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Interviews of the Margaret MacVicar Memorial AMITA Oral History Project

Betty Ann Lehmann – Class of 1953

(interviewed by Eleni Digenis)

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MIT ALUMNAE ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Interview with Betty Ann Lehmann by Eleni Digenis

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Digenis: Hi. This is Eleni Digenis and today is Thursday, January 21st, 1993. I'm in the home of Betty Ann Ferguson Lehmann on Cape Cod. My first question - I'd like to know about your early life - like when and where you were born. Simple questions first.

Lehmann: Right. Well, I was born in 1931, I think that's right, in Boston. My parents lived in West Roxbury at the time. And soon moved to Waltham and then to Lexington, which is really where I remember much of anything. So, I grew up in Lexington. All the way up - went to grammar school and high school in Lexington. I entered MIT directly from Lexington High School with no SATs or anything. Amazing.

Digenis: Did you grow up in a big family?

Lehmann: No, just me and my sister. The two of us.

Digenis: What did your parents do?

Lehmann: Both of my parents came from large families. My mother had gone to Bryant-Stratton in Boston and learned secretarial skills. She was also a very fine violinist. And my dad had gone to MIT and had only gone for about three years when his father said, "Well that's enough of that. You've got to come home and join the family business." Which is what he did. He worked for Crane Plumbing Supply people and got some awards for designing kitchen sink fixtures and things like that. And then later went to work for Brown and Wales Steel Company, which was right in Cambridge. I think it was bought by Lewiston Steel.

Digenis: Were you interested in science and engineering in high school?

Lehmann: Well, yes. I was. I was interested in everything in high school And I was especially interested in - I liked math a lot. I had always been my father's child really and followed him around whenever he was doing anything. I learned to do things like thread pipe and, you know, splice wires. I remember soldering coffee cans for hours in order to learn to solder well enough to work on a radio set or something. So, I think in retrospect a lot of the reason that I went to MIT was to finish for my father. I felt badly that he felt badly that he couldn't finish. I think that's a part of the reason I went.

Digenis: How did you get in with no SATs, no tests. . .

Lehmann: At that time there were certain high schools in the area that MIT accepted people from on that basis, if their grades were good. They didn't require any tests. Looking back that seems outrageous, but that's what they did.

Digenis: What year did you enter MIT?

Lehmann: Forty-nine.

Digenis: Do you remember your first day at MIT?

Lehmann: I do because I involved getting that initial physical (examination) and all those kinds of things, and it was terrible. I remember the infirmary then was in building 10, and we had to go there and get our cards filled out and all that. I remember this nurse saying to me, "What are you doing here? This is no place for a nice, young woman!"

Digenis: The nurse told you that?

Lehmann: The nurse told me that. A part of the physical was a urinalysis and I was sort of embarrassed because she took the little sample and just followed me down the hall with it. Just talking to me all the way and telling me how I shouldn't really be there. I was very embarrassed.

The first few weeks at MIT were very hard. I think there were eight girls in my class and something like 700 men. And it wasn't much fun being in that much of a minority. You would go to class and the boys would leave empty seats all around you. And you'd walk down the hall alone because no one would walk with you. I don't know why - I guess they thought it wouldn't be manly or macho, or someone would make fun of them if they tried to be friendly. But things changed rapidly. I remember field day - we had field day and it was on campus and I had been a cheerleader in high school, so I was a cheerleader for Field Day!

Digenis: What was Field Day?

Lehmann: Field Day was a real contest between freshmen and sophomores. I remember a tug-of-war in the mud. And some kind of football or . . . It was very rowdy and very dirty and lots of fun. (Laughter).

Digenis: Were you a cheerleader for the freshman team?

Lehmann: Yes. Then later I ran for secretary - treasurer of the class and I didn't get it, but I ran and did a lot of posters. I got into a whole group of people who were interested in being leaders in the class. From then on it was a lot more pleasant.

Digenis: Did you get that kind of reaction [that you got] from the nurse from the professors or from the people outside of MIT, telling you "what are you doing there?"

Lehmann: Quite often. Yes. More often than you would think. You'd get either the reaction that you shouldn't be there or else the reaction, well, you must be such a brain to be there that we wouldn't have anything in common with you. It was lonely. It was quite lonely.

Digenis: Where did you live when you were there?

Lehmann: I lived at home. I lived in Lexington and commuted everyday.

Digenis: Did that cause you to feel separated from the campus and the community and the other students?

