October, November of 1977, and the four of us, there were four people at that time doing most of this work myself, Bob Marino, Martin Buehler and John Cooper.
00:06:54:14	00:07:41:17	All of you faculty at Oxford? Yes, All at Ochsner at that time that decided to while we were attending that ERISA annual meeting, that we would give a cocktail party for people, for people that we knew in our former departments who were going to be attending the meeting in New Orleans that we sent out invitations. We have we my one of my med school classmates at Tulane Med School named George Harris was renting a house, a carriage house behind the main house of Lindy Boggs, who was a representative, and her husband, Hale Boggs, had been chairman, head of the House of Representatives.
00:07:41:20	00:08:08:20	She had a house at 600 block of Bourbon Street, beautiful home built in 1795. We through George Harris, we were able to contact Lindy and she allowed us graciously to use the house for our cocktail party. And we had sent out an invitation to buy it. About 75 people from each one of our former departments. And lo and behold, about 300 people showed up.
00:08:08:22	00:08:30:28	So obviously we were doing something right or they found out about it at this private home. Yes. Oh, my goodness. So did you know that many were going to show? No, no, not at all. Oh, my goodness. Not at all. So at that, was there sufficient food? Food did run out. The bar, however, was well stocked to not run out.
00:08:30:28	00:08:37:00	The bar was a must have been a big draw. I'm not sure.
00:08:37:02	00:09:04:12	So you could at that point we had a number of people with whom we talked around, milled around with in the courtyard and in the home. And many people we decided were doing somewhat similar things that we were doing in the operating room and cardiac anesthesia, and also wanted to participate in some type of group. However ill defined it would be.
00:09:04:15	00:09:58:22	That was also encouraging to us. So at that point I kind of sat back and waited to see what would happen. And of all the people we talked to, nobody stood up and did anything. Nobody enacted anything. Nobody. So I decided, well, I'm going to make a group formal company, an organization that would be able to satisfy anybody who wanted to come up and group with and with a goal of trying to keep up with the research that was ongoing, communicate and spread that research, perform, acquire knowledge and and pass it on through communication to improve patient care.
00:09:58:24	00:10:34:05	It was really a matter of intellectual curiosity on my part. And the goal was that this be an organization of populated by academicians and private practitioners. Absolutely. It was supposed to be an open group and anyone could sign up to be a member with certain criteria. And, and, and that was even further brought forward because, again, in 1977, after a few months, I received another letter from Dan Philbin.
00:10:34:07	00:11:06:29	And in that letter, another encouraging letter were about 30 names of other physician anesthesiologists who were doing cardiac anesthesia but were and had had contacted the Association of Cardiac Anesthetists and also been told politely that they were not going to be allowed in because the membership was quite limited to a few people, that that formed the basis for what could be the start of the organization.

00:11:07:01	00:11:56:20	But it needed an organization. There needed to be some entity, a body legal entity that that would exist. So in about in early 1978, I set about making a list literally on the back of scratch papers and old letters of what needed to be done. That included bringing a post office box, getting, opening a checking account with my own money, and then getting designing a logo, putting, which was an interesting task while I was on bypass and then had been buying stationery and then started to write up bylaws.
00:11:56:22	00:12:28:00	So my wife was at that time a second year law student at Tulane Law School in New Orleans, and she had textbooks which had sample bylaws for different companies. This was going to be a not for profit company. And with so I wrote the bylaws up and I deliberately decided that the bylaws and articles of incorporation would be fairly general, expecting that they would require change as the group if the group took off and moved forward.
00:12:28:02	00:12:50:19	So in 1978, the articles and bylaws were given to an attorney who was a local friend of mine, and he posted them at the Secretary of State's office, which is a requirement. So we then we had a company, we had a checking account. And so the next order of business was, well, what do we do next? Well, let me interrupt you just briefly.
