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## Karahalios, Tony oral history interview

Andrea L'Hommedieu

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## **Interview with Tony Karahalios by Andrea L’Hommedieu**

### *Summary Sheet and Transcript*

#### **Interviewee**

Karahalios, Tony

#### **Interviewer**

L’Hommedieu, Andrea

#### **Date**

April 21, 2000

#### **Place**

Lewiston, Maine

#### **ID Number**

MOH 175

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#### **Biographical Note**

Anthony “Tony” Karahalios was born August 9, 1919 in Lewiston, Maine to Nicholas and Christine Karahalios. He graduated from Lewiston High School in 1937 and Bentley College in 1941, then served in World War II flying troops and cargo carrier planes in the Pacific theater. He was an accountant for 50 years. Tony had close ties with the Lewiston/Auburn business community and knew many Republicans and their views. He was active in statewide campaigns including Frank Coffin’s and Tom Delahanty’s campaigns. He was treasurer of Frank Coffin’s campaign. He was married to Marisse Botiggi Karahalios.

#### **Scope and Content Note**

Interview includes discussions of: personal background; Lewiston, Maine; Greek community; 1952-1954 Maine Democratic Party; 1954 Maine gubernatorial campaign; 1968 vice presidential campaign; Frank Coffin; serving as Treasurer of the 1956 campaign; and Olympia Snowe.

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## **Transcript**

**Andrea L'Hommedieu:** This is an interview on Friday, April 21st, the year 2000 with Anthony Karahalios at his home at 3 Gilmore Avenue in Lewiston, Maine. This is Andrea

L'Hommedieu interviewing. I'd like to start just by asking you to state your name and spell it.

**Anthony Karahalios:** My name is Anthony Karahalios, K-A-R-A-H-A-L-I-O-S. I'm eighty years old, born August 19th, 1919.

**AL:** Right here in Lewiston?

**AK:** Graduated from Bentley College, graduated from Lewiston High School in '37, and Bentley College in '41, then went in the service and went through pilot training and was part of the 5th Air Force, 70th Squadron, 433rd Group, stationed in the Pacific, started in New Guinea and worked my way all the way into Japan. Was the third airplane to land into Japan, and I brought the provost marshal in at Tokyo, into Katchitawa airstrip. That was the West Point of the Japan, equivalent of the West Point of Japan. And then came home and worked for the state a short period, a while, and then became self employed as an accountant, and was in business until I was eighty years old, just retired.

**AL:** Now, was your business always in the Lewiston area?

**AK:** Lewiston area, but I covered Rumford, up all the way to Rumford, and then the other way all the way to Thomaston and had accounts. But as I got older, why I got away from the traveling and ended up with just Lewiston and Auburn areas.

**AL:** Now were you born in Lewiston?

**AK:** I was born in Lewiston.

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

**AK:** My father's name was Nicolas, my mother's name was Christine and her last name was Sirois. Everyone thought she was French but she wasn't, she was Greek. The name in Greek was Sirois (*different pronunciation*), but apparently some Frenchman interviewed her and Sirois became Sirois. When she passed away everyone that didn't know her all said, "My God, we didn't realize your mother was French Canadian." And she was a wonderful lady. They both worked hard, she worked in the mill, was a great, great cook, had a great garden, loved gardening, and grew vegetables. It wasn't a flower garden. And was just a wonderful lady. And so well liked by everybody. You couldn't go into her house but that she'd feed you. Even the kids still talk about, they'd come into the house and she'd feed them.

**AL:** What did your father do?

**AK:** He worked at the Pepperill. He ran a bakery for a while, then the Depression came along and he gained employment at the Pepperill Manufacturing Company, what used to be the Lewiston Bleachery, and worked until retirement, and he died when he was seventy-six. My mother passed away when she was eighty-four. I have two sisters and a brother who are still living.

**AL:** Where do you fall within the family? Are you the youngest or the oldest?

**AK:** No, I'm the oldest boy. I have two older sisters. One's in Livingston, New Jersey, or Tom's River now, and the other one is in, lived in New York City, Manhattan, but now is out in San Diego. Her son just retired as a Naval pilot on aircraft carrier Enterprise. She's now in a nursing home; she's eighty-six years old. My eighty-four year old sister now is living in a retirement town, but she's not disabled or anything, and she's eighty-four, still walks, runs around, wears high heels and in great shape physically. She's eighty-four and looks sixty-four. My brother lives just down the street and they have four children, two daughters, two sons.

One of my sons lives in Falmouth, Maine, the other one is in Florida, Jacksonville, Florida. My oldest daughter is in Key West, and my youngest daughter is in Los Angeles, California and is a high school teacher. She was a stand up comedian for a while, but so many, five thousand of them showed up in Los Angeles and, in these comedy clubs, and then became big on television. So the clubs all closed and being of sound mind, why, she graduated, went back to school and graduated from University of California and is now teaching in tenth and eleventh grade high school classes. She's a history major, was a 4.0 student so never had trouble. But she went to University of Massachusetts for two years and then became a stand up comedian, starved to death for about six years, and then went back to school and graduated University of California and is now teaching and loves it out there. And that's about it.

**AL:** Were either of your parents born in the United States?

**AK:** No, they were born in Greece. My father came over here first, one of the first Greeks that came into Lewiston, came in in Newburyport, Massachusetts, and then came into Lewiston and brought in some relatives. And my mother came after him, chased him here, followed him, and she worked in the mill like almost all the immigrants that came in. Of course Lewiston needed people to work in the mills and in the shoe factories here, just like the French Canadians coming in, you know, from Canada. We had a good life and a great mother and father. We were never rich, but we were never in need either, always ate well, my mother was a great cook. And also ran a store on Lincoln Street, my father did.

**AL:** Did they speak, when you were growing up, did they speak some English in the home, or was it mostly Greek?

**AK:** Mostly Greek. But we also went to Greek school.

**AL:** Oh, you did?

**AK:** Yes, city of Lewiston allowed us a classroom at the Oak Street School, and at first we had priests that taught us Greek, and we learned to speak Greek. All the boys became altar boys, went through the, that was part of your life when you reached a certain age, you became an altar boy for a couple of years. But I learned to read and write Greek, and we spoke it at home. But my father could read English, learned to read English, but my mother didn't, she couldn't read.

**AL:** Was it a fairly significant Greek community in the Lewiston area?

**AK:** Yes, it was very large. In fact we had a church, now we have a beautiful church. We had a church on Lincoln Street. That's where most of the Greeks lived at that time, they came into Lincoln Street or into Walnut Street, around the city park, and quite a few. In fact they had a start up of a second church here, but it was in a store. But there were well over, I'd say over a thousand Greeks here.