Lehmann: More separated because I was a woman, I think. There were a lot of commuters and the Emma Rodgers room - that was there and that was a real haven. We used to go there between classes and in fact we could stay overnight there and we did sometimes.

Digenis: I noticed that you were also on the Dean's List for a couple of semesters.

Lehmann: I forget that. (Laughter).

Digenis: Did you do other activities, besides the cheerleading and the student government position?

Lehmann: Yes. I did. I'm trying to think. I soon started to date a fellow in the junior class, who I later married. So, probably by the second semester of my freshman year I was doing a lot of things with the junior class. He lived at Baker House and they had a lot of things going on. The class of '51 was his class. For some reason they had so much class spirit, and they still do. They've been an outstanding class at MIT of people that held together. I sort of got absorbed in their events more than in ones of my own class.

Digenis: Were there a lot of social events at MIT?

Lehmann: Yes. There were. There were dances most every weekend. I remember going on hikes in various places - in Concord. The group of boys from Baker House did a lot together.

Digenis: How did you choose your major?

Lehmann: Well, that's sort of interesting. All during high school I had drawn ships. when I went to MIT I thought that was what I was going to do - I was going to be a Naval Architect or a Marine Engineer. I was informed, pretty soon along the way, that that wasn't possible for a girl because it included a month or two at sea in summers and there was no provision for a woman to do that. It just wasn't possible. So, having been told that I looked around to see what was close to that and didn't require some time at sea.

Mechanical Engineering is what I fell upon because, especially the fluid flow part of Mechanical Engineering, is very similar to that. So, I decided to have that as my major. Then, as I explored further the requirements for mechanical engineering - I had an idea what I wanted to do and there were certain requirements that didn't seem appropriate for me or didn't seem that they would help me do what I needed to do, or what I wanted to do. Machine Tool Lab is the one that immediately comes to mind. In order to avoid it and a few other classes, I decided on Mechanical Engineering and Economics as my course of study. The Economics part really allowed me to write my own course - with certain limitations. That was what I really wanted to do.

Digenis: Do you remember what kind of goals you had for your life when you were at MIT? Sometimes, when you go through life what you think you are going to do changes. Do you remember what you were planning on doing?

Lehmann: It certainly does change. In high school I had thought I would go to medical school and become a surgeon. By the time I was at MIT I had decided that I did not want to spend that many years studying. That I really would like to get married and have a family somewhere along the way. As I got involved with the studies at MIT I realize, I sort of had known it all along, that chemistry was definitely not my thing. (laughter)

Digenis: Mine either. (laughter)

Lehmann: I remember all sorts of problems with finding the unknown. I'd get down to the last test and the bottom of the test tube would break or something. It was awful! So I knew that wasn't it. Physics I liked a lot. I was fascinated by fluid flow and propellers and hulls of boats and airfoils. I really liked that sort of thing a lot. So, I had visions of designing boats or airplanes or something like that.

Digenis: Did you ever accomplish that?

Lehmann: I did, actually. I worked for Westinghouse and worked on jet engine design. So, I did accomplish that. I also liked structural engineering and suspension bridges and things like that. When I got to a thesis I worked with Prof. Stan Backer and he was in the textile part of mechanical engineering. What I worked on was a formula that would describe the forces at work in a fiber that was first twisted into a rope or yarn, and then woven into a fabric. It was supposed to be for nose cones of rockets. I actually did enough work on a formula - which absolutely amazes me now when I look back at it - that a company that at the time did make those, was interested and used it as a basis to go on and find a real answer to those forces. I couldn't finish it, but I really began and it was interesting.

Digenis: So you almost were the "MIT rocket scientist."

Lehmann: (laughter). Yes. Almost. I remember taking a course in Differential Geometry which really was the most difficult math course that I ever took. But I needed it for that thesis. I remember being so bewildered at the beginning of that course. As I went along, light began to sift into my brain almost by magic it felt like. It was almost beyond understanding, but something made sense.

Digenis: A glimmer of light. . .

Lehmann: Yes. Yes.

Digenis: When did you graduate?

Lehmann: I was in the class of '53, but I got married at the end of '52 and left for a year, and went back and graduated with the class of '54. But I've always kept my allegiance with the class of '53 because those were the people that I knew best. While I was away that year, my husband was in the Air Force and was stationed in Delaware. I worked for DuPont as a mathematician. I worked on computers. They were all analog computers - amazingly primitive from the viewpoint of 1993.

Digenis: What did you do after you graduated?