00:12:50:21	00:13:18:20	So there was kind of a collaboration between you and your wife putting these together, or did she just say, here, look at this, and you did it, or how did that work? You know, she was very helpful throughout the bylaws and the legal process. But I wrote the bylaws and she with she gave me constructive criticism, as wives will do, and and particularly wives who are going to be attorneys.
00:13:18:22	00:13:49:19	But it was much appreciated. She also then and all and the other wives there were three other wives who and I mentioned them later when we had our first meeting. Bob Marino's wife, Betsy Marino, and Pam Mueller. Martin Mueller, his wife, acted as the social committee at the first annual meeting, which took place in 1979. That meeting was preceded by once we had the organization formed in 1978.
00:13:49:22	00:14:16:07	We then went to the Southern Society of Anesthesiology meeting, I think, in Williamsburg in early 1979 and ran to another variety of people. And this time we were able to say we have an a company or an organization that's up and running and although it had no money in it other than what we had put forward and said, Well, what what can we do next?
00:14:16:09	00:14:57:02	Let's have a meeting and talk about what our issues are and how we should further refine the society. So that meeting was arranged for November of 1979, if I remember correctly. And it had we drew speakers and I was I was the vice president at that time, but I apparently was also a program chairman because there was no position, but I was the one who wrote the letters, wrote the bylaws, wrote, did all the work necessarily, didn't negotiated the hotel contract for the meeting.
00:14:57:04	00:15:21:17	So I guess I was a program chair. So there was a an article published about ten years ago at the 35th anniversary of the SCA by Jerry Reeves, also a past president. And in reading that article, there was an inference that there was a pretty strong association with the anesthesia group at the University of Alabama early on.
00:15:21:18	00:15:43:13	Is that the way you remember it, or was that a formal thing, an informal thing, or could Bill Well, and Jerry Reeves and some other things be Paul Samuelson? Yes, I would say that was informal. Okay. Because most of those discussions took place again, and another social function at that at that meeting. Oh, the Southern society and another cocktail party.
00:15:43:13	00:16:08:12	So they so well, I remember Jerry Reeves telling me that part of his motivation was that the ACA was kind of a closed society. No, I can give a little perspective on that because I was at Massachusetts General with Ed Lowenstein and Dan Philbin at the time and was aware that it was quite close to me. It was Mass General, University of Pennsylvania.
00:16:08:14	00:16:51:23	They dominated it, as I recall, and there were a few scattered others. Emory came in and Cleveland Clinic with us, the finals. But it was very much a not open society, but it was encouraging to hear that Dan Philbin was supportive. I considered them all supportive. Everyone I wrote to providing support to me, the the at that meeting, we we decided we would have another meeting which I undertook to be to create and fund hotel in New Orleans, then started to try to fill out, pick some moderators for the meeting, to hopefully pick other people to to give papers.
00:16:51:26	00:17:25:18	And sure enough, we had we had we had volunteers who came to this meeting to speak. They didn't get an honorarium. Their expenses weren't paid, their hotel rooms weren't paid for by the society. This was the idea of a volunteer effort of, you know, for not for profit groups simply to convey information. And we had people there from Emory Mayo Clinic.
00:17:25:21	00:17:46:12	I can't without my notes, I can't tell you exactly where, But I would bet you there were five or six different institutions there, all of whom were asked to if they wanted to volunteer to show up and participate. And we had no idea whether, other than the people we asked to come who volunteered to come, whether anybody else would show up.
00:17:46:15	00:18:19:12	So we also tried to make an organization that would at the meeting, we wanted to have elections right away because we wanted to disperse the membership and the organizational hierarchy away from Austin or New Orleans, if we could, into other areas in order to make the organization more open and rough guess as to how many people were at that first meeting and we were looking at 150.
00:18:19:15	00:18:48:12	200? Oh, no, no. I'd say there were between 50 and 60, okay. And my job was another one of my jobs was I recorded everybody because I would send out the form saying, Do you want hotel reservations? Which I had to take, take care of and have their names and included their wives names because we wanted to make this a as much as much a social and friendly organization as we could.
