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## Delahanty, Jeanne (Clifford) oral history interview

Don Nicoll

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## **Interview with Jeanne (Clifford) Delahanty by Don Nicoll**

*Summary Sheet and Transcript*

### **Interviewee**

Delahanty, Jeanne (Clifford)

### **Interviewer**

Nicoll, Don

### **Date**

March 22, 2000

### **Place**

Lewiston, Maine

### **ID Number**

MOH 181

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### **Biographical Note**

Jeanne Delahanty was born on March 22, 1916 in Lewiston, Maine. She attended Lewiston High School and then went on to Georgian Court College where she graduated in 1937. Jeanne married Thomas Delahanty in 1942, also a resident of Lewiston. After their marriage, Tom briefly worked for the FBI in New York City before returning to Lewiston where he was appointed to the Maine Superior Court. Jeanne has been strongly connected to both Maine and national judicial politics for most of her life. She is the daughter of a United States District Court Judge, and the mother of a Maine Superior Court Justice. Throughout her life, Delahanty stayed active in the community of Lewiston serving on many boards and committees.

### **Scope and Content Note**

Interview includes discussions of: family background; political background; Lewiston politics; Tom Delahanty, her husband; Tom's run for Congress; meeting Ed Muskie; John Delahanty; Dan McGillicuddy; Ed Muskie as a candidate; and Eleanor Roosevelt's visit to the Delahanty house.

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## **Transcript**

**Don Nicoll:** It is Wednesday, the 22nd of March, the year 2000. We are at 108 Central Avenue in Lewiston. This is Don Nicoll and I am interviewing Jeanne Delahanty. Jeanne, would you give your full name and spell it, and your date and place of birth.

**Jeanne Delahanty:** I certainly will. Jeanne Delahanty, D-E-L-A-H-A-N-T as is Thomas - Y.

**DN:** And is your first name Gene, G-E-N-?

**JD:** J-E-A-N-N-E.

**DN:** N-N-E. And when were you born?

**JD:** (*Unintelligible phrase*), March 22nd, 1916.

**DN:** Oh, today's your birthday?

**JD:** Today's my birthday.

**DN:** Well, happy birthday.

**JD:** Thank you.

**DN:** And where were you born?

**JD:** Lewiston.

**DN:** And what were your parents' names?

**JD:** My father was John David, Jr., and my mother was Lucille Eugene Smith from Shallot, Michigan.

**DN:** Where did your father and mother meet?

**JD:** Again, this is rather interesting. Her father was in Congress, and I had an Uncle Dan McGillicuddy in Congress, and they became quite close friends, the two of them. And my father was in law school at Georgetown and he was invited to go to a dance at the White House. So needless to say, Dad went. And when he went, of course, all formal and so forth, his hand was done up. He got into an argument, God knows what he'd gotten into, and so he was there formal with his hand all done up. And my mother was coming down, I think the Red Room, some room, I don't remember the name, coming down the stairway and her skirt was split up to the knee I guess. It was pink satin with all sorts of stuff on it. And my father looked up and he poked his uncle and he said, "Who's that lady?" And he said, "That's Mr. Smith's daughter." "Oh, suppose I could get a date with her?" This is what my mother told us. Sure. So each half was introduced and she said, "Well you stood out because your hand was done up," she said, "I noticed you." "What do you think I did it for?" so he made some quick remark. And anyway they had, the next day they had lunch in the center and saw one another for a short time. He actually, and he had to, oh she had to go back to Michigan with her father. They corresponded and they had had six or seven dates and were married within the year. And they were married in Michigan.

**DN:** And she came to Lewiston.

**JD:** She came to Lewiston, terrified.

**DN:** Had your father grown up in Lewiston?

**JD:** Yes, he did. Gramp made him work hard.

**DN:** What was -?

**JD:** He was a contractor, my grandfather. He built city hall, here, and they were building dams a lot around the state. And at the age of fifty, my grandma at the time was the secretary with Clifford and (*name*) Construction Company, and she made him retire. He said, "I can't." "Oh yes, you can, you don't know what you have in the bank." And they were able to build a house on Main Street, and he retired and had a great life. He died, I think he was eighty-three or four, I'm not sure.

**DN:** Did you know your grandfather and grandmother?

**JD:** Oh did I, oh did I, I used to live over there practically, they used to all give me birthday parties, at the big house, (*unintelligible word*) large house, it faces, I don't know if you know it or not but it faces the Frye Street, Main Street, there's a big brick house and you can look right down the street. And it was a wonderful house to have a party in. And my grandfather loved kids, so he did all sorts of Halloween parties and (*unintelligible phrase*) when we were younger always the circus when it came. Whatever class I was in. No wonder I was popular, he used to take kids to music hall, any good show, he just liked kids. It was wonderful for me. I was the oldest grandchild, that was good.

**DN:** How many grandchildren, or how many children were there in your father's family?

**JD:** There were four boys, four children, two girls and two boys, and Dad was the oldest, and then my Uncle Bill, and then there was two girls, Louise and Kathy. And they were very, I'd go down and see Kath, well I did because she's, they've passed away, and I'm very close with the (*unintelligible word*) children.

**DN:** So it's been a real extended family.

**JD:** It has.

**DN:** Where did your father go to college?

**JD:** Bowdoin. Everybody went to Bowdoin but my grandson, he did not want to go, he's at Boston College. That's what he picked. And he did not even (*unintelligible phrase*), the kid knew, his parents knew he was rather interesting and he sent out his resume, he sent the down payment and whatever they needed for it, and then when he got accepted, (*unintelligible word*) acceptance, they didn't know a thing about it. They were, Jack, poor Jack, my son Johnny was horrified, (*unintelligible phrase*) but he preferred, and he's very happy.

**DN:** Good. Your father went to Bowdoin and then off to Georgetown.

**JD:** Right.

**DN:** And came back to Lewiston to practice law.

**JD:** Right, he went in with my Uncle Bill, to -

**DN:** Clifford & Clifford.

**JD:** Clifford & Clifford. See, Bill had eight children, one girl she died unfortunately, she was only thirty-four or five, beautiful girl. She also had kids. But the boys of the (*name*) family, they're all (*unintelligible phrase*), I think three lawyers, they had four lawyers in that, in Portland (*unintelligible phrase*). What was his name, oh, is Andrews in Portland, is our congressman -?