Lehmann: After I graduated I went to work for Westinghouse Electric. Their aviation/ gas turbine division which was in Kansas City Missouri. I stayed there for about five years.

Digenis: Was your husband still in the Air Force?

Lehmann: No. He was then working for Proctor and Gamble. He was a chemical engineer with business administration and he worked for Proctor and Gamble in Kansas City, Kansas.

Digenis: So, what kind of work did you do for Westinghouse?

Lehmann: I did design work on compressor blades for jet engines which involved making design changes and writing up specs for testing, going down into the shop and seeing that they were tested. Doing things like throwing standard birds through the jet engines and buckets of bolts to see how much damage it would do. A lot of fun!

Digenis: Was there any difficulty in getting a job because you were a woman - when you came to MIT and they told you you didn't belong there - did you find that in the work environment also?

Lehmann: Yes. The first few interviews and places I went in Kansas to try and get a job, they liked to put me in inventory control or anything. It's not really imaginary. One of their questions would be, "Can you type?" And I couldn't, so I would always say, "No."

Westinghouse was very good. They had many, many engineers because the name of the game then was to get government contracts. In order to get government contracts you had to say that you had 80 or 90 engineers waiting to design this engine. There were two of us, two women, and probably 80 engineers in all. But, Westinghouse treated us very fairly.

Digenis: Had you started a family yet?

Lehmann: No. We hadn't. In fact when I did get pregnant, Westinghouse changed what they had written into the health insurance because they had forgotten to exclude pregnancy for engineers. So they had to pay! (Laughter).

Digenis: That's great.

Lehmann: I stopped working when our first son was born. Which was about five years after I started working there.

Digenis: So did you just take time off from work or did you go back?

Lehmann: Well, I might have gone back, but then we had a second child right away. My husband changed jobs and came back to MIT to work in the Alumni Office. We moved back to the East coast with two babies and in short order had two more. So I stayed home. I was very busy. I loved kids. I really liked being with them. I had enough contact through Fred's job at MIT - since he was in the Alumni Office, we were involved in all of the reunions and at that time there was continuing education just beginning for people who had graduated. I would be involved in all that. During those years - for several years, I took charge of the foreign student host family program for

MIT, which was fun. We would always have a foreign student and we would have lots of them for Thanksgiving and so forth. So, I was at MIT a lot and I was active in AMITA during those years.

Digenis: Had MIT changed when you went back?

Lehmann: Well, not tremendously. There were still a limited number of women there.

Digenis: Did they have the dorm for women by then?

Lehmann: No. I don't remember the year the dorm was built, but it wasn't right away. Mrs. McCormick in fact used to come to the AMITA meetings. I remember her especially saying more of her friends died from eating lettuce than anything else she could think of and she was telling us that lettuce should be very carefully washed before you ate it. She was such a stern looking woman.

Digenis: She sounds very interesting. Have you heard the story about the painting of her in McCormick Hall? She thought that the dress was too low cut, so she had it painted over to hang in the hall.

Lehmann: I heard a story of Dr. Killian going to visit her when she was in Boston. She wasn't ready to receive visitors, so she made him wait. He waited quite a while - maybe an hour. Then she came down and visited with him and she was dressed very properly and they had a very nice visit. And she died only a few days after that. The effort that she put into that - but, she would be a proper lady until the very end. Very proper.

Digenis: What did you do after MIT?

Lehmann: Well, the kids were growing up and I did all the things that normal mothers do - library, scouts and all those things. I first went back to work as a tutor in the high schools and the grammar schools in the Boxford/ Topsfield area where we lived. It was a really interesting job, in that I got to do special programs with learning disability children and also with children who were extra - bright. So I had the freedom to do what I wanted with them. I liked it a lot. We did lots of exciting things with the kids. I laughed when they had me teaching learning disability children penmanship in the grade schools because I'm left-handed and it was interesting for me to try and show them how to write with their right hand. A little like the blind leading the blind.

Along the way I became very active in our local church and had taught Bible study with another woman. It got to be 12 or 13 years that we taught Bible studies together. During that time, a lot of the people who came would come with questions and talk with me in a counseling sort of role. I began to feel very inadequate to deal with them and I decided that I would go back to school and learn some skills. First of all I was thinking psychology. Then I thought pastoral counseling because I connected it with the Bible study which was really interesting to me. So, that's what I did. By the time my kids were in junior high, I had started going to some of the classes at Harvard Divinity school and got deeper and deeper into women's history and really liked what I was learning. Then my husband left MIT and went to work at Boston University and so I shifted from Harvard Divinity school to BU School of Theology because I got such a good deal. Price deal. while I was there I was really focusing on pastoral counseling. I was still just doing that part

time because our kids were still in high school. Then as a couple of them got into college and my husband changed jobs again and went to work for Rockefeller University in New York City, so, we all moved to Manhattan with the two youngest children. That was a first – to live in the city. I loved it. I enrolled at Union Theological Seminary and finally was able to go full-time and finished there in a couple of years.

