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MacNichol, Alex, Jr. oral history interview

Andrea L'Hommedieu

Interview with Alex MacNichol, Jr. by Andrea L'Hommedieu

Summary Sheet and Transcript

Interviewee
MacNichol, Alex, Jr.

Interviewer
L'Hommedieu, Andrea

Date
March 27, 2002

Place
Portland, Maine

ID Number
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Biographical Note

Alex MacNichol was born March 12, 1935 in Portland, and grew up in Eastport, Maine. He served in the Army for three years after high school, and then studied law. He practiced with the firm Jackson and MacNichol in Portland. His mother, Genevieve (Roche) MacNichol, was secretary to Dexter Cooper when he proposed the Passmaquoddy Tidal Dam project. His father, Alexander MacNichol, Sr., worked with Ed Muskie as superintendent of RCIPC (Roosevelt-Campobello International Park Commission).

Scope and Content Note

Interview includes discussions of: 1956 gubernatorial election polls; early recollections of Muskie; Armand Hammer and Campobello; Dexter Cooper; Alexander MacNichol and Ed Muskie; Lyndon B. Johnson toilet seat anecdote; Alexander MacNichol, Ed Muskie, Lyndon Johnson, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Jr. and David MacNichol drinking anecdote; Alexander's appointment to Muskie's staff ; MacNichol family history; Letete, Eastport history; "Goddamn the Republicans" song; Frank Coffin; Sumner Pike and Pike family; 1946 Eleanor Roosevelt visit to Campobello; Queen Mother visit to Campobello; Lady Bird Johnson visit to Campobello; and the Roosevelt-Campobello International Park Commission (RCIPC).

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Transcript

Andrea L'Hommedieu: This is an interview with Alex A. MacNichol on March the 27th, the year 2002, at his office in Portland, Maine, and this is Andrea L'Hommedieu. Could you first just state your full name and spell it?

Alex MacNichol: Yes, my name is Alexander MacNichol, and that's M-A-C-N-I-C-H-O-L. Date of birth is 3/12/35. I was born in Portland, but that's only because I had an uncle who was a doctor who decided that he'd deliver me for no money, so my mother came down from Eastport and it saved the family at least three hundred dollars. I grew up in Eastport, and that was our home. Dad was in the military during WWII, we traveled quite a bit, but always back to Eastport.

When I got your call, I was trying to remember the first time that the name Ed Muskie meant something to me, or I actually took notice of him. I'm not sure of the date, and obviously you would know the date, when Ed ran for reelection for governor, that would be what year?

AL: That would be '56.

AM: Fifty-six, okay, and, that's what I figured. I had just got out of the Army in 1956 and I was home waiting to go to college. I finished high school before I went in, went in at eighteen, got out at twenty-one, and my mother, to give me something to do, had me driving voters to the polls. My mother was very active in Eastport politics, and a life long Democrat, as was my father obviously. Dad had been in the legislature two terms in the thirties, and resigned to, when he was called up in '39. So Mum had me driving voters to the polls, and since I'd been away for three years and, you know, Ed Muskie really didn't mean anything to me, and driving these, I think it was primarily the elderly, the infirm, you know, that needed a ride, and I can't recall how many times people would say, "I'm going to vote for Governor Muskie." And I thought, wow, that's remarkable, no one said why, no one gave me any reason, and of course since my mother had inculcated me as a Democrat I certainly wasn't going to ask, I mean I didn't want to get into a debate with them. But I thought, wow, what has he done that they're so moved and that they're coming out like this?

The next time was when Ed actually came to Eastport with Alton Lessard. I was in college and, at St. Francis, and I had decided I wanted to be a lawyer, and Alton Lessard was in the Maine senate at the time. He was a lawyer and later became a judge, and I had the honor of pleading cases in front of him which I thought was kind of neat later on. So Muskie stayed at the house, we had a big dinner in Eastport, and we had a lovely old house with double front living rooms, and in the, sort of the better of the two living rooms that no one ever sat in, it was kind of the formal living room, if you will, there was a large, I don't know if it was Queen Anne or what it was, but it was a very high backed chair and it wasn't comfortable. I never sat in the thing. And there's Ed sitting in that chair, I can see him just as clearly, and it looked like it had been made for him, it was almost like a throne, and all the Democrats in Eastport coming in to shake his hand and to see him, and it was really quite a thrill for me. He stayed at the house, Al Lessard stayed across the street at, my Aunt Nancy had a little rooming house across the street.