**AL:** Was Christos Orestis somebody that you knew?

**AK:** Yes, Chris is older than I was, but I've known Chris all my life. He's now almost blind. His brother George Orestis just passed away, was the younger brother. Chris and I were partners for a few months. We started the accounting business. But then he at that time had a part time job that became a full time job, so I took over the partnership and then operated as an individual.

**AL:** Did you, was he involved in Lewiston politics at all?

**AK:** He was somewhat, he was, but he never ran for office, I don't think. He may have had a city job for a while, I'm not sure. But he was close to Tom Delahanty [Sr.] and also Sansouci, who was mayor. I think Chris might have been . . . .

**AL:** Was that [Armand Gerard] Sansoucy?

**AK:** Armand Sansoucy, that's right, and Chris might have been sort of a campaign manager or something for him. But he was, he also headed the census one year here in the community.

**AL:** What was Lewiston like socially when you were growing up?

**AK:** It was great. Lincoln Street was loaded with kids and very few automobiles, and the families did a lot of things collectively. And used to have policemen patrolling the streets in those days and so forth, and the policeman was your best friend. He knew all the families, knew all the children, and we practically played in the streets because there weren't many cars. And there wasn't a lot of money, but the houses, the apartments mostly; people lived mostly in apartment houses on Lincoln Street, both sides of the street were loaded with apartment buildings. And the Irish were on the corner of Lincoln Street near Main Street, and then the Greeks and the Italians were in the middle, and then the French Canadians were closer to Chestnut Street all the way beyond Cedar Street, and then the English were down on the River Road, see.

But there used to be competitions sports wise (*and after* the Greeks playing the Frenchmen or, the Lithuanians also got involved but they were, lived up on Lisbon Street, a ways. But one of the big games down there, especially football games, was the Greeks playing the Lithuanians. Play on a Sunday and invariably a fight would start before the game ended.

But no, we melded, we meshed in very well. Greeks married French girls, first Greeks married Greeks, but then they'd marry Irish girls or French girls and there was a big mixture. But both the people worked in the mills and the shoe factories. The Irish controlled the politics mostly at

City Hall in those days when I was a kid, but then the French Canadians got smart. They, about seventy-five percent of the people were Canadian, you know, French Canadian background, and they ended up controlling city offices. And a very good friend of ours became involved politically on the school board, a fellow named George Chasse, and he, prior to the war, he was also an insurance salesman, and he was fairly strong, practically ran the school board.

**AL:** I hadn't heard his name before. Can you tell me more about him?

**AK:** Oh, he was a great bowler, very gifted speaking, married a Greek girl, and then they moved to Damariscotta. His wife just died. He's been dead for a while. And they run a marina now in Damariscotta, the kids do. One of the, his brother-in-law who was younger than he was went to Annapolis, and that was quite a thing for a boy from Lincoln Street to end up going to Annapolis. And he became very, very big in the Navy. This was, I'd say he graduated from Annapolis around 1935. Handsome, looked like Cary Grant.

**AL:** Now, Lewiston politically, you said when you were first growing up, was dominated by the Irish and then sort of turned around and became a Franco-American stronghold. What have you seen change over the years since then, since say the Franco-American community?

**AK:** Well, they still control the political offices, yeah. And, yet we've had some, well we've had Bobby Clifford become mayor. The Irish kept sneaking in every once in a while, but the big thing used to be the Irish and the French baseball game. But then the Irish males, a lot of them married French girls so it was very difficult at the end to get an all Irish baseball team to play the French teams because they had intermarried and their children were a mixture. And then, of course, the Catholic high school started here, and then they spoke English whereas before it was very difficult for some of the French students going from grammar school into high school. They were taught in French, and then they got into high school, why, they'd have to, they were taught in English, they'd have to change over. And the French solved the, whatever the school problems were and then translated back to English, and it created a problem somewhat. But then that all changed now, you can't tell one, a difference of any of them, you know, any more. They've all intermarried.

**AL:** Were there any racial problems with all the different ethnic groups in the area when you were growing up?

**AK:** Only in sports I would say. But they stayed together. The Greeks celebrated their holidays. Instead of birthdays, the Greeks celebrated name days. And if it was St. Anthony Day, why, they'd visit all the homes that had their children's names were Anthony or the father was, or brothers, what have you, and they'd celebrate. Of course there'd be the cooking of the lamb and the opening of the wine barrels, and everybody made wine in those days.

**AL:** Oh, in their homes?

**AK:** Oh yeah, in the basements, the basements were all dirt basements, okay, and they'd buy the grapes. In fact my brother and I had purple feet way into February, we used to crush the grapes, really, barefoot. Get in there in these old ice cream containers where they used to put ice

in and then you had the middle can for the ice cream, and they'd put salt on top to keep it from melting too quickly. Well, they used those and they'd hire a, they used to have car loads of grapes come in, this was during Prohibition. Well they knew they were going to make, they couldn't stop them from making wine as long as you didn't sell it, so almost all the families made wine. But you had a lot of bootleggers going on. And the areas where the Irish bootleggers were from Main Street to Cross Street, and the French bootleggers took over all the way to Cedar Street. The Irish, and the English took over again down in the River Road. But there was a lot of bootlegging going on. But most of the people made wine, especially the Italians and the Greeks and the Lithuanians, and it's true about crushing the grapes.

**AL:** Yeah, with your feet. You had purple feet for months?

**AK:** Oh yeah, in fact the problem would have been if you'd gotten hurt, taken you to the hospital, they'd figure you had no more circulation, they might have amputated (*unintelligible phrase*).

**AL:** Were there any teachers or members of the community when you were a child growing up that had a profound influence on you, or influenced you in shaping your beliefs?

**AK:** We had great teachers. Went to a normal school, Dingley Normal School, you know where that is?

**AL:** Un-unh.

**AK:** That's where the school, the main office of school administrators are at. That's on the corner of Oak and Bates Street, or Oak and Middle Street, okay, the brick building, beautiful building. That was the normal training school also, grades kindergarten to sixth grade, okay. In fact they didn't have kindergarten I don't think at first that they did, but they had, this was the normal training school. And these were mostly Irish girls who went through the training and became teachers there, and they were great teachers. And they're all old maids, they all became old maids, very few got married. If they did, they quit teaching. And they were great teachers. They were dedicated, boy, and I'll tell you, they ran a tight ship. If you couldn't see the teacher you'd better get ready to duck if you've been talking or doing something because she'd be walking behind you and whack you in the head with either a pointer or a yardstick.

But they were great. If you were slow- I was lucky, school was easy for me. I happened to learn to read quickly, and numbers were very easy. I sold newspapers when I was eight and nine years old, *Ladies Home Journal* and *Saturday Evening Post* magazines, and it was busy. But they were great, there was no need for them to go home to their kids and things like that, they were all old maids. In fact a lot of them got married after they retired when they were sixty-five. But I'd say half of your teachers went through that training, and they were great. Boy, I'll tell you, they worked with you. And if you were slow they'd keep you after school and work with you individually.