00:18:48:15	00:19:17:18	And then the next meeting after that was Kiawah Island Island. And did you organize that one as I did not. I did not. We had a I'm not sure that they shared a big part. You escaped it? No, I didn't escape. No. I was on the board for a long time in order to make sure that the spirit and the basic founding thoughts and vision that we had would remain in place.
00:19:17:21	00:19:48:05	Well, tell us. I did have concerns about that. Tell us about how you structured the board with the founding members at that time called Founding Fathers and what that whole principle was about and how that evolved. So I wrote the bylaws. So I decided that first we sat down and I said, well, I was going to be we had three slots to fill for president, vice president and Secretary treasurer in the bylaws common set up for any organization.
00:19:48:08	00:20:17:13	The most logical person I thought for president was Bob Marino. So I put his name down as Bob Marino first and he had contacts and is more social than I am and I'm more of a organizational person, I think. So I made myself vice president. And then we had Martin Mueller. Martin was drafted into the position. I don't think he ever really felt comfortable in that role, but he agreed to be secretary treasurer.
00:20:17:15	00:20:44:10	So after we decided and as I said, I felt very strongly that we would we would we would birth this baby, but then we would step back and let others help it grow. And in doing so, one of the things that concerned me was what happened. And I've seen what's what can happen when something becomes successful, but we had no idea it would be successful, I'll be honest with you.
00:20:44:12	00:21:16:08	But it's others can be tempted in in certain situations to become try to dominate an organization or tried to change its basic function. We felt I felt very strongly that no single individual or department for that matter, should benefit from its role in the society, particularly. No single individual should benefit financially from his or her role in the society.
00:21:16:10	00:21:39:12	So I thought the only the best way to handle that was for Bob and myself to stay on the board indefinitely. And as it turned out, I think that turned out to be the right thing to do. And was Martin Mueller also a part of that package initially, or just the two? He was according to the bylaws, but he didn't be tried out.
00:21:39:12	00:22:03:14	He dropped out basically, and but not Don Harmon. He wasn't a part of that or he came in soon thereafter. Didn't hear was Don was still beginning to Don was a resident when we started. Okay. So there was no role for him as in the society, as a resident, until after he had gotten. We didn't have fellowship members, fellow members, as that was a change that was brought on.

00:22:03:17	00:22:33:18	So but Don was an enthusiastic supporter and really priceless, I think, addition to the group. And he subsequently finished his his training, went on the faculty of the staff at Ochsner as well. They provided entertainment and awards and plaques, you name it. He was a very and he was an officer at one point, was he not? Didn't Yes, he was.
00:22:33:20	00:23:03:11	He became secretary treasurer in the in the first year after that of the second year after that. I can't recall exactly. But he was he could as soon as he was able to join, he join. So it sounds like you saw the founding members serving in continuity as a way of sort of protecting the organization's intent and providing, you know, a common path through the years.
00:23:03:13	00:23:42:09	Absolutely. I didn't I didn't want the when I wrote those that section of the bylaws, I was intent on not having someone wind up abusing the basic image that we had, the vision that we had of what the society should be. And I think that that was a good thing to do, because there were times where in subsequent years when the society's independent role could have been threatened in some way, well, it's certainly passed the test of time, I think.
00:23:42:11	00:24:05:01	Would you organize it pretty much the same way if you had it to do over? Were there things you thought a lot of a lot about that? Well, I mean, a lot of the changes that were necessary, I think, were made in the first ten years that benefit of making the term of the president and then the subsequent offers all two years that that encouraged people who were going to be officers to commit years.
00:24:05:01	00:24:51:07	They had years of work to the society. And and I think that was very helpful. The the other changes that were made were also, I think, helpful. So I'm I, I don't know the selection of the first officers. I don't know. I've thought about that to some extent because Bob Marino was the first president sometime in early 1979, before after the bylaws were written, had a health issue, and he wasn't always able to devote his time necessarily to the to his function as president.