While I was there, the major I took was called Psychiatry and Religion. I don't know why it was called Psychiatry and Religion. It would be more appropriate it seems to me to call it Psychology and Religion, but it was called Psychiatry and Religion. Ann Ulanov was the person I did my thesis with and people like Beverly Harrison and Phyllis Tribble were great, great teachers there.

Digenis: Was it strange being back in school?

Lehmann: No, it was great being back in school. I always loved being in school anyway! (laughter) When I first started, even at Harvard, the language was a big hurdle because each discipline has its own language, you get to realize. Like if you went to law school, the language would be . . . and theology has language and psychology has a language, and I wasn't familiar with the language and it took me a while to realize, "Well, that's the problem - I understand the ideas usually, but I don't know what they are talking about!" And they're using some of those words. . . . But after a couple of years you are using them too and you forget that everyone else doesn't know what you are talking about! So I really enjoyed that.

Digenis: When you were in New York and going to school had your kids grown up already?

Lehmann: No, well, my younger daughter had finished high school a year early and she came to NY with us and took a year off intentionally between high school and college. She took some classes at Columbia and did other things, like play her flute in Central Park, with a box out for people to throw dollars in and go horseback riding in Central Park. She enjoyed the city a lot, and then she went to Bard in New York after that. Her younger brother was a junior in high school and was heartbroken to leave the school where he had grown up. In fact, he was the goalie for the hockey team, and it was awful to leave, but he did leave. In junior year he went up to a private school in New Hampshire, New Hampton, which had a great hockey team. But for his senior year, we let him come back and live with another family in Topsfield and go back to his high school and finish there. Then, he went to the University of Maine. So, it was transition time for those two kids while we were in New York.

Digenis: What did you do after you graduated with your degree in Psychiatry and Religion?

Lehmann: Well, we had to do field work while we were in seminary and I did that at St. John the Divine, which is the Episcopal cathedral in New York City. I was the director of the Howard Thurman listening room there, which is a place for meditation, really. That was quite an experience. I found that Dean James Morton of the cathedral was a contemporary of mine - he went to Harvard at the same time I'd gone to MIT, so we had a lot in common and used to joke about having probably seen each other thirty years ago and not known it! (laughter)

After I graduated I went for a year into a clinical pastoral education program at Columbia Presbyterian Medical Center. Upon graduation from seminary, my husband and I decided to split after

thirty years of marriage. So that next year was sort of a rough one for me - it was a beginning of a whole new life as well as a whole new career. As well as this clinical pastoral education thing which is really, a soul searching time. You are a chaplain wherever you are, but you get a lot of supervision and a lot of group therapy while you're doing it. It's not a very pleasant thing to go through, but you learn a awful lot about yourself and about people and about how you can be with people in pain and be helpful. So that was a real life changing year for me - that year after I graduated.

Digenis: Was it difficult focusing on helping other people dealing with what was going on in their lives, when you had so much that you were going through at that time?

Lehmann: Yes, very difficult. In fact, I had been accepted into the program before we separated. So I went back to the supervisor-to-be and I said, "I can't do it - look what's happened to me." And he gave me some of the best advice I've had in my life, he said, "You have got to do it. If you don't do it, you're going to be very sorry your whole life." And he said, "Not only that, but you've got to do it knowing that you can't do it well." And for me that was a terrible blow because I always wanted to do everything well. And he said, "You've got to admit that you can't do it as well as you'd like to do it. But you're going to do it anyway." And so I agreed to do it anyway and I'm very glad I did. Very glad.

After I began, he was supposed to be supervising my work and about our second session he said to me, "Well I can't supervise you. We've got to use this sessions for therapy because you're hurting so much." He said, "Now if you'll go get yourself a therapist, then I can supervise you. If you don't, we're going to have to use this for therapy and you'll lose the supervision." So I said, all right, I'll go get a therapist. How do I do that? And he gave me the names of three therapists that he knew and recommended. And I'd never dealt with any therapist so to approach three was something I couldn't even imagine doing. But he insisted. Again, I am so thankful because I actually had an hour session with three different therapists and it was just as clear as a bell that one of them was going to work very well for me and the other two wouldn't work at all. And they were all very good but it's amazing to me how that dynamic between client and therapist is so important. And it's something you can't tell by reading credentials.