**AL:** So the dedication to their job was much more than just eight to four.



**AK:** Oh yeah, well you can't quite say it that way, but it was true, oh yeah. Many a time if, well there'd be, I'd say almost every day, there'd be one or two kids that would not, would stay over not for discipline purposes but for help. And they were great. Also they had a special class of two of them where elderly kids that came in from Canada and so forth, came in when they were in the second or third grade, may have been nine or ten years old, that they ran one class or two with special teachers and helped convert them from the French to the English. And they'd really work with them, and they were able to do well. Most of them would go to the French school, but a lot of them didn't want to, their parents wanted them to go to Dingley School in some cases. And I remember playing on the baseball team, and I was probably eleven or twelve, and we had some fellows who were fourteen and fifteen in the fifth and sixth grade. But they'd be in the special class, and they caught up, and they became, oh, had a couple that became lawyers and other things, became very successful. But they were smart enough to say, "Hey, these kids need special training and we're going to give it to them."

**AL:** Now where and when did you meet your wife?

**AK:** I met my wife, I was supposed to meet my wife- I was a cadet, became an aviation, first I was going to, I graduated from Bentley, and I was about to be drafted so my folks talked me into, somebody advised them to talk me into going to finance school, officer's training school at Duke University. But I wanted to become a Naval pilot, but you had to be, your parents had to sign if you weren't twenty-one, and they wouldn't sign for me, they didn't want me to become a pilot, they wanted me to go to finance school, officer's training school.

So I went in there December 3rd, I'm at Camp Lee, Virginia, and I'm going to Camp Lee, Virg-, no, I'm at Fort Devons and I'm going to go to Camp Lee, Virginia for basic training, then I'm going to go to Duke University. Well, I got down to Fort Devons, and on Sunday, that Sunday, got there Wednesday and on that Sunday, Pearl Harbor. So all of a sudden things got tighter, and they're pushing everybody and so forth. So then they opened it up at eighteen you could apply, become a cadet, but you had to have a college background to get in at first. So I went down there, and I'm waiting. I'd taken the basic training, and I'm waiting, and there's so many ahead of me going to Duke and that, that finally I told my folks, "Well, I'm going to go into the Air Force." And you were allowed to transfer from finance into pilot training, so I took the exams, and I became a pilot, and then I went over to the Pacific theater and . . .

**AL:** How did your parents feel about you becoming a pilot? They thought they'd had that in the bag.

**AK:** Well, no, they realized then that that's what I wanted, and my mother was really worried, but my father was proud of me, you know, having gone to pilot training. And I went to the Pacific theater and then I, oh, prior, right after I went into the Air Force they didn't have enough air bases so they sent me home on leave. So I'm home on leave for about thirty-some days, and a lot of the fellows I'd grown up with were graduating at Bates College, but every night we're home, why we're out kind of partying and so forth. So anyway, Anna Benson, (Bob Parent, who was in my class, he eventually married her) said, "My God, there's a nurse." She was in nurse's training, she says, "There's a nurse that I'll see if I can fix you up. A very beautiful nurse from Wilton, Maine and her name is Boticci and I'll see if I can fix you up with her." And we used to

go to a lot of dances in those days, we were very lucky, we saw all the great bands over at Old Orchard pier and so forth. So she was going to fix me up with this girl named Botiggi, Marisse Botiggi, they called her Tiggi. And that afternoon I got a telegram to report to Jefferson Barracks, Missouri, so I never got to go out with her or anything but I remembered the name Botiggi; I'd never seen her or anything.

So I got home from the war and Bill Lever and I, a friend of mine that I'd grown up with, and he was in the Pacific theater. He was a bombardier and became very successful in the insurance business here, went to the Silver Slipper, the Elm Hotel in Auburn, had a great band there and that's where everyone used to go, especially Friday and Saturday nights. They did, they had a super band. And we used to like to dance, and we were great band followers, and we'd see Benny Goodman, Artie Shaw, all of them. Then I went to school in Boston; that's where most of the big bands started.

So we went over there, the two of us, and we saw some girls we used to dance with and so forth, so we were going to, we danced a little bit with them. And all of a sudden this girl walks by, and so I, she was going to the ladies room I guess and coming back, I says to Bill, "Did you see that?" So I got up and I asked her if I could have the next dance, and she says, "I'm sorry, but I'm here with someone." So, I kept looking at her and then the person she was with got up to go to the room, so I went over and asked if I could dance with her. She says, "Well I'm sorry, I'm here with someone." I says, "Well, it'll be a while because it's so crowded in there that he won't be back," I said, "why don't we just finish this number." So I introduced myself, she says, "Well," I says, "my God, you're the girl I almost had a date with, someone was going to fix me up with you," when I heard the name Botiggi. But she was there with someone and I, talking to her, I says, "Well, could I call you, something like that." "Well," she was, so I go back and I said to Bill, I says, "there's the girl I'm going to marry." That's no kidding.

And that Sunday I called her. Well, she was working at the hospital seven to seven for forty-two dollars a week, eighty-four hours. Nurses were getting fifty cents an hour, okay? She was just graduated. Well, she wasn't sure, this and that, but I was in uniform and medals, and I was a captain and so. But I could dance very, and asked her, so she liked the dancing part. But, so I says to her, "Well, I'll come to the hospital tomorrow," I says, "and I'll see you, I've got to go there and see someone." Well, there was a Doc Morin I knew who later became a doctor was there and so forth, but he was a, he hadn't quite graduated. But anyway, so I got Bill Lever, and I says, "Come on, let's go to the hospital and we'll see, maybe we can fix you up, maybe I can get a date or whatever." And, oh, in the meantime we had two girls that we used to dance with a lot and we were going to have a date with them on a Monday. See, we had just gotten home on a Wednesday, like a Wednesday. And when they saw us there, they came over, but they were with their friends or whatever it was.

And so as we're walking in, who comes out of the elevator, Johnnie James, Dr. Johnnie James, I don't know if you knew him, he went to Bates. And I knew him, and Bill had gone to Bates College and they were very close, but I knew John fairly well. So he's coming out of the elevator, and we grabbed him, and I says, "Do you know where Botiggi is?" And he says, "Yeah, I just left her, she's on the third floor," he says, "you go upstairs and turn right or whatever it is." So I, oh, and I says, "By the way can you fix Bill up?" Now he's thinking, he

says, "I've got the just the girl for him, just the nurse for him." So they disappeared, I went up, and I talked her into going to the Greymore that night in Portland, kind of a nightclub and a great dancing area. Dancing was a big thing in those days. And so we got my father's Nash Lafayette, got it set up and off we, oh, and I talked her into that I'd pick her up, they got out at seven, we'd pick them up at seven thirty. But she didn't know that, and I didn't know at that time when I said I was going to pick her up at seven thirty and we'd go to Portland whether he had a date or not. So when I came back, he had a date with this Muriel Hall, a nurse, because Doc James fixed the two of them up together, and of course he was in uniform.