00:24:51:09	00:25:24:24	And indeed, a month and a half or so before the first annual meeting where we were supposed to be the officers, we were the officers, he had his his health issue forced him to be absent for 4 to 6 weeks and then showed up again, maybe ten days before the first annual meeting. So that was that was a difficult time to figure out how this was going to work.
00:25:24:27	00:25:53:13	But in retrospect, I think the society was able to do fine in spite of that. And Jerry Reese became the first elected president, is my understanding. And was that just kind of you guys talked among yourselves and said, let's nominate Jerry. That was happen from the podium, from the dais and everybody how many all those in favor kind of thing is that describe it or I don't know if it happened from the dais.
00:25:53:13	00:26:30:03	I don't remember that. But yes it was We had approached Jerry at I think at the Southern Society meeting, and that's where Jerry comes across with his has a relationship early on because first place we didn't know if anybody was going to show up at the meeting, the first annual meeting. So in second place, I was adamant that that both Bob and I relinquish our offices to other people in an effort to spread the the function and perpetuate the society.
00:26:30:06	00:26:53:25	The the Bob Bob showed back up at the first annual meeting. He said, I don't really want to leave being president. And I had to explain to him that that's we had already talked to Jerry and that I didn't really know if Jerry was going to be elected because it was an open election. But we needed somebody who would agree to step up.
00:26:53:28	00:27:35:15	And so it was Bob that was that's not going to he can't stay in that role. So So the meeting was open to other nominations? Absolutely. From the floor. And I think every meeting we've had there have been open nominations to have nominations before. Subsequently, there was a nominating committee developed, that sort of thing. But the goal was to to have an open membership and open meetings and perpetuate the society and describe the evolution from the president, vice president, secretary treasurer to president elect president, past president.
00:27:35:18	00:28:01:13	Yes. So six year continuum, basically. Exactly. That's exactly right. And it had to do with on the one hand being president first. The first issue was being president for one year was clearly not enough time for one individual to get anything done. In order to prepare for a meeting, you had to select it two years, at least two years ahead of time in order to prepare for any major change in bylaws, you had had to do it.
00:28:01:13	00:28:29:09	It start at least a year, sometimes two years, before, to make sure it passed through all of the necessary reviews. So a one year presidency term was not feasible, not functional, highly functional. So we switched to year on the President. Well, if you can have two year presidents, then originally there was no requirement or no expectation that a vice president would move up to president or of Secretary of Treasury would move up to anything.
00:28:29:12	00:29:04:05	And that that was lasted for maybe ten years. So by making a two year terms across the board for the major officers, I think that guaranteed that whoever stepped up to the plate is committing six years to the society. These are all volunteer positions still and that the society is better served by having that continuity of vision and relationships and experience in what issues of society it was faced with and how their remedy.
00:29:04:07	00:29:35:21	So I think that was a very good change. How did you then get roped into or moved towards being the President if that happened in almost ten years after the founding of 1986, 87 and in the late eighties, I think it is 7 to 89. Okay, So just don't hold me to that. I think that's right. The nominating committee or somebody said, George, why don't you take this on?
00:29:35:21	00:30:03:20	And and honestly, I have no recollection of exactly how it happened. Were there was a I think there was a vacancy. Somebody decided in that in that term of we just discussed the six year commitment. You know, somebody didn't want to do it or it didn't work out. And I but I don't remember the the aspects. What I do know is that I was I was happy to do it because at that time, I was I had moved.
00:30:03:20	00:30:48:20	I got an offer I couldn't refuse from anesthesia group and just north of New Orleans. And and and I accepted that in 1980 so that by accepting that, I became a one group. It's a group practice, but private practice. And I thought it would be a good sign to have a private somebody in private practice as in as an officer of the society shouldn't it shouldn't be all academic, although it turns out it's very difficult, as I experienced for a private practitioner to to participate to the extent that's necessary in running the society.