And the next thing I remember in politics distinctly was the election of '60 when my dad looked at the long lines of voters in Eastport and said, "they're not out to vote for someone, they're here to vote against someone," because it was the anti-Catholic vote and a lot of people that he knew that had never voted in Eastport were all lined up to vote. And came out very close to the election, that Ed was a Catholic, it had never been an issue in Maine, so I think there might have been a little backlash in Eastport on that one, but Ed always carried Eastport. And Eastport was kind of a bell weather town, it would go for whoever was really the better candidate, it wasn't solidly a Republican town or solidly a Democratic town, but I think it always went for Ed.

Now we move ahead to when my dad was appointed to the position at Campobello. He was executive secretary to the commission, and the commission was equally composed of Americans and Canadians, and the chairmanship of the commission rotated between Ed Muskie one year, and there was a Canadian, and I'm trying to think of his name, and he was a very distinguished gentleman. He had been the speaker of the house, Parliament, in Canada, but his name escapes me at the moment. I'll think of it later. And there's some good stories there. The one I like, that doesn't fit in with your stuff, but it's so good.

AL: It's okay.

AM: Eleanor had given the cottage at Campobello, they always called it the cottage, their big summer place, to her son Elliott, and Elliott I think had some few financial problems, so he sold it and of course Armand Hammer, the industrialist, bought it. And Armand, if anything, liked to turn a dollar. So he wasn't there very long before it was decided that Campobello needed a new roof, and although Armand Hammer was a millionaire many times over, he took a barrel, I've seen the barrel, and put it on the front lawn and put a sign in the barrel, "Shingles from the Roosevelt Campobello Cottage $1 Apiece", and he sold them to the tourists to pay for the new roof. Yeah, I've seen the barrel, my dad had the barrel. So, I love that one. Now when he deeded the cottage and its contents to the commission, to the international joint commission, it's the only park in the U.S. I think that's under an international, of course the park itself is in Canada, and yet half the money comes from the U.S. and half comes from Canada. So when he deeded it, he sent down a team of appraisers from New York. Now, I don't know what he paid Elliott for the cottage, but it wasn't much, and here everything now was suddenly being appraised as FDR's napkin ring, you know, this type of thing, and on and on and on. Everything in the kitchen, you know, FDR's muffin tin, and you know, on and on and on. And huge, huge prices on everything.

And that sets up this next story, which does involve Ed. The next summer when my dad was operating the park, he looks out the window and here comes Dr. Hammer and his wife with their luggage, a couple of bags. So my dad rushed to the door and, “Dr. Hammer, what?” “Well, my wife and I have come to spend the summer, and we'll stay up on the third floor.” Now the third floor was the servants quarters, it wasn't open to the public. The public could come in and go through the first floor, and they could go through the second floor where the, but the third floor really didn't have anything to offer because they were very small, cramped rooms, and the Roosevelts lived simply so of course you can imagine the servants were really, they were really living simply. In fact I remember when my dad allowed me up there one time to look, I thought, well, I'm glad I wasn't one of FDR's servants in the thirties. So at any rate, dad, you know, was thunderstruck, I mean here he was, he'd given the place, he'd received this huge tax write off, and now he was back to live there. So dad got on the phone to Muskie and he outlined the situation to Ed, who was chairman that year, and Ed said cryptically, “Put him on the phone.” So my dad said, “Dr. Hammer, this is for you.” And Ed said a few things to Dr. Hammer which we'll never know because both are gone, and Dr. Hammer then picked up his bags and left, and that was, (*laughter*) there was no freebie summers after having, you know, taken the government for all the money he did on the tax write off.

AL: Now, tell me both your parents' names, including your mother's maiden name.

AM: Oh yes, my father was Alexander A. MacNichol, and I'm Junior, but I dropped the middle initial, that way I don't have to pull the junior stuff, so I just call myself Alexander MacNichol. My mother originally was from Portland, Genevieve Roche, R-O-C-H-E. Although there's a strong branch of her family in Eastport, she grew up in Portland, her dad was in the weather bureau, but she came to Eastport early on in the twenties with Dexter Cooper, she was his private secretary, and he was the gentleman that was going to build Quoddy. So that's how she met my

father, and they were married in the, she always used to say the depths of the Depression, '31 I think they were married, so.

AL: Did she ever talk about any recollections she had of working with Dexter Cooper?

AM: Oh yes, all the time.

AL: What was that like?