So I dropped Jim off, they lived around the corner from each other, but they left each other at seven o'clock and says, "Well, I'll see you tomorrow and so forth and we'll see you, and good luck tonight with your date and whatever." And so I dropped him off, he picked up Muriel, and I went around the corner, and I picked Tic up. She got in the car, and I went around the corner, and we picked the two of them up and well, they got giggling, the two of them. Here they had left each other and ended up going to Portland. Anyway, so that's how we got started, and we ended up getting married two years later. Oh, she had signed up to go to Bellevue Hospital in New York; she was leaving in three weeks. And, I'll show you pictures, you won't believe them.

**AL:** Did you have much contact with the Cliffords prior to 1954?

**AK:** Yes.

**AL:** Before then actually?

**AK:** Well Jack Clifford, that's Jeanne's brother, Jeanne Delahanty's brother and I went through school together, okay? And he liked my cousin, Athena Kasaros, okay? They had a camp at Old Orchard, and the Cliffords had practically a year round house at Old Orchard, but it was a camp. And so of course her father wanted her to marry a Greek boy like most of the Greeks were, you know, it was a lot more convenient, and they were more comfortable. And in those days various ethnics did things together, you know, they went to the same church and this and that. So of course he always wanted her to marry a Greek fellow. So having a party at the Cliffords, and Tic and I are going to go, and Jack says, hey, how about your cousin? He'd never really met her. So I says, "We'll see." So I says to Tic, "You know, if Jack is interested." She says, "Don't worry about it. We'll invite her over to our house to play cards, so her father's glad she's coming over to our house to play cards." Over to our apartment; we lived on upper Turner Street then.

So we picked up Athena, and, no, she drove over, left her car there, and we went over to a big party at Jack's house on Ware Street, and that's how they met. Well, eventually they got married, but the father was mad at me, my uncle. It was my father's first cousin, so I called him an uncle. He wasn't really an uncle as such, but the Greeks, they were all, the older ones were all uncles, see. And so he was mad as heck at me. So we got married, Tic and I. We eloped because my folks, my mother, well, they wanted me to marry a Greek girl, see, and of course I, Tic and I were on and off, on and off. We'd get into discussions, well, she wanted to get married, and finally I says, "Well, let's wait and (*unintelligible phrase*) you know, my folks." In

fact she went and saw my mother. Did you ever see the Benny Goodman Story, the movie? Where Donna Reed played the part of Benny's girlfriend and went to see Benny's mother, and she wanted to marry him and she was in love and so forth, and Benny's mother says, "No, you're not for my Benny," or, "my Benny's not for you." Well, it was the same with my mother, but my mother didn't say much, she just says, "Well, you know, we're Greek," and tried to infer that well, she was too good for me, which wasn't so but she wanted to, didn't want to hurt her feeling, see.

And so we eloped anyway. But then when we got back, right off the bat my mother said, "Hey, that's our daughter-in-law now," and, who became my mother's best friend, Tic. And so anyway, this is how, oh, we got married, and Athena's father didn't send us a gift, he was still mad at me for taking Athena (*unintelligible phrase*). And then later after that, why, I used to kid him, I'd say, "Why you tightwad, never got a," well I, I said, "no, I don't want it now, forget it," you know, kidding. And so that's how close we were with the Cliffords, and I was very close with all of them having grown. Well, they were younger than we were except for Jack (*unintelligible phrase*) his cousins.

**AL:** So you know Bobby and Jere and Bim?

**AK:** Oh, all of them.

**AL:** But they were a little younger than you.

**AK:** Yeah, they were. In fact, Bobby made Tiggi "River Mistress". Yeah, because she had helped him, she drove when he ran for office and did various things, put out cards and banners and signs on our lawn and so forth, so he had to do something for her. So she had just taken a Coast Guard course, five days, because we bought a camp at Flying Point, Freeport. And she took the course because she wanted to be able to run around in a boat out there, and so he wanted to do something for her. I says, "She doesn't want anything." So he says, "Well, she was a nurse." Tic says, "Look," so finally I says, "Hey, how about the river? Who's in charge of the Androscoggin River?" or something. He says, "My God, we'll make her the 'Androscoggin River Mistress'." He did, oh, we have a plaque here somewhere. Oh yeah, I've been very close to him, and I was very close to the father, Bobby's father and Bim's father, and I play golf with Bim and Jere now.

**AL:** So you got married in 19-

**AK:** In '48.

**AL:** Forty-eight, and you immediately settled here?

**AK:** No, I worked for the state.

**AL:** Oh, the state for a short time in Augusta.

**AK:** Shorter period in Augusta, and they wanted me to move to Augusta, and I didn't want to.

I wanted to, because I could have stayed in the service and done well. It was a question of whether I would stay or not because I was the executive officer of a squadron, and I was going to go in a group and so forth. And, so I could have made a, but I wanted to come back here because I love Lewiston, I love the people. I really did, I had a lot of friends and they were good to me, and I had a mixture of Irishmen and Frenchmen and Pollacks and Lithuanians and -

**AL:** So 1951 you built your house that we're sitting in today.

**AK:** That's right, yeah.

**AL:** And when did you first start becoming politically active?

**AK:** Right then.

**AL:** Right about that time.

**AK:** Yeah.

**AL:** And who were some of the people you were involved with?

**AK:** Well, it's a little later than that. Well, Chasse was still involved a little bit, he was getting out of it. Oh, I became active in the Legion too, we had a post, a Pine Tree Post we called it. And oh, with Chris Orestis. When Sam ran, we helped Sam Sansoucy. And Billy Rogers was active in the Legion post, I don't know if you knew him, from Auburn.

**AL:** He was a Democrat?

**AK:** No, he was a Republican, oh yeah. And, oh also Payne ran for governor. I became a Republican because of him.

**AL:** Fred Payne?

**AK:** Fred Payne. And I was a friend of his. He had gone to Bentley, graduated, and I met him in the service, too. He was a payroll officer and he was running. And that's how I got started at little bit. I went to a Republican meeting with Bill Lever, and a fellow named Henry Farnham that was in school with us was a county chairman in the Republican party, and we were invited to his house, group. I went there, I listened to him speak, I says to Bill Lever, "I don't know about you, but tomorrow I'm going to register as a Democrat if that's the best they've got in the county." And yet I leaned towards the Democrats anyway, I was, and a lot of my friends were Democrats. So I did. He didn't believe me. I went down and I registered the next day, became a Democrat.