00:30:48:22	00:31:15:08	So but I still think it was a good thing. It's a good message to send, and I was happy to be that that happened prior to becoming president elect or present. However, it worked at the time were there and you had organized meetings and you were certainly on the board the whole time. Were there other major assignments that you carried out in, say, the early eighties that you think led to that type of recognition?
00:31:15:08	00:31:40:03	I guess I would imagine so. They a contingent on the Bylaws Committee chairing that for years since I was already familiar with the bylaws, my wife had totally educated me in law as a saw as an aside. But every doctor I think, must think he's a lawyer at some point, which I'm not hesitate to say. Don't hesitate to say.
00:31:40:06	00:32:12:12	So I also handled the contracts with the with the hotel because I'd started that a couple of times. But more importantly, we had our first annual meeting in 1979. There was no there was no organization that we dealt with, contracted with to set up the meeting meeting management organization in the second meeting, we did have a person, a single person, I think his last name was Brown, but I'm not sure.
00:32:12:14	00:32:52:10	And and we still and more and more people were coming. We needed a professional meeting manager who could contract with hotels. So that was when we interviewed and and hired Ruggles Surrogate Service Corporate Corporation and Family business. Yes, Family business. And I think and they served us very well. But one of my jobs was to negotiate with the Ruggles Company over their contract terms, which occurred about every two years.

00:32:52:13	00:33:20:28	So nobody else maybe wanted that job. I'm not sure. But that was another thing that I had under my belt. Now, when you you know, that was, I should say, I was John Hinckley. John Hinckley, Right. And his daughter Heather and his son Stuart and Stewart. Right. That's right. Now, was there a competitive process by which you engage drug ulcer or was it pretty much somebody recommended them and off you went.
00:33:21:00	00:33:48:09	Somebody had recommended them. We may have had a competitive proposal. We had the Brown fellow again, I'm assuming that's his name, still was employed for only one year, I think. And so Ruggles was interviewed at the same time. So that was I don't remember any widespread interviews. We were still having, I don't know, less than a few hundred people attending the meeting, the second and third meetings.
00:33:48:11	00:34:20:24	So but then after the Ruggles first contract ran out, we did on occasion and I can't say we did it every time. So solicit proposals from other organizations in a competitive process when you were the president, if as I read the bylaws, not the bylaws, the board minutes from that period, the first SCA monograph was published. Yeah, apparently there was a substantial cost overrun.
00:34:20:29	00:34:45:27	Can you tell us about that? And it resulted in some dramatic changes, I guess, or. Well, we had two events which had cost overruns. The first one was a first international meeting. This was in 1986, in 1984 and 85, before I was president, it was in Munich, Germany, and it lost money. And we learned a lot from that.
00:34:46:01	00:35:16:00	We learned to not partner with somebody, necessarily put limits, I guess I should say, on the amount of commitment that society would make. Risk exposure. Yes, exactly. And then the second was the monograph, which ran over budget considerably. But I have to admit, I don't remember that that caused changes and discussions about who was going to get the monograph, where we're going to continue the monograph under what conditions.
00:35:16:03	00:35:47:17	And that also we had different publishers involved at some point during that during the entire monograph series. But but having a Monographs written was I think, one of the best benefits that we had to members engaged in something tangible the whole besides the the certificates that we had that I designed that we would mail out. I think we stopped mailing those out after a while and certificate that said, You're a member.
00:35:47:20	00:36:18:12	Okay? The first batch of those, probably a lot of those on framed on walls, they are probably they are there. One of them, the auctioneer art department, which made the logo. I had hand-drawn the logo and this wasn't the lighthouse logo or. Yeah, yeah. Okay. The lighthouse was actually taken from the essay. Okay. We wanted to show because we had concerns that we'd heard through the grapevine that the agency was concerned that there were too many specialty subspecialty societies.