**DN:** There was a congressman, Tom Andrews.

**JD:** Yeah, he just ran recently.

**DN:** Yeah.

**JD:** Yeah, well, one of my Uncle Bill's children married with the Andrews last December, I wasn't here.

**DN:** Oh, Deborah.

**JD:** Is that the one, I can't...

**DN:** I think so, yeah.

**JD:** She's very cute.

**DN:** Yes, she is, and she's very delightful, very -

**JD:** (*Unintelligible phrase*).

**DN:** And so you had mostly lawyers in the family.

**JD:** Oh yes.

**DN:** No one followed grandpa into the construction business.

**JD:** No. Kevin and I think (*unintelligible phrase*) you know, talents or something if you would say that. But no, didn't want anything to do with that. He just wanted to be, do what he wanted to do, that was his problem. Many times he says, I said, "Why didn't you go to law school?" "I didn't want to be like anybody else." I think he's sorry he didn't, because he can argue like a son of a gun, (*unintelligible phrase*).

**DN:** Now, your father was active in Democratic politics in Lewiston.

**JD:** And the one that surprised us all, Tom, did he tell you about Patrick, his son Patrick?

**DN:** No.

**JD:** When he was studying, (*unintelligible phrase*) in high school, in the history class, he volunteered to work for the Democrats around here. He never had that (*unintelligible phrase*). The next thing we knew he had signed up, he would spend until practically midnight down there at the office, going around, calling people up and driving the, doing all kinds of things. Decided he liked it. But of course it ended there. He's a walking computer, that's what I call him, and (*unintelligible phrase*). And Michael, I don't know, we'll have to see what happens with Michael when he comes out, if he's going to make his millions and buy my cottage, I'll have to see.

**DN:** But was your father elected to office in Lewiston or was he -?

**JD:** At one time, one term. He didn't like that much. Of course, when Ed came along he liked that. He, of course my father liked trying cases and I think he missed his calling on the stage because, who was it, John Ford who came from Portland? Well, he knew Dad, but he came up, he wanted him to go to Hollywood to play with, what was the other guy's name, ah. (*Unintelligible phrase*), I can't remember. It'll come sometime. Walter, some -

**DN:** Walter Brennan?

**JD:** No, it'll come, whatever, but my grandfather said, don't you go there, he says, I don't want you going there, you'll be ruined, blah-blah-blah and went on and (*unintelligible phrase*). But he could do it.

**DN:** Was this after he was in practice?

**JD:** Yeah, yeah, because he'd been trying cases and people would come up from New York and he was very famous supposedly another case, a guy at the dime store, at the Woolworth's, a woman had stolen, an elderly old woman, (*unintelligible phrase*), and they were going to go after her and arrest her, and they did. And finally, I don't know who, and Dad got hold of the case some way, but they settled. I don't know, (*unintelligible phrase*) or whatever, from New York. And Dad took him over the coals from what I understand and it hit headlines and everything. Tom's sister, Kathy, did you ever know Kathy, Katherine?

**DN:** No. Oh, yes, Katherine I knew.

**JD:** Yeah, Kathy, and she sent us an article from, oh dear, oh the, it was some article that appeared in a Maine magazine.

**DN:** *Downeast*?

**JD:** It probably could have been *Downeast* that she found, and they'd written that case up (*unintelligible phrase*), and I don't know what Tom did with it, but I never found again. But, you know, how the small town lawyer sort of hung the big guy, they really did a good job on it.

**DN:** In your family, did, were you very much aware of your father's work as a lawyer?

**JD:** Oh, he wouldn't tell me too much, but you'd just pick it up. I don't think I would have known (*unintelligible word*) a doctor or anything else, he didn't talk about it.

**DN:** Did he and your mother talk much about politics at home?

**JD:** My mother was a Republican. But she never said much, but she went along with the Democrats. She said, I suppose if I eat it might just grow. But she said, whatever Dad wanted she (*unintelligible phrase*). So that was good. And my grandmother came on from Michigan. I can remember that my father and my grandmother going to, regularly arguing about politics. And she loved to argue, and of course Dad did so I could just hear them yelling. I don't know much about it, they were playing bridge and she, whatever they were doing, there was this yelling at one another. (*Unintelligible phrase*).

**DN:** Did you get taken to political rallies?

**JD:** Not particularly, no, I really wasn't except a few here and that was after we were married. Actually, you know my father loved boxing and the only thing I can remember is Gene Tunney came to town one day and Dad picked him up in Portland to bring him up to his place in Maine, up the coast, and half the kids knew I was going down with my father while he picked him up, before school, and took me down to Portland and bring him up. Well, I asked him, well Dad asked him, he said, "These kids want to speak with you." And he said, "Okay," so he got out of the car and went over and shook hands with the kids in the school yard, even before he had his breakfast. But he was, they all thought it was wonderful and (*unintelligible phrase*). And I remember, (*unintelligible word*), when I was growing up I just remember they had meetings and so forth, (*unintelligible phrase*).

**DN:** Did your father get involved in the Louis Brann campaign?

**JD:** He just knew Louis, I didn't, he was very friendly, he was everywhere but he didn't, I suppose he did to a certain extent, I never (*unintelligible phrase*).

**DN:** How about Lewiston politics, did you have much of a sense of what was going on in the city?

**JD:** Oh yes, Louis Jalbert. I surely did. One time they had, Eleanor Roosevelt School had Eleanor Roosevelt come up to speak to the teachers, and of course Dr. Phillips, the president of Bates, and at that time I don't know who handled, brought her here or anything else, but they, she was able to spend the night with Dr. Phillips, but there was no place for them to have dinner because all the teachers in town, everything had been taken up. So, I'll never forget, it was five minutes past twelve at night and Tom is poking me, he says, "Can we have Eleanor Roosevelt for dinner tomorrow night?" And I said, "What are you talking about, go back to sleep," I thought he was crazy. He says, "I mean it." I said, oh sure, what's the difference, I know I was just nonplused about the whole thing. And I came to about four, oh my God, (*unintelligible phrase*) of who do I invite, (*unintelligible phrase*). He was president of the chamber at the time,

Tom was, and I said the only people that are coming, no politics, I want the members of the chamber, the wives and just the members of the board of the chamber to come, otherwise than that I won't do it. And so I had, I didn't want to pick this one and that one, it wasn't right to do it, I didn't think.