Digenis: Yes.

Lehmann: So now I advise people to do that and they're horrified. and I try to convince them that it really matters a lot. And it's worth the extra agony at the beginning to interview several therapists before you pick one. So after that year, I had to decide whether to stay in New York or not. And one of the things I had done that year was interact quite a bit with the people at Columbia - the Medical School. For the first time, they had just hired a man to run an ethics program for the medical school. They had never had one. He was Jewish, but he wasn't a religiously trained person, a theologically trained person. He was a philosopher. And I went to talk with him because it seemed very much to me that there should be a religious aspect to the ethical teachings and he agreed. And he wanted to have me stay and to be with him in the medical school in some capacity. My thought was to stay at Columbia Presbyterian and be a chaplain part-time and be an instructor or something in the ethics field part-time. Both were receptive, but I would have to find my own funding. And when I tried to think about doing that, in addition to taking on the responsibility of the jobs, after the year I'd been through, I didn't have the energy. I couldn't

do it. I just couldn't do it. And so I decided to move back to Boston where I felt at least I had some roots. The alternative was to go to San Francisco or some place where I would be starting altogether anew. but I decided needed to come back where there were some roots.

Another interesting thing I did at Columbia Presbyterian, which is a little off the subject, but they had five emergency rooms when I went there. We were on call 24 hours a day, there were five of us and we rotated so we were there a lot. We stayed overnight, we had two beepers. We were called for all sorts of things. They also had an abortion clinic there. And I'd always been particularly interested in the struggle that abortion represented to me. I'd never had personal experience with it but somehow it struck at my heart, what a struggle it must be for people. And so I went to that abortion clinic to see if I couldn't be there as a chaplain. Everyone there was horrified at the thought of having a religious person there because of the stereotypes they had of a religious person. I guess that they could just imagine that someone would be in there saying "You are a sinner, you've sinned, you've sinned," or whatever. Anyway, after talking with all the doctors there they allowed me to come as a chaplain. And so I did that for the months that I was at Columbia Presbyterian. It was one of the most moving and valuable – I felt I was really helping people there. It was such a painful thing. I never saw anybody come in there who wasn't just in pain, just having an awful time. It's very hard for me to believe that anyone ever makes a decision to have an abortion easily or lightly. I think it's such a hard decision to make and the stories that cause - that bring people to that decision are so gut-wrenching. They're just awful. It's a problem that there's no easy solution to. Anyway, that was a valuable time for me.

Digenis: So what did you do in Boston?

Lehmann: I just packed up and moved and came to Boston and then started hunting for a job. I had made a couple of attempts to come to Boston and look for a job and all I got out of it was some parking tickets really. So I moved and I visited some of the hospitals. I was looking for a chaplaincy job, when a friend from Columbia Presbyterian notified me of a church on Cape Cod that was looking for an interim associate minister. And I just called and they were happy to have me come down and talk to them and I came down and it just clicked. I decided to come even though I had to commute from Boston. Six days a week I commuted from Boston – a hundred and fifty miles a day.

Digenis: Did you have a home in Boston?

Lehmann: I had rented an apartment on Beacon Hill, so I had a year's lease. And I had a rental car and they gave me unlimited miles. When I took it back months later he said "You couldn't have!" And I said, "I did!" A hundred and fifty miles a day for six days a week, the miles really add up!

Digenis: You must have been tired.

Lehmann: The interim position turned into permanent position. I wanted to stay and the church decided to keep me and it's now almost ten years later.

Digenis: So now that the ten years have gone by, what do you think about it all looking back?

Lehmann: People often ask how could you change from being an engineer to being a minister? Questions like that - or what good did your engineering do if you wanted to be a minister? I really have always believed, and still do, no matter what we learn or experience it all adds up to a part of what we are and that we use it. I still use my engineering, not in the technical sense, because I'm way out of date by now. What I did with jet engines is ancient history. But the orderly way it teaches you to think and experiment and reason and to figure things out, that never leaves you and it's valuable. It's even valuable in silly little things like new typewriters at church or new elevators at the hospital. Of course now, even churches have computers. It's helpful in understanding the medical procedures that the people you work with go through and those get more complicated and people get more frightened of them as time goes on. It really helps to have some sort of understanding of what that's all about.