AM: Oh, yes, oh she just worshiped the ground he walked on. I think that the story she used to tell me that I liked the best was when the bill went before the Congress, in the Senate. The Passamaquoddy project was tied in at the last minute by those who wanted to defeat it to a cross-Florida canal project, which had no chance of success, and then they were both roundly defeated in the Senate. And I guess Cooper had gone down to Washington to lobby the bill, and he came back, and now all this work was for nothing and the whole project was down, and he looked at my mother and he said, "Well," he said, "Genevieve, let's start the American project." Because there were two pools and, well this was after, I'm sorry, this was after he'd lost in Canada, that's it, he'd lost the project in Canada, they wouldn't go through with it, and so now he said let's try an American project, just a one-day project. But he had great, you know, fortitude, and stuck in there, and she had nothing but respect for him and admiration.

Let's see, picking up the story on Muskie. My dad first worked with Muskie in the OPS, and my dad was one of only two GS-15s in Maine at the time. He had been to Europe working on McCloy's staff in, basically in the State Department I think, and he got the GS-15 ranking, he'd been a full colonel when the war was over. So when he came back to Eastport in '49, slim pickings in Eastport, and this offer came when Truman had put in the OPS and, I think around fiftyish but I'm not sure exactly when, and dad got the job. Now Muskie had then been in the Maine house but no one really knew of him, and I don't think my dad liked him because a couple of times early on in Muskie's career he said that, you know, he was there every day doing the work, of course he didn't realize that Ed was out building his political base to run for governor, and his was kind of a political appointment, he was over my dad. And he said, you know, "Everything that goes out must go out over my signature, I'll be back every Friday to, you known, see what's been going on all week." And dad, of course, didn't understand the situation. I think the big change came, was when we went to the convention, and I'm not sure if it was '60 or before. I was in college, so it could have been either around '58 or '60, either one of those Democratic conventions. And of course it was easy to be a delegate from Washington county because they never had all the delegates, and mum says, "I'll get you a delegate's badge, you'll be on the floor," and of course I was at St. Francis at the time down in Biddeford. And they held it that year, I think it was in Lewiston. And Muskie gave, oh, just a crackerjack talk, and dad came right out of his seat and there was never any question after that, he was a solid Muskie you know. But Muskie did a wonderful job, and dad more or less said, well, he didn't realize what Ed was doing back in the old OPS days, but he was then sold on him.

And later on, let's see, I got two Armand Hammer stories I want to tell, oh yeah, I got a Hal Pachios story to tell you. This is great. Harold Pachios was a, what did they call them, a forward advance man for LBJ. So LBJ is going to visit Campobello, so, and Harold loves to tell

this story, Harold comes up to Campobello and my dad takes him around and they look over all the security and all the accommodations. And there's a beautiful guest house, and it was the (*name*) house he was staying at, dad bought a separate, the (*name*) were from Philadelphia and their house sets quite a ways back from the Roosevelt cottage, and you can use it for guests and for conferences, because no one could stay at the FDR place because you've got all the tourists running through it, see. And it had been beautifully fixed up, and so at some point Pachios sees the bathroom, and said, "no, that won't do." And dad says, "What's the problem." He says, "well, the toilet seat. LBJ likes a big toilet seat and that's not, that's not big enough for LBJ." So dad said, "Well, really, I've got money in my budget for, you know, new toilet facilities," and, of course any time there was any problems like that he'd flip it off onto Muskie, so to speak. He says, "why don't you call Muskie." So, according to Pachios, he gets on the phone and he calls Muskie and he tells him what he's doing, he's doing the advance for LBJ, and the toilet seat just isn't big enough for him to -. There's dead silence from Ed's end of the phone, and finally Muskie says, "if it was big enough for FDR, it's big enough for LBJ." So, that's a great story. First time I met Pachios he had to tell me that story, as soon as found out who I was, because he'd been saving it for me.

Let's see, anything else I have, oh yeah, my brother's story he said that you can't use. It was during that same time frame when LBJ visited Campobello, and dad said my brother Dave, who was kind of, you know, working as a fly catcher, he said, "Get a bottle of scotch and get back in here." I don't know where they were in the house at the time, but there were the four of them, there was my dad, Muskie, LBJ, and let's see, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Jr. Now Franklin junior, I don't know if you ever saw him, he was a big man, he was well over six-three or six-four, big frame, Ed of course you know, and LBJ and my dad weighed in at two forty. So we're not talking about any small people in the room. So my brother pulls the cork on this bottle of Johnny Walker Black and it's passed around and the bottle handed back to my brother and it's empty. Never heard of four drinks doing a fifth in, so he was very impressed by that. It went around to drinks and that was it, the fifth was gone. He says you probably can't use that one.