So the wives came through beautifully. There was, Marge Touhey's father ran the bakery and another gal's father was in, at the hotel, well worked at the DeWitt, I don't know what he was doing there. So he was able to get cold cuts of turkey. We had, well, what else would you have, a turkey and a ham or something like that. But the girls all came through and we had it. And two women who were very, very sick, said they were Republicans, so they came, they weren't that sick, they were very happy, they (*unintelligible phrase*). So my mother and father, we had my mother and father, my uncle and my aunt, and Dylan, but the rest were, oh, I can't get in there, I've got a picture of Eleanor. We'd only been in the house about a year, so the den wasn't really quite finished, but she (*unintelligible phrase*). We'd sent the kids over to Karen (*name*) and she said, I want to see your children, (*unintelligible phrase*), they're sitting around in dungarees then, you know, and the old shoes and-

**DN:** This was up on Delcliff.

**JD:** On Delcliff. And we had, of course there were police protection there all around the place, and Louis Jalbert and, I don't know who his buddy was at the time, he was driving a pink Cadillac, that's all I can remember.

**DN:** That would have been Roger Dube.

**JD:** It could have been, because I don't, I wonder, did he come from the lower part of Lisbon Street?

**DN:** Yeah.

**JD:** He lived down there, but that's probably who it was then.

**DN:** And he had the pink Cadillac.

**JD:** Pink Cadillac, that was it. And so when they came up to the door to come in, they said, no, you're not on the list. But of course they know me and then finally, you know, the, Dube or somebody had handed the cop a picture of his, being taken with Roosevelt, I don't know whether it was or not but he wanted it signed by (*unintelligible phrase*). So we'd just had the lawn come in, it was mucky, it was in the spring, and he turned that Cadillac around and goes right over the lawn. (*Unintelligible phrase*). But it was one of those things, he was just mad. (*Unintelligible phrase*).

**DN:** You grew up in Lewiston and you graduated from Lewiston High?

**JD:** I graduated from Lewiston High. Then I went to Georgian Courts in Lakewood, New Jersey.

**DN:** And when did you meet Tom?

**JD:** Oh, I'd known him for years. He played football and he was in the group that we were in. I never went out with him then, but I went out with friends of his. And he went to Washington and I was in Jersey, so one time he asked me if I could come down for a dance, so I went of course. Then I'd see him on, when I'd come home at Christmas time or something, we used to go the Kiwanis dance together, (*unintelligible word*), so he didn't know many people here (*unintelligible phrase*). They just go away, their own ways, once you get through high school everything breaks up, which is too bad, but. And that's where it all started.

**DN:** What was Tom doing in Washington at the time?

**JD:** Law school, he went to George Washington. And worked at the NRA, not the NRA, not the National Rifle Association. He hated guns and he was a terrific shot. But he had to have one (*unintelligible phrase*).

**DN:** But why was -?

**JD:** He went on, into the FBI.

**DN:** Now, had he gone to college?

**JD:** Yes, well he went to George Washington and then, which, into the law school, which you could do at that time, two years and you could go to law school. And then he worked (*unintelligible phrase*) well, it would have been about that time, at the office of, what was Muskie (*unintelligible word*)?

**DN:** Oh, the Office of Price Stabil-, well, the first one was the OPA, the Office of Price Administration.

**JD:** That's what brought (*unintelligible word*). Then he came back. And, you know, he was working for something in Washington.

**DN:** And then he went to work for the FBI there?

**JD:** No, he worked after he came back and gone (*unintelligible phrase*) law enforcement and so forth and decided to try it. That's where, actually he was with the FBI when he decided to quit and signed up for the Marines. But he was missing a tooth, out back, and he, but we had it put in, went back, you know, and they found he had an ulcer. Of course he had that for years and years (*unintelligible phrase*). Any of the services today, they would probably carried him on, I don't care whether you got ulcers or not, get in there, but -

**DN:** What year was that, by the way?

**JD:** When was the start of the, the start of the Second World War?

**DN:** Oh, December of '41 was the attack on Pearl Harbor, and -

**JD:** Well, it was right after that, he was with the F-

**DN:** In early '42 (*unintelligible word*) -

**JD:** Well, it was before that because he wasn't in the, we were married in '42. (*Unintelligible phrase*) because he was with the FBI when we married, yeah.

**DN:** Now, I seem to recall that Tom worked at one point in the Pepperill Mill?

**JD:** Oh, when he was in high school.

**DN:** When he was in high school.

**JD:** And his mother worked there. His father died when he was four, and there were five children, and she was, she was something. (*Unintelligible phrase*). Maybe he joined everybody else at the mill, from what I can figure out.

**DN:** Now, you were married in '42 and Tom worked for the FBI for how long?

**JD:** Well he was in it while we were married, oh, he must have been there about a year before we got married I would say. Because he, the first assignment was in Kentucky, we weren't married at the time. And then he transferred to New York and that's when I started seeing him. I was buying, Grant Knowles, which is long gone, a clothing store, and I had gone to (*name*) Fashion School at the time, and then I hurt my knee and came home and then I had an offer to go to work there so I did, and then I left when I was married, back to New York.

**DN:** Did you live here when you were first married, or live in New York?

**JD:** We were in New York, out in Garden City. It was fun, we enjoyed (*unintelligible phrase*). I wasn't far from the airfield, which was Mitchell, so the trains would go by our apartment though, and you could just tell what was going on here. (*Unintelligible phrase*) well of course, you could tell, (*unintelligible phrase*) when they did the invasion. The train (*unintelligible phrase*). I did drive an ambulance to a certain extent because I could change a tire and I could use, drive a shift, I was brought up driving a shift. We were few and far between back then. (*Unintelligible phrase*) and he decided to go and of course they wouldn't take him, and he went back and then started in practicing with Al Lessard, that work started.

**DN:** Tom decided not to go into the Clifford & Clifford firm.

**JD:** Well he didn't want it, he wanted to be, you know, oh no, he said, Bill's got too many kids at home. This is-

**DN:** By this time your father was a judge.

**JD:** Right.

**DN:** And how did Tom get to know Al Lessard?

**JD:** I guess he'd known him for years. I don't really know quite how he did know him, you know, he knew him when we were mar-, after we were married, but I didn't.

**DN:** You hadn't known Al. But Al was from Lewiston I take it.

**JD:** Rumford I think.

**DN:** Oh, he came down from Rumford.

**JD:** I think he came from Rumford, or (*unintelligible phrase*), now maybe Al, (*unintelligible phrase*). His wife came from Washington, Al.