**AL:** And this is in 19-?

**AK:** Fifty, around that time. And that's when Payne became, I think in '48, became, and I did work for him. Became governor. That's when they had a, some problems with Gahagan or

whatever his name was on the wine bit, with Papalos.

**AL:** [Herman] Sahagian?

**AK:** Yeah, Sahagian.

**AL:** Fairview Wine?

**AK:** Fairview Wine, yeah.

**AL:** I'm going to stop right here and turn the tape over.

**AK:** Okay.

*End of Side A*

*Side B*

**AL:** We are now on side B of the interview with Mr. Karahalios. And we were just talking about the Fairview Wine and Fred Payne.

**AK:** And Papalos, who I think might have gone to jail for, or maybe, I'm not sure.

**AL:** Was he in the Saco area?

**AK:** No, they were in Waterville.

**AL:** Oh, they were all in Waterville.

**AK:** The Papalos family came from Waterville. And his younger brother Nick became a good friend of mine, and who was in the jukebox and pinball machine business. But he also booked bands, he booked college bands. And he had booked Tommy Dorsey to play at Waterville. They also had the, oh, something-Gardens in Waterville where the mother sold tickets, the sister checked coats and so forth, and Tommy Dorsey's band played there. See, on off nights, they'd play in the bigger cities, but then they had no place to play so the fraternities at Bowdoin or at Maine or at Colby, the college, would have a dance and they'd hire the big bands for very little money as a fill in, for them to have someplace to play. There was a murder there that night. When Tommy Dorsey was playing, they were going to put the whole band in jail. But it was Papalos' younger brother who killed some girl, and they blamed the band. But they were, finally they let Dorsey go.

We're in New York with Papalos, and Bob Parent and I were ready to go in the service, he didn't go in the service but he had to go to New York, and I was on my way overseas and I stopped off to see Bob, and Nick said he was coming, he'd take care of us. So we, they got there in the Pine Tree Limited or whatever it was, it went into the hotel Pennsylvania railroad station there. And so we're waiting to get in; it got in at six in the morning, we were out all night long, New York was wide open so instead of going right to bed we figured we'd wait until the train came in. In

the meantime I hear music, I go around the corner. It's Tommy Dorsey rehearsing, the whole band, and they're playing there that night. So Papalos says, when he came in we told him about the band, and we're going that night, we got reservations there. The Brewer Sisters are singing, and we had seen them at Old Orchard, they were about our age, singing for Dorsey. So they said they'd get a res-, they'd seat us the next night, see, and if we couldn't get in to call them anyway at this number, and they'd get us a table. So Papalos got off, we told him about Dorsey, he said, "I had him play at my dance hall, family dance hall in Waterville."

Well, to make a long story short, we went up after, we got the reservation, we were right in front of the band, the band started, then this short intermission. We said, "Well, go over and get your buddy Dorsey," you know. And so, well they're a little reluctant, so he goes over there and Dorsey ignores him, so he comes back and all of a sudden Dorsey comes running over (*unintelligible phrase*). He says, "now, I remember you, you little so-and-so. My band got hooked up in Waterville, and we almost missed a gig because they were going to throw us in jail because your brother had killed somebody there," and etcetera, etcetera, lucky to get out of there, and it was really funny. Finally, of course they, Dorsey finally said, "Yeah, I was just kind of kidding." He says, "But no, I'm still mad." But, geez, I'm pulling you away from what you're really here for.

**AL:** That's okay, no, stories are really what we're here for so that's wonderful.

**AK:** And so -

**AL:** Tell me what you -

**AK:** Oh, Clauson was also Internal Revenue Commissioner. I became a Democrat and became very, very friendly with him. That's why I went to his inauguration; I have the card there that he sent me. And what a nice man he was. And so I became kind of active. Well, Frank is thinking of running, Coffin, and I knew Frank. He was a year ahead of me in school, but I knew him very, very well. And he knew a lot of the fellows that I knew well, and he was very, very smart in school. You'd never knowing it looking at him. I shouldn't say that, don't put that down there, but he's very, very gifted. And also we started an investment club, and Frank was part of it, which was very helpful to a lot of us later. And we only put up five dollars a week. And -

**AL:** So what, when did, what, at what, when did you see that he was starting to get really a lot of ideas about doing something about the Maine Democratic Party?

**AK:** He spoke in Portland, it was in all the papers, and made a heck of a speech, and helped Muskie tremendously, that speech. He was very, very gifted speaking, and very, very gifted writing. Very dry humor, but fun being with him. And he could be very serious and could be, and you could zig him and he loved it. But it was obvious that he was going to go places because he was gifted; it was rather obvious, and he did so well in school. And so, started socializing some with him and got to like him more so as I got to know him better, and then he ran for Congress. But he made that great speech in Portland. Boy, I'll tell you, it was really something.

**AL:** What year was that, '53?

**AK:** This is before he ran for, I think Muskie had, was running for governor. When did Muskie run for governor?

**AL:** He was governor from '54 to '58.

**AK:** Okay, at that time I'd say. I think Frank ran for Congress in '56, I'm not sure. It could have been maybe a little bit later. So they made me the treasurer, and that's how I became active politically. And we had a group of other fellows that became active, and we had Democrats and Republicans contributing to his campaign, and we did all right financially. And then after he'd been elected to Congress again, we used to go to the Army-Navy game; he used to get us the tickets, we were all football nuts, so it was really something. And we'd meet him in Philadelphia or New York. And one of the fellows, Dave Murphy, was a very, very good friend of Frank's also, who was also very gifted speaking and writing but never got into politics, but did help Frank.

And Bill Lever, Dave Murphy, and I went down when Frank first got elected as the leading business people, supposedly, of Lewiston and Auburn. And, to use us, he came up with the idea of a pilot tour so that he could meet all the administrators or the heads of various departments. So we went down there as three big businessmen, we're all about twenty-nine years old, and we went through and met all these department heads. And Murphy was very gifted; he was as good a speaker as Frank was. And we got to meet them, they were pretty impressed with us and so forth because we had a lot of follow up on the thing, and it helped Frank there. Frank all of a sudden because of this got to know the department heads and so forth and he knew where to go. And his only problem was though, was Johnson, he and Johnson didn't get along. But that, I'll let somebody else tell that story.

**AL:** Well, I understand as a businessperson in the Lewiston-Auburn community you must have mixed with, did you say your friend Bill Lever was a Republican?

**AK:** That's right.

**AL:** And so there must have been many others who were Republicans as well as some Democrats, what -

**AK:** Who pushed Frank now, see? Pushed Frank.

**AL:** Frank Coffin, also some of them must have supported Ed Muskie too?

**AK:** Oh yes, oh yes, oh yeah.

**AL:** Well, what was it about them that made Republicans say, "This guy is okay, we're going to support him even though," you know, what was that something that made them -?