Digenis: Has it made a difference to people when they meet you and know that you went to MIT? Do they react to that?

Lehmann: There were times when I would be very lonely. . . In fact, I'm ashamed of it, but for some years of my life I decided not to tell anyone that I had gone to MIT because when I mentioned that or they found that out, their reaction was to just leave me alone and not invite me to the morning coffee or not take a walk with me, because they thought I was so odd or different or something. So I said to myself, "All right, I'm not going to let them." That enabled me to make some friends I guess, but then I realized that it was a terrible thing to do to myself.

Another experience along that line, that years later I had to sort out. When I worked at Westinghouse, part of doing the testing and part of doing the research was to write reports. Which I did, and signed my name. One day my supervisor came to me and said, "I like your work. I don't see anything wrong with it. It's accurate. It's right, but I get so many questions about it. I pass your reports on and people call; they complain, they check." And he said, "I suddenly realized it's probably because they see Betty-Ann Lehmann and they are immediately suspicious" And he said, "Let's do an experiment. Are you willing to sign your name B.A.?" And I said yes. And I did. Like magic, the complaints stopped. He didn't get any more questions. Well, years later I realized what I had done. I was so ashamed of what I had done, really. I had to go back and reclaim myself in lots of ways. I wrote an article that went into a book, that was published and is still around, called Live the Question Now. I wrote something about that story. It's funny because the publisher in writing my name left an "N" off the end of Lehmann. And by then my oldest daughter was pretty grown-up and I sent her a copy of the book and she sent me back this big poster with a huge "N" on it. To go with the story she had Written. "An "N" for a Whole Name," or something about a whole name, all the letters of your name because the story meant a lot to her as she began her career as an architect 30 years later and found the same sort of abrasiveness: "Can you really do it?" It was astonishing to me that she was experiencing so much of the same foolishness that I experienced. It was disheartening.

Digenis: It's getting better. . .

Lehmann: It is better. For her, it's now ten years later and it's a lot better for her as an individual because she's established her reputation and people know and they don't question. But if she went to a new place, she'd have to prove herself again before she got recognized.

Digenis: I noticed the bumper sticker on your car. Is that your motto?

Lehmann: Right, right. "Live simply, so that others may simply live." My life has simplified a lot and that's very good for me. Feels good physically,emotion all, and spiritually.

Digenis: So how has it changed your daily life?

Lehmann: Well, ministry is more than a full-time job. What I've had to get used to is that it's never done. There's always a 100 more calls that you could've made that you didn't. There's always more that you could've written, reached out, done. It's hard to live, never finished. But you begin to learn to live a minute at a time in a way. Which is a good way to live.

I've done a lot of traveling. When I do go on vacation I like to ski. I like to hike. I like to walk. So I go places where I can do those things. I rock climb in the White Mountains, swim in the mornings. I'm lucky. I've been to so many parts of the world. I've been to the Far East, Japan, and China, and Korea, Thailand, trekking in Nepal. It was wonderful. South America. All over this country.

I'm about to leave this church. I'm going to leave in July. It's my choice to leave. I've been here almost ten years and before I have to retire it's time to do something else with my life. I'm not sure what that will be. Whether it will be interim ministry or . . . it'll be ministry of some kind. But I want to have some time to maybe join some Earth watch expeditions or I don't know. One of my fantasies is to spend a whole year, a whole cycle of seasons, by myself in a cabin in the Rockies or in a cabin on Martha's Vineyard or Vermont or someplace like that, to be able to write and observe and think and meditate. I do a lot of writing and I hope to be able to do some when I have more time. I've had a sabbatical during which I explored lots of issues in faith and ethics and medicine, which is a confluence of fields that really interests me a lot. I love fiction and all kinds of literature and I find that a lot of our faith and ethics for that matter are reflected in our fiction and in movies and various art forms.

There's a lot to do and I look forward to doing a lot of it!

Digenis: Do you have any advice to pass on?

Lehmann: Well, I guess for me it's if you can find a center and a peace and a simplicity in yourself, then you can really just enjoy the richness of life all around you. There's so much. Every place. You don't have to go way away. It's in your backyard. People have so much to offer - every single person has so much history and potential, beauty and pain, and all of it. If you just try to see that in people and in places and things wherever you are.

I love to look at the rocks. They're wonderful Everything. Everything is just quite amazing if you look at it. So I guess that's all. That's the advice. Look, and enjoy, and be thankful.