**DN:** Had he studied in Washington also?

**JD:** Tom?

**DN:** No, Al?

**JD:** I don't know, I really don't know.

**DN:** But they formed a partnership and -

**JD:** And then when Tom went on the bench, well, what did Al do, yeah, he became a judge.

**DN:** Yeah, they both became judges.

**JD:** I think he was upset when Tom went (*unintelligible phrase*), but that's okay.

**DN:** They were different personalities.

**JD:** And how. But they did really well together.

**DN:** Now, Tom was practicing law, and in 1954 he was approached to run for congress. And were you enthusiastic about that?

**JD:** No, not at all. And the kids were going to school, "Don't vote for my father, we don't want to leave here, don't vote for my father." They found out we, they happened to like this (*unintelligible phrase*). Well the teachers told me, "Did you know your kids are going around telling them not to vote for your husband?" He did well on Lewiston but up north, actually it was just (*unintelligible phrase*).

**DN:** What was it like in that campaign?

**JD:** It was a bitter one, I felt, in a way. I mean, they, oh what was his name, was it Brewster? No, would Brewster have been involved?

**DN:** Well, Brewster was involved some, on behalf of the Republicans. The-

**JD:** I know he didn't want my father to get the judge ship, I know that.

**DN:** I'm trying to remember, I guess Charlie Nelson was still there.

**JD:** Right, he was.

**DN:** And ran and won. Was it bitter in terms of Tom and Charlie Nelson, or just bitter?

**JD:** I think bitter, I mean, he did very well here in this area, but, I don't know, I mean, I didn't feel all that badly really because he wasn't, I think it would have been exciting for Tom and Tom would have liked it, but he didn't seem, you know, down in the dumps when he didn't get. I mean, it's amazing, the people, the letters I found, where they are now because everything's downstairs in boxes, if I ever move I don't know what they'll do with them, but people always said, well we thought he could win if we give him some money. And that's kind of a bad way to go at it, but that's what happened. And, oh I think he'd have won if he'd gotten half the vote from up north.

**DN:** Did he run into prejudice?

**JD:** Oh, yes, up that way. (*Unintelligible phrase*), 'be you Catholic'. Yes I am.

**DN:** What was the response?

**JD:** (*Unintelligible phrase*). Knowing Tom he wouldn't have said much.

**DN:** What did the fellow say to Tom?

**JD:** Oh, he said, (*unintelligible word*), "Be you a Catholic?" (*Unintelligible phrase*) and what Tom said I don't know, he said, "Yes I am, sir," or something like that. And he says, "I was very nice to him, I had him fill my gas tank and I paid him."

**DN:** Do you remember when you first met Ed Muskie?

**JD:** I sure do. He brought him home one night, when he worked in Portland, and he said to me, "I told him he could stay here overnight." And, so I'm, I says, I just, I looked at the height of him and I says, "You know we only have a cot up on the third floor." It was warm, it was a bedroom, but I didn't have another, just a, it wasn't folding, it was a cot cot, and I, and if he wanted to let his feet hang out I would make the bed up. And then the next morning when he came down for breakfast, this is what I made. He had six eggs, a pound of bacon, and I don't

know how many toast, and, but I remember the orange juice, he had a tall glass of orange juice. But that I can remember because I never, my father was a good eater, but I never saw him eat more than three eggs.

**DN:** Now this is when Ed was with the OPS?

**JD:** At OPS, yeah. (*Unintelligible phrase*). But it was very, it struck me very funny. And he was so thin, poor guy, I don't think they'd eaten during the campaign. Well, you were at the house (*unintelligible phrase*) what he can remember. When they'd arrive, they'd (*unintelligible phrase*) and he'd have this house to eat, so of course I was at the beach so they'd just have full range, but nobody wanted to buy his food and bring it in. But it was fine.

**DN:** Had you known Frank Coffin before the campaign?

**JD:** Yes, I did and, because Frank's son and my John were very close friends at school, and that's when I, and we were both friends about the same time, Ruth and I, and John, my son, was due in, oh, about the first or second week of April, and Doug was due around the end of March. Well, she came in, Johnny arrived early, the 26th of March, and I don't know, I know Doug was longer, and he was overdue and she was barely able to walk, so that's the way that friendship started off. Funny talking about it.

**DN:** Did you, so you and Tom and Frank and Ruth had a social friendship in that period.

**JD:** Oh, yes, (*unintelligible word*). I know when he was sent over to France, was it ambassador?

**DN:** He was the, he was the U.S. representative to the Development Assistance Committee.

**JD:** Oh, is that what it was. Well anyway, I know he borrowed some skis, my son John, he had a couple, so he went over with his skis and broke one, so he had a, he came back carrying the ski. I thought, oh my God, all the way back with the one ski, so it sort of, he said, I've got to hang that up someplace in my bedroom (*unintelligible phrase*). But (*unintelligible phrase*). But he was a great guy. He lived right across, across the street, a very good friend of mine, Margaret March and when Margaret's mother died he was very good to her father, taking (*unintelligible phrase*) back and forth, food, watching out for him. They're the kindest (*unintelligible word*).

**DN:** Well you had a family connection with Frank's family dating way back.

**JD:** Oh yeah, before (*unintelligible phrase*), I didn't, it was Johnny that really knew him best.

**DN:** Yes, but your uncle Dan McGillicuddy was law partner with Frank's grandfather.

**JD:** That's right. I didn't, to me, I didn't really know him but Uncle Dan we used to call Humpty Dumpty, he was built like Humpty Dumpty, he really was. He was great, but they never had children. His wife was Aunt Minnie and she didn't want any, and he was upset. But, whatever, whatever she wanted. He was great with us, he used to take a group of kids down to

Old Orchard every summer. It's funny, isn't it, how things are.

**DN:** Oh, yes.

**JD:** I didn't think much about the relationship, you know, I really didn't, until you mentioned it.

**DN:** Now, in 1954, did you go campaigning with Tom?

**JD:** Not much, I couldn't leave the kids, I had three of them. I think two or three times we went to some dinner somewhere (*unintelligible phrase*).

**DN:** Did, during this period, you used to entertain folks and you did so right up through the early sixties. What was it like having, you mentioned some of it, but what was it like having folks coming wandering in?