**AK:** Well, Muskie went to Bates, Lever went to Bates, okay? And if he was a friend of



Frank's, why he became a friend of Bill's, see. And in fact when he was defeated for governor, we had some money left over. Got to be careful now. So, the Democratic Party wanted the money. (*Unintelligible phrase*) we paid our bills, we ran a very orderly and, but we got a lot of people. Oh, we had a lawyer named Flaherty from Portland, did you run into him?

**AL:** Is he part -?

**AK:** Of Preti.

**AL:** Preti, Flaherty, Beliveau and Pachios.

**AK:** Okay, he became a big part of our group, young fellows. We didn't get to see very much of him but when we did, why, he gave us a lot of ideas and fitted in well and so forth. And so, what are we going to do with the money? And somebody, I'm not going to mention his name, was mad at me. "Who the hell does he think he is?" I says, "Wait a minute, there are other people involved in this thing. I'm not the only one, I'm not in control of the money or anything else. They did a lot of work." And we got some Republican money. So we finally decided, and I was smart enough to stay out of it, but I gave them the hint of leaving, setting up a scholarship fund. And also, where a lot of attorneys were involved, Frank got a lot of attorneys to support him, awful lot of attorneys, see, so we gave money to the Portland Law Library. What was the school there? The Gorham, well no.

**AL:** The Maine School of Law?

**AK:** Yeah, that was it, okay? We gave them half of it and the other to the scholarship fund. So that pleased everybody. And I was the culprit, supposedly, that's all right, it didn't bother me. I knew I wasn't ever going to run, and even if I run, I'd have never gotten elected anyway, so.

**AL:** Did you know Irving Isaacson?

**AK:** Very well.

**AL:** Tell me -

**AK:** He also -

**AL:** Was he part of that, those early days in the fifties?

**AK:** Yeah, he worked for Frank, helped Frank.

**AL:** What, do you remember sort of what his role was?

**AK:** His uncle, Harris Isaacson, was a Republican judge also. Didn't hurt Frank, let me put it that way. We also had our investment club, and we were going to bet all our money, because somebody said he had plenty of money that he was going to bet that Frank was not going to be

elected governor. So our group (*unintelligible phrase*) that race where it was just starting, young fellows going to bet a lot of money, whatever we have in the kitty. Lucky they turned, they quit, they turned it down.

**AL:** Oh, they turned it down.

**AL:** Yeah, they rescinded or whatever. They changed their minds. Luckily, we would have been cleaned out. But Frank had a lot of support, and Bill Hathaway came in play at that time, came in the, moved into Lewiston and moved in with Frank.

**AL:** Oh, moved in with him?

**AK:** Yeah, they became partners. But there were a lot of young people, I'm telling you, smart people, and a lot of the Portland young lawyers helped Frank. And they weren't in that district either, remember.

**AL:** What were his feelings when he didn't become governor? Because there must have been a lot of feeling that he was going to win?

**AK:** It was unbelievable until three days before. The DeWitt Hotel was, hadn't been torn down yet, and we used to meet there a lot. McMahon and I would go down there, he'd call me, or he'd drive by, blow the horn, with the Kennedy people. And McMahon didn't tell me until the night before, but I got a phone call, Tiggi had called me on something, and I had to come home. Then I went, and they didn't say anything to me. And the next night he said to me, "Well, don't get your hopes up, but the Kennedy people have spent a lot of money here and Frank is not going to win." And I couldn't believe it, how hard everyone had worked and so forth.

**AL:** Was this, this was the result of them talking to a lot of people and sort of getting the impression of which way it was going?

**AK:** There were a lot of people were going to come out of the woodwork and vote against Frank, not vote for Reed. In fact Reed's mother said, "What's my son going to do?" Because they figured that Frank was going to beat him, see. "What's my son going to do now?" And, but the Kennedy people, boy, they knew how to run a campaign, they were so gung ho, I mean it, you know. I met probably seven or eight of them, they always had somebody up here most of the time. But there were two we were very friendly with, and he said to me, "Don't say anything to anybody." So I couldn't, so I had to act as if we were going to win. But I still said, "Oh, we still might be able to do it." But they had various clubs and so forth, the Republicans did, and it became a religious thing, see.

**AL:** The Catholics?

**AK:** And that's why, but they also passed the word around that Jack felt so sorry for Frank and that but that, for Frank not to worry. That's why I think he might have made it to the Supreme Court, I'm not sure. But with his background and so forth. But Frank ended up doing what he loved to do. Now at that time, Ed started to move.

**AL:** When did you first meet Ed Muskie?

**AK:** I met him -

**AL:** Before he became -?

**AK:** In Rumford, yeah, I met him in Rumford, he was in business with a guy named McCarthy I think, in a law business or something.

**AL:** Bill McCarthy?

**AK:** Yeah. And his, McCarthy's father, no, no, Beliveau's father was a judge at Rumford at that time.

**AL:** Albert Beliveau.

**AK:** Albert, that's how I also met Muskie, through Beliveau. And, but I was in awe of Muskie, he was Abe Lincoln to me, and I just knew that he -

**AL:** What was it about him that gave you -?

**AK:** Well, his height, he was gifted with words, his laugh. His wife, though, she was kind of the boss; I got a big kick out of that. That here was a guy that I figured he's going to go someplace, he's going to really make it. This fellow isn't for Maine very long. But then he became such a strong senator. If I'd have been with him in Manchester, he'd have become president, guaranteed. To have let him start crying, oh, I hate to have you have this on tape.

**AL:** Everyone knows that's, you know, that that's what was -

**AK:** I'd have tackled him. But I know how he felt about her. And this could have happened, you know, to... But also he and Humphrey a week later, if the election hadn't come up as soon as it did, well it came up, he knew what day they were going to elect, but if it had been a week longer they'd have won, there's no question. They became so strong at the end, Humphrey and Muskie. I met Humphrey in Portland when he also spoke at Portland at the Democratic convention. And later they had a hospitality room upstairs. So I was in the service with a fellow named Bachman, Barney Bachman, they owned a chain of jewelry stores in Minnesota. And Humphrey also had a secretary, it was not a girlfriend, it was a secretary, or a young girl there. And because of Frank and Muskie and them, I got kind of friendly with him and I was anxious to really get him alone. I said, he came from St. Cloud, Minnesota, and he had a cottage there. And from St. Cloud came this fellow that was in the service with me, very, very good friend of mine. And I'd called him when I heard he was coming to Portland, but they were in Florida so I couldn't get him, trying to let him know that Humphrey was coming and so forth, if he knew him. Especially where I found out that he had a place at St. Cloud.