But that's about all I have. Dad had great admiration for Ed, from, probably from around '60 on, and I still remember him being in the house and all that. I remember his wife staying at the house one time when she came to Eastport. There was no place to stay, so if you came to, like, you know, the end of the world of Washington county, you had to have somebody that you could stay at their house. And Lucia Cormier stayed years later.

AL: Oh, what did you think of her?

AM: I loved her, I loved her.

AL: What was she like?

AM: She was very, very, very abrupt, very, very quick, and she was a good friend to my parents. For instance, when this job was up for Campobello, I think, Ed was kind of, well, you know, I wonder who should get this job and blah-blah-blah, and Lucia Cormier just picked up the phone in my dad's presence and said, you give it to MacNichol, he's saved this party in Washington county and blah-blah-blah and just went on and on (*unintelligible phrase*) get the

job. So that was very nice of her.

AL: Do you know what year that was, when your father -?

AM: My dad went on, yeah. I was just starting off in law, I got out of law school, I got out of college in '61, law in '64, so he went on the commission probably around '6-, I think he had seven years before he died and he died in '69, so that would be '62, '63, right around, that's when the commission was set up, and he was first hired. He and my mother both, my mother was, I don't know whether she was secretary or treasurer or what her position was, and he was executive secretary. And it was a great way for my dad to finish his career.

AL: Tell me what Eastport was like growing up, I don't know a lot about -?

AM: Eastport, my grandfather came to Eastport from Letete. MacNichols go back to the French and Indian War, first MacNichol came over, Neil MacNichol, and he was given a grant of land in Letete. Now, Letete is actually just across Passamaquoddy Bay from Eastport, it's up from St. Andrews, you've got St. Stephen's, St. Andrews, and then you go down to this little point of land and it's called Letete. And I've been there, I've been to the cemetery and seen Neil's tombstone. But I guess my great-grandfather, Alexander MacNichol was a sea captain, and he brought the family over to Eastport when my grandfather was only four, and I'm not sure of the year. But it was so much hullabaloo after Letete which, of course, was (*unintelligible phrase*), and my grandfather put a bag over his head growing up (*unintelligible phrase*) couldn't stand the traffic, horses and buggies. My grandfather was a very good businessman, made an excellent living, head of his own fish factory, largest independent on the coast, did sardine packing, and later went into coal and salt when the sardine industry started to peter out.

AL: When the what industry?

AM: Sardines. And when I was kid, you'd hear the whistles blowing all the time, and all summer long, and each factory had their own particular whistle. And they had a code, like two whistles meant we need the men to unload the fish, three that we need the packers. And they had busses, and each factory had a bus that would go around and pick up the ladies that did the actual packing of the fish in cans. And the whole town just went on that economy. And the winter, the town shut down and there wasn't much life. Came to life in the summer and everybody ran out and did the fish. But the town, after WWII, I remember, I was thinking in the late forties, I mean there were a lot of people in Eastport, and I think then they get the population's around thirty two hundred, and there were a lot of good middle class and there were still some good shops. But gradually it just started to go down, down, down. And I stopped taking the local paper a few years back because I just didn't know anybody any more, you know. And I'd pick it up, and when I was sitting as a judge in Washington county it was kind of funny because occasionally someone would come in front of me, you know, and I'd know who it was.

And there was this gal that I never particularly cared for, I was a good friend of her brother's, and she was always telling me to get the hell out and go home, I was making too much noise and bothering her. She was older, naturally, and never really cared much for me. So one day I look up in my court room in Machias and there she is with her husband, and they were being brought

in for non-payment of debts. And I spotted her right off, and she did not know me. So she had this little rehearsed speech about how things were going to improve when she was able to sell her parents' home, which happened to be on Campobello, by the way. And I'm sitting at the bench like this, with my hands, listening to her story, and finally I said, "Okay, all you're asking for is two months, is that right?" And of course when I used her first name, she looked at me sharply, and she turned to her husband and she slapped him on the hand and said, "Oh my God, it's Al MacNichol."

AL: In the middle of your court.