00:36:18:15	00:36:52:14	Important perhaps in the work. I think we were only the second or third to be formed, but we wanted to reassure the agency and we did so in phone calls by to make sure that the assay understood we were all still BSA members. We weren't leaving the flock trying to do anything subversive with the FSA. Well, along those lines, talk about the role of the assay versus that of the SCA in things like politics and lobbying.
00:36:52:16	00:37:11:08	Lobbying is SCA does not do lobbying. It's a not for profit organization. So it is, in my opinion, prohibited from doing any political lobbying, lobbying, and I don't think it's ever hit wants to do that. The assay, I don't know what the assay does. I was a delegate for a while, but I have to admit that was so long ago.
00:37:11:08	00:38:00:15	I'm not sure what what they do now, but we did want to reassure and we we contacted Arthur Keats and Jim Aarons, both of whom were I fairly big NASA and assured them that and sort their support, actually not financial support, but political support and and that worked very well. I think they Dan Philbin, for instance, attended our first annual meeting in 1979, I'm sure, just to see what we were up to and so so those contacts, I think, wound up being helpful that the society we didn't want the society to be viewed as anybody's enemy, but rather as a supplementary organization and subsequently a leadership work.
00:38:00:17	00:38:33:11	And I think there was always representation or as long as I can remember, of some SCA member on the NASA Committee on Economics that was had been, I think, a pretty helpful association. I agree wholeheartedly and I think that is the say started a breakfast panel with SCA and I think subsequently made tracks for cardiovascular anesthesia. So I think we had a good influence and still have a good relationship and influence.
00:38:33:17	00:39:02:11	There was a very interesting mix of people serving with you on the board of directors early on and and while you were present, just some of the names Paul Barish, Earl Winans, Carolyn Wilkinson, Brant, Dan Graham, Alan Schwarz, Jorge Silva, David Torpey, Adele Electra, Carol Lake. Do you have any comments or thoughts stories about any particular the folks or the board composition?
00:39:02:17	00:39:41:12	Some pretty impressive group. It was a very impressive group and I was very pleased that they agreed to serve and they did serve and made great contributions to the society. And the best thing about it was how widely diversified they were in geography and and I think a approach which really helped the society grow and prosper and speaking specifically to the involvement of women early on, Carolyn Wilkinson Brant became secretary treasurer probably in the 1980s.
00:39:41:20	00:40:05:22	Carol Lake, and took on a major role as chairing the Education Committee, as I recall. That's right. Okay. Any comments about society's openness to that, to females or other types of diversity? You feel like it was always pretty open. I think it was always open. What was encouraging and maybe required an encouragement I don't really know was for people to step up.
00:40:05:24	00:40:40:20	It's okay, sign up as long as you're willing to do the work and be involved, then I think there's a place for everyone in this society. Back in, you talked about the six year continuum from president elect to present to past president sometime in the 1990s. Maybe that's sort of evolved to more like an eight year continuum with the secretary treasurer being the entree to president elect and president.
00:40:40:23	00:41:05:01	That certainly was not the case early on. Do you have any thoughts or comments or was it never was really intended to be that way? Wasn't no. As as I said, in order to get this many people involved, we didn't necessarily want to have strict hierarchal situation. Yeah. So but at some point that changed and they've got to be more demand, I think, from other people who wanted to participate, which was great.
00:41:05:03	00:41:43:16	But we had to establish some some type of criteria for people to participate. So I mean, you have the same issue with program chairs who do an outstanding job under. That's a tremendous workload. Absolutely tremendous. And have probably over the years been the most consistent pathway to serving as an officer. Yes. Yeah. Cardiac fellowships were on the informal side, as we discussed early on.
00:41:43:18	00:42:16:12	During your time on the executive committee, it looks like a fellowship directory was initiated and that fellowship training guidelines were at least proposed, if not implemented. And any thoughts about how that evolved? Well, I think the whole subspecialty was evolving and that led to the fellowships. We have had an education committee and I think that that there was a demand from residents who were and who wanted fellowships, but they didn't necessarily know where to go get them.