**JD:** You'd be amazed. It got so it was natural. I kept canned stuff on hand. But he'd call up, Tom would call up from the court. He didn't come home to lunch very often, and he didn't eat lunch, he should have but he didn't (*unintelligible phrase*). And so he says, "Oh, I've got a couple of law clerks here, can we have lunch?" "Eleven thirty," he says, "I'll be up in about twenty minutes, half an hour." So I'd, soup and sandwich, no problem. It worked out very easily, and I did have a good sized refrigerator then. (*Unintelligible phrase*), the refrigerator was like that. But, you know, I'd make up things ahead of time and freeze them. (*Unintelligible phrase*), I didn't mind it. I never minded entertaining. I know some people go berserk, some of my friends, how do you do it? You just do, I think, my feeling is if they want to come and eat at my house they'll eat what I have. If they don't like it, well, don't eat it. (*Unintelligible phrase*).

**DN:** Was that a pattern in your family's home, your mother and father's house?

**JD:** Well, it was a different type of (*unintelligible word*) it seems to me, when I was, oh Mother and Dad always had big groups or clubs, which they were, and they would dress formally for dinner, in the house. And then they used to call, then they, nobody wanted to entertain any more so they used to go down to DeWitt and then come back to somebody's house and play cards. There were three tables, and, you know, there were. And then there were these big card parties for the women, my grandmother used to (*unintelligible phrase*) entertain them together because the house was big. (*Unintelligible phrase*) and I'd be a filler-inner. It's so different today. The formality that we had then and, at least in my house. My mother would never let us come to the table in bathing suits. Today, they're lucky if they even dress for anything, let alone (*unintelligible phrase*). They had, she had a woman working for her down at the beach, Mother wasn't too well (*unintelligible word*), and the first time she had my grandmother and grandfather down at the beach for dinner one Sunday, this girl, Wendy was her name, she was (*unintelligible phrase*), she comes serving at the table with her bathing suit, of course with an apron over it, and my mother hit the ceiling. She was gone the next day. Now what a difference. I'm lucky to get anybody to bring anything to the table today today. No, we worked out fine, never thought anything about it.

**DN:** When did Tom go on the bench?

**JD:** You'd think I'd remember the date, I'm trying to think. Ed appointed him New Year's day. He took, what is the first year that Ed went down to congress?

**DN:** Nineteen sixty-nine [1959] he went.

**JD:** All right then, that, just before he left he put him on, had him go on the bench, because I have a picture in there I think, or somewhere, that I realized you wanted, I had some pretty good pictures, you can tell. But anyway, this is a picture of my boys and myself and Ed where he was swearing in or something there, and I know that because I couldn't get the boys' ties tied right and I had to go over to Louis Griffith's have him come over to tie the boys', because Tom called, I want you here now, and get the boys dressed up. I know (*unintelligible phrase*).

**DN:** So it would have been late '68 then.

**JD:** It would have been in '68 (*unintelligible phrase*).

**DN:** And nine.

**JD:** I know, oh that's right, it was like New Year's day we had him go up. (*Unintelligible word*) I'm glad you mentioned that. That I know. I don't know much of these dates, but that I do know.

**DN:** And he served on the superior court and then the supreme judicial court.

**JD:** Right.

**DN:** Did he enjoy being on the bench?

**JD:** Very much so, I know he liked the superior court. He says, you know, "You can do what you want on the," but he, we had some wonderful friends on that bench, on that court thing. There are only seven of them, but I didn't, the only thing I didn't like, he was away so much.

**DN:** In those days there was a lot of travel for the justices.

**JD:** They always made it back for a football game if the kids were in it. The only one he missed was Kevin was playing for Bowdoin, and he was having lunch at a McDonald's or something. He'd been in Portland on the court, and started up to the game and, oh, somebody's been injured, they're taking him off, and the way they described the play, they knew it was center, it was Kevin's, which he hated his position but anyway he played it, he was a good one, too, and they carried him off the field. And I was there with my brother and sister-in-law, and the people next door to us at the beach and all the kids, they had five kids (*unintelligible word*), except well the girls didn't go but there were three boys and two girls. And they came, brought the boys up so they could see Kevin play football, and there he was carried off the field. Oh they were very disappointed. But Tom, you know, turned around, found out he was all right and went

back, so he stayed a couple of days in the infirmary (*unintelligible phrase*). They had him do it because he was just sort of knocked out, and wandering around. (*Unintelligible phrase*) "I'll go down, don't you dare go near him on that field," (*unintelligible phrase*), which is true. (*Unintelligible phrase*), if he was the only one that's knocked out, I guess I was pretty lucky with three of them playing, because he liked football.

**DN:** Kevin did?

**JD:** Always did.

**DN:** Did your other boys play?

**JD:** Oh yeah. And John's boy, see he went to Cape Elizabeth and they don't have, didn't have football, this year they put it in, and Ben was very disappointed they didn't have football at Cape Elizabeth, but anyway, you know what he's playing now, he's down in Boston? What's that called, rugby.

**DN:** Oh.

**JD:** I was furious. I says, that's (*unintelligible phrase*), I said, "Football I can take, but rugby, no." (*Unintelligible phrase*). They tape back their ears with electric tape. I nearly died. And he had lovely blonde hair, (*unintelligible phrase*). And his mother "You're not going to play this year are you?" "I certainly am." I think it's awful, I can't believe it. John said, "Now leave him alone, he loves it." I says, "I'm not going to do a thing." And he says he's not heavy enough to play on a college team, well he's a pretty good size, but he isn't that heavy, he's tall and slender, but, probably, oh I think he's 6'1" anyway, (*unintelligible phrase*). I don't know what he is, every time I look at him he grows up, so he's over six feet. He's following the tradition, having big feet like all of them.

**DN:** Now, John is practicing law and Tom practiced and then went on the bench. Did either of them show much interest in politics in Maine?

**JD:** Well, they're interested but nothing, Johnny's the one, more so. Of course, there he is up there, he's traveling back and forth, (*unintelligible phrase*).

**DN:** He does a lot of lobbying.

**JD:** Yeah, he does, yeah, he's up there now.

**DN:** You've never been terribly drawn to politics.

**JD:** Not particularly.

**DN:** In spite of your father's involvements?

**JD:** I mean, I would do if I did what I could, want to do, but I never got out politically. I

probably would have if I, I wasn't that interested, I wasn't . . . . Georgette Berube, but I met Georgette, we were on the library board, we were on the library board here at one time together, and so, I was surprised to find out she was going to go back. What is it, four years I guess.