So finally I got talking to the secretary or whatever it was, and I says, where's he, where does,

what part of Minnesota does he come from, and he says, "Well, he has a summer place at St. Cloud, Minnesota, lives in so-and-so, but he spends a lot of time in Minnesota." Now he was a pharmacist, his brother was a lawyer who became a college president, Humphrey's. They said it should have been the other way around, he should have been the lawyer, the brother should have been the pharmacist. Well, the minute I mentioned Barney Bachman's name, that was it. Now he's all over me and more friend-, he's introducing me to Maine people, Humphrey is. And that was kind of nice, and of course Tic was with me, and he introduced the two of us and all in all he was a very good friend of a friend of mine and all and everybody's saying, "Christ sakes, he's a buddy of Humphrey's, Karahalios is." I'd never met him until then. But what a speaker he was, and easy to meet. But Ed also stood out at all these places, combination of his height and his ability to speak and... You know, it's too bad that he, it would have been something for Maine if he had made it. And then of course I very seldom saw him after that.

**AL:** Tom Delahanty.

**AK:** Nicest, another nice man.

**AL:** Friends, you worked with him politically as well as knew him socially?

**AK:** I ordered matches for him when he ran for congress from a fellow named Frank Tarr here. The matches never showed up until after, okay, and we're waiting for the matches. Finally Tom says, "Are you short of money or something?" I says, "Well, no, why?" He says, "Well, maybe you got to come up with the money or something, you don't have it." I says, Are you kidding? Christ, I ordered from Frank Tarr." I says, "You know Frank Tarr, he worked for Geiger Brothers."

So I met Tom. He was older than I was, and he was a great baseball player. He went to Catholic University; I think that's where he went. And I'm visiting my relatives in Hartford, Connecticut; they ran a diner and made a lot of money when the war came along. This is before the war, though, and they had this big diner right across from the post office in Hartford, made a lot of money. Karahalios it was named, they changed it to Karas, K-A-R-A-S. One of the brothers refused to. And so I was down there visiting with them, they had, one of them had a son my age, Jimmy. So I get on the bus and Tom gets on, so I'd known him from watching the Rangers play baseball and he knew me a little bit because he'd seen me around there, the ball field, and so I sat next to him.

So we stopped in Portsmouth, New Hampshire at a diner, or a restaurant, well it was a diner. Every place had a diner in those days, and the bus stopped there. All I had was a nickel, and he had a dime. I'm not kidding, that's all I had. (*Unintelligible phrase*) I had some money, but I had spent it before that. So chocolate milk was a nickel; hamburgers was a dime, okay? So he says, "Are you going to have something?" He was going to get a hamburger, and I says, "No, I only have a nickel (*unintelligible phrase*), no," I says, "I'm fine." I says, "Well," I think I'll have a chocolate milk." He said, "I think I'll have a hamburger." So he cuts up the hamburger and he goes over and gets a cup, he says, "Okay, I'll have half of your cup of chocolate milk and you have half my hamburger because I know you've only got a nickel, and I know I've only got a dime." Something like that.

So we became very good friends, and that's how we built houses here, and then we became big friends, and then I opened the Orestis and Karahalios accounting office next to their office along with he and Al Lessard. Remember Alton Lessard?

**AL:** Yeah, I was just about to ask you about him. Go ahead.

**AK:** Okay, oh yeah, he was the little bantam rooster.

**AL:** The little bantam rooster?

**AK:** That's what I called, oh yeah, he was always, and I used to play cards with him at the Elks a little bit. We used to play pinochle with a pegboard, it was different, we played two instead of four, pinochle you had to play with four people, well that was two. And I used to be able to beat him, why I was lucky, and he was determined he was going to beat me. He was a better card player, but he couldn't. But he was very helpful with me. But I later got involved in something that, pertaining to an appointment, that somebody else got appointed to a big job, and that was Frank. But I, well I, somebody asked me, and I had to go back to him. I said, "Look, either one of them's great," but then I said, "Well, you got to take a stand." So I did and -

**AL:** Yeah.

**AK:** But Al became mayor of Lewiston, but he was beaten by a fellow named Malenfant next time he ran.

**AL:** Do you remember Ernest Malenfant?

**AK:** Of course I remember him, gatekeeper? They claimed that he had made a statement, and it wasn't he that made it. It was a guy name Peg-a-leg Levesque, who was mayor, and it was made at the fairgrounds. Everybody says Malenfant made it, but I'll tell you, well he didn't make it.

**AL:** And what was that statement?

**AK:** He got up, and they had the mayor speak, and they presented his wife with a bouquet of roses, see. So he starts his speech, and he says, "For my wife, I want to thank you for the flowers;" he says, "for myself I want to thank you for the clap." He meant the applause, okay? There's complete silence, and then all of a sudden people are saying, "Did he say what I heard?" Well, everybody says that Malenfant made that speech. He didn't, and I can prove it, I was there. Not only that, Malenfant never got married. So how could he have said, "For my wife I want to thank you?" See? But it was Peg-a-leg, who had a wooden leg. He was an office manager in a place on Cross Street, behind the canal on Lincoln Street there. It's a lumber office, small turning plant.

**AL:** So that story sort of got turned into a legend and attributed to the wrong person. Yeah.

**AK:** Yeah. But Malenfant, the salesman had come into town and had turned on the radio in their hotel rooms. And they would broadcast the meetings, the city meeting, council meetings, and they'd wait for Malenfant to get involved in it, you know. Somebody said something about the deficit. He says, "Let's spend it." And things like that.

**AL:** Did you know Faust Couture?

**AK:** Yes, he owned the radio station.

**AL:** And what role did he play in the Lewiston community, besides being part of the media?

**AK:** Well, he was very effective because they owned the French newspaper.

**AL:** *Le Messenger*?

**AK:** That's right. Faust owned *Le Messenger*. Eddie Beauchamp bought it later. But he owned it and that's the influence he had. Hey, he could print anything he wanted in the paper. I knew him but I didn't know him that well. He knew who I was, I knew who he was, if we'd meet in the street, he'd stop, we'd talk, and so forth. His wife got to know my wife pretty well, so if we were couples, why we'd always stop and talk and so forth. He was an interesting fellow, but I didn't know him, you know, that well. Like, I knew him, and he knew me, and, but he had an influence because he ran the newspaper. And at that time . . .

**AL:** Was he a supporter of Frank Coffin?

**AK:** Yes, I would say he was, I would almost think so.

**AL:** What about Louis-Philippe Gagne?

**AK:** Well, he was a nice old man. Yeah, he, it was difficult. It all depended on who ran, see. And of course the French stuck together, but some of them hated each other too, so sometimes you got support from a source you never thought you'd be getting support from. Because you know, there's cases where two brothers hate each other, and they really hate, and, but he was a nice old man. He had a nice family and so all I can say is nice things about him.

