

**Transcript of an Oral History Interview in the collection of the  
BREVARD COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
308 Forrest Ave., Cocoa, FL 32922**

Interviewer: At the age of 16, Mr. Denius attended night school at the University of Cincinnati, for five years. He studied physics, electronics, and mathematics. At the same time, [00:00:30] he was employed by Crosley Corporation, where he was involved in the production of a radio proximity fuse. Mr. Denius's career in electronics led him across the country, holding such jobs as commercial engineer at the American Type Founders Corporation, and executive engineer at the Philharmonic Radio. From 1946 to 1950, Mr. Denius was Vice President and Director of Melpar Incorporated in Alexandria, Virginia. In 1950, [00:01:00] he moved to the Melbourne area. It was then that Mr. Denius and a colleague George Shaw co-founded Radiation Incorporated, an advanced research and development company designed for support of the space program.

When I asked Mr. Denius about the problems he had in getting Radiation Incorporated started, this is what he had to say:

Homer Denius: It was very difficult, but I knew I had to work at it day and night for quite a long time. But everything went well from the first, we [00:01:30] never had any great problems, except one: we couldn't borrow any money in this area.

Interviewer: In 1967, Radiation Incorporated merged with the Cleveland-based Harris Intertype. Today, we know it as Harris Government Systems. In 1960, Mr. Denius formed the Denius Foundation in Melbourne, Florida. Its purpose was to support high technology development in schools of higher learning. Also, in this same year, Mr. Denius led the founding of the First National Bank of Melbourne, and served [00:02:00] as Chairman of the Board.

From 1967 to 1969, Mr. Denius served as Vice Chairman for Harris Intertype Corporation. He left there to create another success, Electro-Science Management Corporation, a venture capital company in which he is currently involved. Mr. Denius had a lot to say when I asked him about what he thought was his greatest accomplishment.

Homer Denius: I was very interested in getting FIT started here, because the [00:02:30] company needed them for one thing, and also it was a good source of ... what was it, education possibilities for our engineers that wanted to take advanced courses and so forth.

I'm a lifetime director of FIT. Over a period of time I've worked for several companies. I held about every position in a company [00:03:00] except president before I came here, and I was 36 years old when we started Radiation. I started work when I was 17 ... no, 18, and back during the big depression ... The thing that I did, I went from one job to another. I think one of the most important [00:03:30] things a person can do working for a company is to give every bit of

support they can to the person they're reporting to. If they can't report ... if they can't work for that particular person, they should get themselves transferred or go to a different job, because the one thing that means the most, I believe, in industry to someone getting ahead is the person that you're working for is the one that is going to push you forward. And if you don't push him forward, he's not going to be able to push you forward. And life [00:04:00] goes that way, not only in industry, but in other things.

I worked in all branches of electronics. And I was with a company up in Washington, I was in charge of—I was Vice President of Engineering and Director of the company. And I wanted them to start a company down here when this base opened. And they didn't want to do it. I [00:04:30] offered ... I said, "Well I'm going to do it then, if you want to put money in the company you can," and they decided they didn't want to. So, I came down here to start another company and I brought five engineers along with me, which was agreed to by them. And that's the way we got started down here, George Shaw was Vice President.

Interviewer: Every rose is bound to have its thorns and Mr. [00:05:00] Denius considers the thorns of his profession.

Homer Denius: Well, you never know from one minute to the next what's going to happen, but I think you just go with the ... roll as it goes by and do the best you can.

Interviewer: On the other hand, when asked what he enjoyed most about his life, Mr. Denius replied:

Homer Denius: Well, I enjoy sailing and hunting. I guess those two things more than anything else. Fishing, I'll have to add that.

Interviewer: He is a lifetime member of the Board of [00:05:30] Trustees and on February 22, 1969, the Homer Rainey Denius Student Center was dedicated in his honor. In 1965, Mr. Denius was awarded an honorary doctorate of space education by FIT for his contributions to the aerospace industry and higher education in space science and engineering.

I asked Mr. Denius what would be included in a Homer Denius's formula for success, and he responded:

Homer Denius: Well, I [00:06:00] think it just gets down to live according to the golden rule. Do good where you can.

Interviewer: When I asked Mr. Denius what advice he would give me about becoming my generation's Homer Denius, he replied:

Homer Denius: Well, I have several grandchildren. And the advice I give to them I would say is the same thing I would say to you. I tell them what when they go to school and all of [00:06:30] my grandchildren have either graduated or are in college, but the

most important thing for them to do is to get the best grades they can possibly get, because if they want to go to graduate school it'll help them quite a bit at getting in. And the other thing, it will mean an awful lot to them and everything they do in future life.