**DN:** It's a four term limit, yeah.

**JD:** Yeah, and she had to get off and then said she's going back. Of course I couldn't get anywhere in Lewiston anyway, I don't speak French.

**DN:** Was there any pressure on you to learn French when you were in school?

**JD:** Oh, I (*unintelligible word*) in French. The only time I really had pressure put on me, not pressure, I went overseas, (*unintelligible phrase*) with a friend of mine in France and I said, I went to school, night school, you know, to pick up little phrases or something like that. I just wanted to know what I was eating, know what to ask for and how to ask directions. Well I learned a lot more, and I never used it hardly at all, except to read a menu over there. Nobody, they all spoke English.

**DN:** When you were growing up in Lewiston, was there, among your classmates, was there much conversation in French?

**JD:** No. And the French teacher was, Mrs. Callahan, Miss Callahan, it was funny because the French teacher, the one with the French name and everything (*name*), she always, she taught English and here's Callahan teaching French.

**DN:** Could you describe your father, physically and his personality. He was one of the great figures of the twenties and thirties in Maine Democratic politics.

**JD:** Oh, he loved it.

**DN:** You say he was a big man?

**JD:** He wasn't as big as Uncle Bill, but he was about 5', oh, I'd say 5', I don't know, about 6' (*unintelligible word*). And he was big, broad shouldered. Yeah, he was, he had a very good appetite, you can imagine all the wrong stuff. Today, you don't eat so many eggs and a lot of meat and all that. But he was very kind.

**DN:** Kind person?

**JD:** Worried a lot about his kids. Make sure everything was right. Now, my brother never showed much interest, he had no interest in law. Jack, every time, well when Tom was running, he'd do anything he could to help him. Drove cars, he did this, did that. But (*unintelligible phrase*).

**DN:** Now your Uncle was not much interested in politics.

**JD:** No, no, he kept the office going, he kept . . .

*End of Side A*

*Side B*

**DN:** This is the second side of the interview with Jeanne Delahanty on March 22nd, year 2000, Jeanne's birthday, and I just asked Jeanne if her Uncle Bill was much interested in trial practice.

**JD:** No.

**DN:** He stuck to the books as it were.

**JD:** Yeah, Bill did the book work and (*unintelligible phrase*) stuff, whatever they were doing, if -

**DN:** Corporate law?

**JD:** Yeah, corporate. No, Dad was the trial guy, he and Benny Berman, two of them. I'd just hear them talking about (*unintelligible phrase*) and I never saw my father try a case. He didn't want my mother or me in the courtroom.

**DN:** Is that right.

**JD:** I always wish I had, now Tom didn't care most of the time, once, a few times I could sneak in or if he told us there'd be a good case and if we wanted to, and once the boys had gone and everything then I would go with Tom wherever he was going. If it was a place I didn't know anybody I just sat in the courtroom.

**DN:** Now, did, your father didn't want you in the courtroom when he was trying a case. What about when he sat on the bench?

**JD:** Well, it depended on the case he wanted, the only ones we had to go in for are these very boring things (*unintelligible phrase*), I says, but I want to hear a good case. I went in only once I remember, and for some reason I had to see him and I don't, didn't plan on going but I went, you know, there in Portland.

**DN:** You talked about the first time you met Ed Muskie, and his good appetite.

**JD:** Oh, that was funny.

**DN:** What do you remember otherwise about Ed as a candidate?

**JD:** Oh, I thought he was very dedicated and I just was quite impressed with him even at the time. And I think his height and size made a difference. He was impressive, I thought, when he walked in. (*Unintelligible phrase*), I don't know, but I enjoyed his, he used to go over to Kennebunkport, or Kennebunk Beach, he was at the beach. Now, does he still have this place in

Kennebunk Beach?

**DN:** Yes, they still have Deer Trees. Jane comes in June and stays there, and the kids come there quite a bit.

**JD:** Well, that's good, because they had a big house there, too. Tom used to go and play golf some over there and I'd go, you know, stay with Jane and (*unintelligible phrase*).

**DN:** Now, you told about the time Mrs. Roosevelt came to your home and, what was she like?

**JD:** Charming, absolutely charming. And my mother was there, and she wanted to sit next to her so they could talk about the White House. And she was wonderful to mother. First she wasn't going to go, I said, Mother, of course (*unintelligible phrase*). The two of them got along as if they'd known one another. Of course she made it so easy for my mother. And I've read more about her life (*unintelligible phrase*). Dad (*unintelligible phrase*) because fortunately Tom was a Democrat and interested in the political, and it gave him something to talk to. (*Unintelligible phrase*), I would see him, he'd sit there, they'd sit there at the table and talk and then they'd go out maybe on the porch if it was hot and talk all the time. Good thing I married somebody that was politically interested, in Maine and from Maine.

**DN:** Did your father and mother have any questions about your marrying Tom?

**JD:** Well, Dad said, I didn't go with him too steadily because it was when I was away at the time of the wedding, and, Tom Delahanty, "Now who's that?" I mean, my father says, "Who's this Tom Delahanty?" Bill knew him very well, my Uncle Bill, he says, "Don't worry, Jack, don't worry, Jack, she's going to be fine with him." And, oh, it's very interesting, but Tom's father was sponsored by my grandfather to come over. And going through this stuff this woman, this man sent to me, the only mention of the whole thing that Delahanty came from Ireland (*unintelligible word*). And my other grandfather came from the northern part of Ireland.

**DN:** The Cliffords.

**JD:** Well the Cliffords came from the southern part.

**DN:** The southern part, oh the Smiths?

**JD:** The Smiths came from the northern part.

**DN:** Orangemen.

**JD:** Oh, yes. And my father really used to give it to my grandmother. On St. Patrick's Day, dear, you put on green if you're going to stay. I don't know whether this, who this Bud Abbott is, I haven't any idea. See, Dad gave, Mother had the family Bible, and for some reason my father gave it to her brother, living in Washington, and there was just the two of them, my mother and father, I mean my mother and her brother. So, and then it suddenly dawned on me it's the only way I'd know what was happening on that side of the family. So, I called Bill the

other day and he said he will find it and get in touch. I'm not going to worry about that thing any more, I spent hours. The typing is so small, I have difficulty even with my glasses.