00:42:16:15	00:42:40:15	They didn't know where to apply, who offered what was offered, what was what each fellowship included, and how go about obtaining one. So I think that was one of the better things that happened for the subspecialty and for the society was Carol Lake spearheading that effort. And I think she might have she may have been I can't can't remember that.
00:42:40:15	00:43:07:21	And fellowship training guidelines. What did you put together a committee to kind of put something on paper for that? Exactly. The beginning of it. Always making something new and see see how it works and it works, which ultimately, you know, in mid double lots evolved to fellowship accreditation and now has continued to evolve to certification. It takes time.

00:43:07:27	00:43:41:20	It takes time. And it's easy to sometimes it's easy to talk about something as an idealistic vision, but implementing it with pencil, paper guidelines, criteria is the key, I think, to bringing any idea to fruition, birthing it and going towards adolescence and as long as that keeps changing, it keeps re re stimulating itself, which is a wonderful thing to see.
00:43:41:22	00:44:04:07	Well, it speaks to the to the quality of the organization's initial bylaws and, you know, articles of incorporation. I think I believe correct me if I'm wrong, I believe that you were the president at the annual business meeting where there was a contested election for president. Is that correct? Yes, that was president. And tell us a little bit about that.
00:44:04:07	00:44:39:00	You don't have to necessarily name names, but tell us about that experience. And you can name names if you wish to know. No, that's I don't have that good memory. The the election. I'm I was present at that time and I'm supposed to take the chair and conduct the election. So we had one of the things that are really feared was that either large anesthesia departments or could come to dominate the society if it either the room or used proxies.
00:44:39:00	00:45:01:11	I don't know if you remember the proxy discussion because because proxies. Well, that might just about the most maybe the most interesting part of the whole thing. Yeah, go into that. And I don't remember the details here or how this wound up happening, but one of the thought processes was, I think by one of the by some department was that it could send in a bunch of proxies.
00:45:01:16	00:45:27:17	Members all had the right to vote, but the bylaws weren't specific about whether proxies were allowed or not based not at that time. And so they had to be some decision made as well as to whether non present members were going to be able to vote by proxy. But but leading up to that, there was the nominating committee had suggested a nominee for the present elect, as I understand it.
00:45:27:19	00:45:51:27	Yes, I think that's right. But the process permitted nominations from the floor at the business meeting and that was how the second nominee and the whole proxy thing came into play. As I as I understand or as I recall. I think that's right. You have a better recollection of it than I do. But the answer is I think that is what would happen, that we've always allowed nominations.
00:45:51:29	00:46:27:21	Well, not always. I don't know what it is now up to that point. And I think past that point, we allowed nominations on the floor. That was part of the process of being open. But this was seemed to be more of a bit of an organized effort to put in place by means of proxy by people who weren't present to challenge the nominating committee, commandeered and one might say through strong right to me, I'm trying to be diplomatic about it.
00:46:27:28	00:47:10:04	Yes, but whenever anything exists, you want to see whether what is the motivation behind it is for the good of the society or is it for the good of an individual and or of a department for that matter? And and there are frequent there can there can be friction when when, when when that occurs. But I'm very as I've always been fairly strong about no one person should benefit individually from this society's functions.
00:47:10:06	00:47:42:09	And I was concerned that that was happening at that point. And so what did you what was your response to the submission of proxy ballots? I think I think since they were not allowed and I have to look well, the bylaws didn't preclude it, though. It did not preclude them. But I don't remember how how they said how well, what I'm doing this somehow you recognized that a Louisiana corporation, I think, did not allow proxy.