AM: I kept a straight face, but I don't know how. And so she got the two months time, so, and got the bill paid. But that's, the, you know, the economy just kind of sunk down, and down, and down and there's very little there now. I have a cousin that I grew up with, a MacNichol cousin, his name is (*name*), his mother was a MacNichol, my aunt, and he retired as a school teacher in Connecticut and went back to Eastport and bought the house right next door to the one he grew up in. But that's a little too much like ancestor worship for me, I don't know. I always threaten my wife, she's from Springvale, we've been married thirty-eight years, and every time I want to get her goat I say, well, come on, let's go retire to Eastport you know. She keeps saying, "you're going without me." But it has a lot of happy recollections, it was a good town to grow up in, and you know we had a lot of fun.

AL: Did you go clamming when you were a kid?

AM: Never did, never did. I, no, I, there were places to go clamming, people did it, but no, I never did. I remember pulling lobster traps one time with a friend of mine, but not as a rule. And we did go fishing every summer, you know, there'd be some, some tourist would show up or relatives. They always wanted to go deep sea fishing, so my dad would always get a boat and put some beer aboard and off we'd go for a day's fishing. But I wasn't, I was never much of a fisherman, never liked it. I liked to hunt, and I'd like to go off to the dump and shoot rats, it wasthings like that I was always (*unintelligible phrase*). No, fishing was too slow for me, (*unintelligible phrase*).

I got out of law school and I ought to say to everybody that I didn't have the nine fifty that you needed for the Trailways bus to get back to Eastport. At that time the bus didn't even go to Eastport, it just went down One and stopped at the intersection there and you had to get out and hoof it in or get a cab (*unintelligible word*) four, five miles from Eastport. So it really had gone down.

AL: Did your parents like to talk politics around the dinner table?

AM: That's all we talked, that's all we talked. I'll never forget, I think I was at Maine, and I decided that I ought to be different from my parents so I was going to vote for Eisenhower, that's for his second term, and it was going to be my first vote I think as a twenty one year old or whatever. And I decided that Stevenson, because actually Stevenson was just too erudite for me at that time, and I was going to vote for Eisenhower. Father didn't say anything, my mother went to a board meeting, that night we were having chicken and dad didn't say anything. And I looked

down and I had a, what we called the Pope's hat and the neck on my plate. If I was going to vote Republican, that's all I was going to get to eat. But that didn't, my rebellion didn't last very long. I can't say, I know I'm not a yellow dog Democrat, I don't, I'll split a ticket occasionally. But no, basically I'm a pretty stalwart of the party. I mean, we grew up with the New Deal. My brother actually remembers people coming to the house while we were eating, I don't remember, I'm too young for that, in the Depression when dad was on the legislature and they had different, and they were trying to sign up for WPA and things like that, and my brother would have to go and say, "Please have a seat in the living room, my father will be with you in a few minutes," you know. Oh, I got one for you, you'll like this one. I had a good voice when I was just a little kid, it was like a little angel I used to sing. So my dad would get me and put me up on the table, and this would be in 1940, where I would sing to the tune of "God Bless America," "Goddamn the Republicans." I can still sing it, do you want to hear it?

> Goddamn the Republicans, scum of the earth
> We will meet them, and beat them
> With the right and the might at our sides.
> Out of Wall Street, comes the wealthy, he's a silky S.O.B.
> Goddamn the Republicans, and the GOP.

(*Unintelligible phrase*) and it would bring the house down, this little kid, you know, with short pants up there and this high tenor, high soprano voice singing "Goddamn the Republicans." Of course I didn't know what GOP was, or S.O.B., I didn't know what the terms were, you know, I didn't know when I was taught to sing it.

AL: Good, then there was no harm done to your soul at a young age.

AM: No, no, no. But that's, that was the way we were, we were the Democrats in town. There weren't many of us.

AL: There weren't a whole lot at that time, were there?

AM: We used to say we could have the caucuses in a phone booth before Muskie, you know, and Frank Coffin, I remember Frank coming around.

AL: Do you remember him?

AM: Oh, very well, what a brilliant man. I had nothing but respect for Frank Coffin. And he came to Eastport and he gave a talk on the governor's council, and it was up here somewhere, I was in college or law school at the time, and I remember going to him afterwards and, he was running for governor I think, no, he might have been, no, he wasn't our congressman, so, up there, no. We had MacIntire who was absolutely colorless and (*unintelligible word*), he was a Republican, and you couldn't get him out with dynamite, so all these Democrats would come every two years and, eager young, bright young hopes, you know, and MacIntire would just roll over the top of them, you know, solid Republican vote in those days. But anyway, Coffin gave a talk against the executive council that was absolutely brilliant, persuasive, you know, just, just beautiful. And I thought, wow, what a mind. And I still do, I still do, that man is absolutely

brilliant. He and Muskie made a great team. Anything else?