**DN:** Now what was your grandfather Smith's first name?

**JD:** John. What else could we have, we have Johns and Bills.

**DN:** Now he was in the congress in the, what, 19-?

**JD:** Oh, (*unintelligible phrase*). Nineteen (*unintelligible word*), well he had, well I imagine it must have been around nineteen twenties or, no, no -

**DN:** No, it would be earlier than that. Nineteen ten?

**JD:** Nineteen ten, 1910, because he died at seventy or seventy-one from a heart attack.

**DN:** Was he in the house then?

**JD:** I think he was there for seven years, or eight years, seven or eight years.

**DN:** Over in the archives we have a collection of biographies of members of Congress in which we at least have a thumbnail sketch of your grandfather.

**JD:** (*Unintelligible phrase*).

**DN:** As well as your Uncle Dan.

**JD:** Oh, he was such a lovely man, he was so cute. I look back on it now and I sort of giggle when I think of him, he was so cute. That's all I could think of was Humpty Dumpty.

**DN:** That was the shape of the era.

**JD:** That was the shape of the era all right. And he had promised, I guess he, some story about when Uncle Dan McGillicuddy was down there he promised that he would bring it so the ships could come up the Androscoggin to Lewiston, or some story like that, something like that (*unintelligible phrase*). Well, he got elected, so.

**DN:** Has, in the 1950s and before, did you pay much attention to political activity in the -

**JD:** Oh, I didn't at all.

**DN:** You didn't at all, no?

**JD:** No, I, probably because my mother would just, she said, (*unintelligible phrase*). She used to drive her father, she was the first woman to drive a car in Shallot, Michigan, while the Smiths would take it out on the racetrack and get it up to thirty-five miles an hour. A number of the, my

grandfather never drove, but he got the car so she used to drive him around Michigan on campaigns.

**DN:** But that was the extent of her involvement in -

**JD:** As far as I ever heard, (*unintelligible phrase*). He didn't talk much about that. Of course the men, when they, at their card parties, the men would go out and the kids would go someplace (*unintelligible phrase*), it was just typical. He does today, they all go out that way and the women sit in here (*unintelligible phrase*) after they're married.

**DN:** You remember some of the other candidates in '54? Paul Fullam, for example?

**JD:** Oh, I adored Paul, I liked Paul, he was a nice guy, very, very nice person. And (*unintelligible word*), I don't think, I don't know how Ed ever got to stop to think of it with other people around. I enjoyed that, you know, but I never was really involved in it that much.

**DN:** Do you remember Ken Colbath?

**JD:** I remember him but not too well. What ever happened to him?

**DN:** Ken stayed in business in Presque Isle and later died, and his wife stayed right there. Do you remember the first television program when you and Tom and the others were at the Channel 6 studio in Portland?

**JD:** No.

**DN:** In '54?

**JD:** No, I don't remember that, no. I remember going on the air here and, they had a station here at one time. And after we built the house, I went on then. Something about the house, I don't, can't even remember now. (*Unintelligible phrase*) nobody used redwood except Henry Dingley.

**DN:** That was, that was different. You had in here, speaking of the house, you had a room down in the basement -

**JD:** You'll have to put the name of it on there.

**DN:** Well yes, I think that's, that was a gathering place for, what was the name of the room?

**JD:** Shall I put, I should have a whole sign on it, or I should have left it on, they changed the house and the sign.

**DN:** Well that was called the Passion Pit, and why was it called the Passion Pit?

**JD:** I don't know.

**DN:** What color were the walls?

**JD:** Oh, the red?

**DN:** Yes.

**JD:** Oh, I forgot all about, leave it to you, Don. Because the other one that took care of it, that went in there, we had a boy from Austria, you know, a foreign student, and he was excellent, he was a wonderful student, and the only one that didn't want him to come was Kevin. At the time he was on this board, they were, the kids were all involved in the school and, oh, Kevin was president of the class, John was president of the class, Tommy was president of practically everything, he was vice president of the class, ran the school paper. I don't know, the kids have all been involved. Now whether my grandchildren will be, Tom's children (*unintelligible phrase*). But I don't know whether, I hope, yeah, they just, it's different for some reason. They said they didn't want to get in this one, this crowd drinks, and, we never ran into anything like that with our children. I don't know why. I always used to threaten them here.

**DN:** How does it feel living across the street from where you went to high school?

**JD:** It's a funny feeling. And some of these kids, no matter what I put on the porch, it gets the, a little, like a disappearing act or something. Christmas time the only thing, I finally got sick and tired of having my wreaths stolen, I bought a fake one with a, with the bow, never, I used the same wreath now the past four years.

**DN:** That doesn't interest them.

**JD:** No.

**DN:** They're junior highers now.

**JD:** That's right, and they are, and they used to smoke all the time down here on the corner and one of the teachers was driving early in the morning I guess, or something, so I understand (*unintelligible phrase*), I haven't seen them on the corner at all lately. I, of course I don't think there's so much smoking as there used to be (*unintelligible phrase*).

**DN:** That's being cut back now.

**JD:** Well it seems to be, I don't know. I don't think, of course I don't have anyone over here or (*unintelligible phrase*).

**DN:** The interconnections in families is fascinating. You're living in a house that was once owned by Frank Hoy, and -

**JD:** His grandson married my cousin, my niece.

**DN:** Your niece.

**JD:** Yeah.

**DN:** And who was Frank Hoy?

**JD:** Oh, that's right. Now, what was he before he was with the paper?

**DN:** He was an accountant, and I, and he was, as I recall he was controller of the *Lewiston-Sun*.

**JD:** Oh, I didn't know what he was.

**DN:** And then vice president. And then he left there to found the radio station. Was he a liberal Democrat?

**JD:** Not that I know of. I didn't even realize he had much to do with politics until later. And, you see, Jack now, being into the political thing, my brother, of course (*unintelligible phrase*). Jackie, I think, was running, the older son. He didn't probably get into it. I did, I mean at times I would go to meetings when they were picking delegates to go to the convention, and I was always on that, for another body for the Democrats, I'm sure. But, I remember seeing Betty Davis up there, up in Bangor.

**DN:** What was that event like? Can you remember?

**JD:** Well, it seems to me it was a pretty wild one, because she was not known to drink milk. Whatever it was, and she'd get up and she'd parade around and, I, you know, I don't know. And she was going with a fellow that went to Bowdoin and he used to get drunk all the time.