**AL:** Pat Mahlia, is he somebody you knew? Who, what -?

**AK:** Yeah. Pat Mahlia was his own worst enemy.

**AL:** Yeah? In what sense, I've never heard about him before.

**AK:** Well, hmmm.

**AL:** What, he was a Democrat?

**AK:** Yes, he was.

**AL:** What was his occupation?

**AK:** He was a lawyer.

**AL:** He was a lawyer, okay.

**AK:** He married a schoolteacher, Alice Cote. And because of some of the things, why at the end, I used to like him, but at the end I didn't because he couldn't handle. And would get very wild with her and be out of place, become very caustic with people. When he was okay, why he was okay.

**AL:** Was he politic-, when he was doing okay, was he politically involved at that point?

**AK:** Well, he was, but how strong he was I don't know. At that time I got very, very busy, and I wasn't that involved any more. I had gotten away from it. Frank had to, went to Europe for a while on a great deal, and that investment group was great because he was able to send his kids to school. And then he got the judge's job there and he's done very well with that.

**AL:** Louis Jalbert?

**AK:** Oh Louis was, could be a wild man, but Louis got a lot of things done for people. Whether, how he did it, why, probably best not known. But if Louis liked you and if you were kind of an underdog at times, Louis kind of sometimes would like to nick the big boys if he could. But Louis became a very good friend of Harriman's, the New York Harrimans, and Louis to his dying day went to the World Series on tickets that Harriman sent him. And that's a true thing because I know because I, we ended up, a fellow named Tom Carignan and I ended up with tickets to the World Series at Yankee Stadium, and who was there, Louis. And Louis was on the same airplane as we were. And the, oh, a big law firm in Auburn... The brother was a bank president... Oh, the son is a lawyer now. They were sitting in front of us, and Louis' telling the stories, and the couple never laughed so much in their lives. When we got off, of course, Louis took off, and the wife came over, and she says, "That's the wildest time I've ever spent on an airplane, just listening to Louis tell his stories." See, Louis couldn't tell whether they could hear him or not, but Louis was rather loud.

But Louis helped a lot of people, he helped a lot of people and he hurt a few people. And either you liked Louis, or you didn't. He was a friend of mine. Well, I got to know him at first because his wife worked with the Maine Employment Security Commission, and I worked with her for a while, and that's how I got to know Louis. And we stayed friends. If I called Louis about something, if he could, not that I'd try to change anything or not, but I could get information from Louis, see. And then when I got active politically there for a few years, why, I'd call Louis once in a while, and he'd get the information for you. It seemed that everybody owed Louis something; it seemed that. And he had strange bedfellows; that's the best way I could describe it.

**AL:** Did you know Don Nicoll at all?

**AK:** A little bit. Now, I'm talking about the little Don Nicolls, now there's two Don Nicolls aren't there?

**AL:** Well, he's Don Nicoll, with no 's' on the end.

**AK:** Which one's the little one?

**AL:** He's about Frank Coffin's height.

**AK:** That's the one, I know him very well. He worked the campaign.

**AL:** Yeah, yes he did, he was very integral I think in that time period, and then went to Washington with Frank when he was elected.

**AK:** Then another one came along, I'm talking with him, and I realized on the phone, he's not the Nicolls [*sic* Nicoll] I knew. Which one is he? Is there another one?

**AL:** I think there's somebody with a similar name, but I don't know who that is.

**AK:** Yeah, okay. I still don't, all I knew was it wasn't that Don. Oh yeah, he's done all right, huh?

**AL:** Oh yeah.

**AK:** I haven't seen him in, I think after the, right after the election, that was it. I don't think I've seen him since.

**AL:** Hal Gosselin, is that somebody you knew?

**AK:** Yeah. I didn't have, I knew him, my wife knew his wife fairly well. I've known him all my life, but I was never that involved with him.

**AL:** Am I missing any important people that you were involved with closely that I haven't asked about?

**AK:** No, because I was mainly with the Frank Coffin bit, more so than the others even though I worked from Clauson and others locally.

**AL:** Were you -?

**AK:** I didn't want any office or anything. I just was, because I got involved, and everybody wanted to make me the treasurer.

**AL:** So you were involved in Frank Coffin's campaign, and you also worked for Tom Delahanty on his congressional campaign. Were there other campaigns that you worked directly



with?

**AK:** Well, when any of the Cliffords ran for anything.

**AL:** That's right, you mentioned Bobby.

**AK:** See, yeah. I've contributed to the party, and then it became a problem, Olympia Snowe.

**AL:** Yes, being Greek but also being Republican.

**AK:** But my sister almost adopted her. Lucky her aunt came along. Not lucky, well, lucky for her because everything turned right (*unintelligible phrase*). But she was in an orphanage, Olympia was, that the Greek diocese ran in New York, okay? And my sister grew up with her mother, Olympia's mother. And when my sister found out visiting here, my sister lived in Livingston, New Jersey, that Olympia was in an orphanage in New York, immediately found out where it was and went and took her on a weekend and brought her to her house, and did that a number of times. And Olympia, gave her a white sweater or whatever it was, besides other things I guess. Olympia still has the white sweater. So my brother-in-law came back and said to my sister, "That's it, either we adopt her, or we aren't going to bring her here any more. I can't take it, taking that kid back there." And it was a nice set up there, it wasn't that bad a set up, but it was just that . . .

**AL:** But the emotional bond?

**AK:** That's right, see. Just then her aunt decided to bring her home. You know, if she hadn't, she'd have never met Snowe, she wouldn't have gone to the University of Maine, okay? That's why her aunt sits in front, wherever Olympia speaks her aunt is there. And she came from Greece, you know. Her husband went over there and met her and married her, and she came to this country. They did that a lot in those days, they were kind of a match marriage, but they were, but she's a nice lady, oh yes, very, very nice lady. In fact I've got some pictures of her here. I wish I could find those other pictures but maybe you can blow those up.

**AL:** But so I'm sure you followed Olympia's career.

**AK:** Oh yeah. I'm, I don't know what to do, but I'll have to. She doesn't (*unintelligible phrase*), I always wait until the last minute. This fellow running now, turn that off for a second.

**AL:** Oh sure, I'm going to pause here.

(*pause*)

**AL:** And I think my last question that I'm going to sort of ask you today is did, do you think that Maine changed much politically and economically and socially as a result of the elections of '54, '56, '58, '60, up into the early seventies?

**AK:** No question.

**AL:** In what ways?

**AK:** A number of ways. Because Maine started to get things, they were starting to pay attention to Maine. You had Senator White before that and fellows like that that didn't do very much. Also, he got so involved environmentally, also that helped, and he got national coverage, and it had to help. That had to help at Bath Iron Works, and money was made available for projects. It got a lot of publicity. And he got better people to run also, see. And then, look, he came up with George Mitchell. Just that in itself, that's an unbelievable deal. For the fellow to leave as a judge, how often have you seen a judge leave?

**AL:** Federal judge leave to, yeah -

**AK:** That's right, and say, hey, I got a job -

*End of Side B*

*End of Interview*