00:47:42:11	00:48:10:11	Right. How did you know that? I don't remember how often. And sorry, I can't tell you that. Well, that that I think was the I bet it's true. Talking to Rick Davis last night, who remembered it that way. And I think the minutes expressed it that way as well. But you were very quick on your feet to recognize that and assert that there would be no proxy votes is the way it apparently played out.
00:48:10:11	00:48:37:26	Does that match that? I remember. Okay okay. That's how I came out. What I did to back that up, I have I believe that it was not allowed unless the bylaws specifically stated that. Got it. Okay. In the bylaws did not state, therefore it was not allowed. But your recollection may be better than mine. Well, it was aided by reading the minutes of the business meeting, but I remember it was quite a scene.
00:48:37:28	00:48:58:28	Now, another just as an aside, almost a humorous aside, I noted in the minutes when you were present that the SCA approved the purchase of a fax machine for the present and the program chair. What a what a great time capsule that is. So that was you remember that? You remember that's 87 to 89, right? Yeah. So somewhere in there.
00:48:58:28	00:49:26:21	And the answer is yes. Everyone has to remember when from from when we were forming the society and in the first few years there was no Internet, there was no fax. There. You either did it by telephone or you sent letters, you know, And so we needed a fax to in order to make things go faster. We didn't have a fax machine, at least in that 1976 when we started this.
00:49:26:23	00:49:51:09	So I do have to I do have to laugh at that. I have to admit we might not even had Post-its. I don't think we had posted anything at all. I have a Xerox copy. We they have a copy machine. Yeah. Xerox copies of the various things I'd scribble on the backs of pieces of paper. Well, is there anything else you would like to discuss, chat about or.
00:49:51:16	00:50:15:27	I don't know, comment on? I don't think so. I certainly am honored to be interviewed here. We have to say that in order to be interviewed by you because you were live, you were at the first meeting and yes, I mean, just out of my fellowship. Yeah, yeah, yeah. And and honestly, I think Dan Schulman, I was one of the people that he encouraged to look into this.
00:50:15:27	00:50:42:24	Oh, good. I think so, Yeah. Good. Actually, I didn't keep that list of 30 some members, people that he sent me I don't have or couldn't find it. But that was then a stimulus to to pursue you. But having you involved with that society has been one of its best attributes, in my opinion, and very thankful that you have done what you've done for the society over the years.
00:50:42:25	00:51:03:17	Well, right back at it, we we appreciate your service for a lot of these many years. And you finally stepped back, what was it, 2018 or something like that? Maybe 17 or 18. Yeah, it was either 40 years or very, very close years. So it's a remarkable. But I try to keep I tried to keep a low profile.
00:51:03:17	00:51:27:00	Low profile and, not speak unless something really well bothered me. Exactly right. But every once in a while it's like, Oh, George doesn't like this or or George wants to discuss this a little further. And it was it was always something very important. I remember that. I figured that's why I'm there. And if somebody says, No, here's why you're wrong, I say, Oh, I understand.
00:51:27:00	00:51:58:10	Thank you very much. Well, I think that that founding member did provide continuity. And it's like there's because even when you have people with just six year, you know, continuance in office, they don't necessarily remember the mistakes that were made ten or 15 years ago. And it's like, well, okay, we tried that. It didn't work and we might try it again, but let's learn from what we what we messed up the art department in the first logo misspelled anesthesiologists.
00:51:58:13	00:52:20:19	So yeah, so it's a hard one to still have. And this is all done by hand. Of course, back then, not a machine, not a computer. So in order to speed the process up, they had an extra letter somewhere. And so I said, okay, just take the letter out and redo the remaining letters closer. So in the first logos you'll see there's a slight space differential.
00:52:20:19	00:52:45:24	But on the other side of the word anesthesiologist. So there are so many little jokes like that, it's it's amazing. But it's been an amazing process, wonderful process. And to watch the society grow and to see all the huge number of people that have contributed of their time and energy as volunteers basically to have this function. It was a winning formula.
00:52:45:27	00:52:54:29	George, thank you very much for your time. Thank you.