**DN:** That was her husband.

**JD:** Well, yeah, whatever.

**DN:** Cary Merrill.

**JD:** That's the one, because they'd go down to the beach and get lobsters and go down and eat them on the beach. I can remember that. Because they were over at Prout's Neck one summer.

**DN:** Do you remember the master of ceremonies at that event in, it was actually Brewer, in 1956?

**JD:** No.

**DN:** Herbert Ross Brown, of Bowdoin, Bowdoin professor.

**JD:** Oh, for heaven sake, that was Ross Brown, one of the persons that they said Mary Smith, the last name was Brown, I am a Brown, that's the only mention, nobody can find a record of it,

nobody found a record, maybe it's *(unintelligible phrase)*. They couldn't decide where she was buried. I wondered whether they got mixed up or something, I don't know. But, no, I don't remember that, I remember the name, Brown, Brown, *(unintelligible phrase)*. I'm not good on remembering names, unless I know them well.

**DN:** As you look back on Tom's experience in politics, and Ed Muskie, Frank Coffin and company, what strikes you as their major contributions to the state of Maine?

**JD:** Well, I don't know, *(unintelligible phrase)*, I don't really know what I think. Frank has one of the reputa-, everybody loves Frank, and they seemed to love Ed, except the one from New Hampshire, he put that horrible stuff, I was so mad. This is when things get mad, they do things to people I don't like and then I can get out and fight. I thought that was awful of that guy. And then he came out and said, and he admitted that he made it all up. So, I really can't say *(unintelligible phrase)* things they start and pass and so forth. When Tom was alive I was into it, talking to, but now I don't know who these people are.

**DN:** You indicated earlier that Tom enjoyed his time on the superior court bench.

**JD:** Yes, well I think he liked both, but he and Judge Archibald, very, very good friends and I was with his wife, we used to travel with them a lot. And she just recently passed away in, there in Florida, she died in Florida. They're having a service for her in May. But the two of them were like blood brothers. He was great. But they didn't talk talk politics very much either, *(unintelligible phrase)*. I know who the persons were here and there, but nothing, *(unintelligible phrase)*. I didn't pay too much attention all the time, I know that. But why they, Ed, as far as I was concerned, did very well in every, and across, in the politics. The Democrats recognized the name. This was the first time I think they ever were, from what I know. Any other Democratic governor that did so well as Ed to get his name *(unintelligible phrase)*.

**DN:** No, there haven't, well the only Democratic governor in the twentieth century before Ed was Bill Brann, and then subsequently Ken Curtis and Joe Brennan.

**JD:** I remember Ken and Joe.

**DN:** But as far as Ed, there had not been a Democratic governor since before the Civil War, except for Brann.

**JD:** That long?

**DN:** Yeah.

**JD:** No wonder I didn't know anything about it.

**DN:** Well, as a matter of fact, except for John *(name)* and Carl Moran in the house in the thirties, and Dan McGillicuddy back in the early part of the century, and Frank Coffin's grandfather who was speaker of the house in 1911, Louis Brann, those were the only major Democratic office holders.

**JD:** No wonder I didn't know much about Democrats.

**DN:** And you had a mother who was not going to get much involved.

**JD:** No, well the only thing she ever did was in Michigan, driving the car, from what I understand. I haven't come across any of that in the stuff they sent. Little things here and there, you know, pop up. Now, oh, I just want to tell you this, when you called, Muriel Maloney, do you remember Jack Maloney?

**DN:** Yes.

**JD:** Well, this is his wife Muriel. And she said, "Say hello to Don for me." I says, well all right. Now I've said hello to Don. But Jack liked politics. And the only (*unintelligible word*) was the time when they were running we'd have teas and so forth. They don't have those (*unintelligible word*) any more, I don't think, at least around here I haven't seen any (*unintelligible word*). Silver teas.

**DN:** That was before the era of television.

**JD:** That's right. It changed everything. Now computers are chang-, I don't have a computer. I'm busy enough without getting involved because I'm sure I would have to have somebody to help me with it all the time.

**DN:** You and my wife.

**JD:** Right. I can get along perfectly all right (*unintelligible phrase*). I don't know anyone I'd correspond with, particularly with a computer. The two people I do write, one's in Detroit, and the other one's now out in California, two girls I went to college with, and they don't have them so why should I bother. Kathy said, "Well you could E-mail me." I says, "Call me collect (*unintelligible phrase*)", I says, "call me, I'll pay for it, just call me."

**DN:** Well Jeanne, this has been a great visit.

**JD:** Well, I don't know. I just gabbed on like a nut.

**DN:** Well, you've given us lots of insights and wonderful stories.

**JD:** Tom will probably kill me. Well it is, when I look back of course, it (*unintelligible word*) talking with you, but most people I know don't even know what I'm talking about. And the girls that I knew that used to be in some, Muriel is about the only one alive today that had anything to do with politics around here with, you know, with all those (*unintelligible word*), with this and that, but, and (*name*), I mean she's not dead but she's not with it, I feel very sorry for her, now she's the only other one (*unintelligible phrase*). (*Name*), did you ever know him?

**DN:** Yes.

**JD:** (*Unintelligible phrase*), because he was the one Tom would go see when they were doing the surgery. (*Long unintelligible segment.*) It's getting scary, I don't like to even open the paper. I think I'm the oldest one that, no, no, (*name*) Russo, Dr. Russo's wife, (*unintelligible phrase*). She'll be ninety-seven or eight the end of July and she's not having trouble with her eyesight or nothing, and she still loves to play bridge. She says, "Without bridge I don't know what I'd do." And she, her husband was (*unintelligible phrase*). (*Unintelligible phrase*), they were cousins or something. And that would be the nearest (*unintelligible phrase*). That's too bad.

**DN:** Is Muriel Maloney still living here in Lewiston?

**JD:** Over on Main Street in an apartment (*unintelligible phrase*), changing the windows and they want to have them, took the double windows off, took out a lot of the other stuff and she's having to take the curtains, and all kinds of things now, it's going on the third week and they haven't been back and she says I am ready to hit the ceiling. She's on the first floor, and it's awful, the curtains are down. So I don't know, really it's, the two of us can get together and that's about it.

**DN:** Well that happens, the circle gets smaller.

**JD:** And looking for a substitute is not easy any more.

**DN:** We thank you very much Jeanne.

**JD:** Well, I should have given you some coffee or something.

*End of Interview*