AL: Let me pause for just a . . .

Is Sumner Pike somebody that you knew?

AM: Oh yes, oh yeah, oh yeah. Put it back on I'll give you Sumner Pike

AL: Okay, go ahead.

AM: Sumner Pike was a remarkable man, my dad thought the world of him. Sumner Pike was originally I think, well, he was put on the Atomic Energy Commission but I'm not sure by whom, maybe by Truman but I'm not sure, it could have been by Eisenhower because he was a big Republican. The Pikes were an old Lubec family. You've got to understand that Lubec and Eastport are like this, you've got the large bay, not Passamaquoddy Bay, but Cobscook Bay, and Eastport is here, and Lubec comes out just a little bit more, it's a little more easterly, Campobello's right here. And it's only like a mile and a half by water, but if you go by land you got to go forty-eight miles to get from Eastport to Lubec. But anyway, the Pike family, we knew them very well. Sumner was a brilliant man, and absolutely incredibly bright. He had a standing order with I think it was Scribner and Son, just about every book they published they'd send him a copy of. And I remember one of his nieces who was in college, Ann McCurdy I think, and she was telling me that her specialty was biology, she a very bright girl, and she mentioned something to Sumner, and that wasn't even his field, and he'd just go, you know, boom-boom-boom, start the Socratic method and just chew her up. I mean the guy was, he was, almost anything you wanted to mention, any area, any field you go into, he was extremely bright, very gifted. He made, supposedly he made quite a bit of money in the stock market before it collapsed, got out before '29 and came back to Lubec and watched it all collapse, you know. As we used to say, just a poor Lubec boy.

Lubec was a funny town. You had the Pikes and the McCurdys and a few other families, and then there didn't seem to be too much of a middle class, you know. Although they would have considered themselves middle class, but we certainly didn't, they were kind of the elite. And then there wasn't anything else, it was just, you know. Lubec is in even worse shape than Eastport vis-a-vis population now. But yes, I knew Sumner, and I remember talking to him. We used to have an annual (*unintelligible word*), you know, a summer, they had a, the Packers (*tape skip*) had this nice place up on a lake, Cathance Lake, they used to have a year end party there, a New Year's Eve party or something that the Packers gave, and Sumner was always there, it was always a pleasure to see him and talk to him. And he had brothers; Rad Pike, was a botanist from University of New Hampshire, and my dad got him out every time to do, to help with the plantings at Campobello to make sure, and beautiful, beautiful plantings at Campobello and I think Rad Pike had a real hand in that and, because he was just incredible in that. And then there was another brother who was a real close friend of my dad's because they'd been buddies for years, Mose Pike, who had one of the last factories, one of the last fish packing plants on the coast.

AL: Mose?

AM: Mose, Moses Pike, yeah, Radcliff and Sumner.

AL: Was there one called Algernon?

AM: I don't know.

AL: That doesn't ring a bell.

AM: No, no bells to me, no.

AL: Do you know if any of them are, any of them have children who are living?

AM: Yeah, there was a boy about my age and, what was his. Go off the record for a minute. Jake, Jacob Pike, Jake Pike, and he was a son I believe of, let's see, Rad never married, Sumner, Mose, I don't know if he was Mose's, he had to be, I don't know which one he was, but he was the only boy I think in my generation. There was the McCurdys which were the girls, one of those Sumner sisters married I think a McCurdy. But the only boy I remember is Jake. He's a little younger than I am, he'd be about, I'm sixty-seven so he'd be probably sixty-four.

AL: Did you ever meet Eleanor Roosevelt?

AM: Yes, well, I never met her but I remember my mother took me over to Campobello, I think it was around '46, it was after the war, and my dad had gone to Germany already, we hadn't gone yet, and she was coming to dedicate the, there was a little stone in town that they were going to dedicate to Franklin's memory. It's still there, near the post office I think, or the library, or something like that. And one of my recollections was that she drove up in a Lincoln Continental, and I'd never s-, I knew right off what it was because I was very car conscious when I was a kid, you know, and yeah, I think it was a Lincoln Continental with that little cheese cake grill that they had. And I don't remember too much of the talk, but later they had a picture in the paper and there's my mother right down in front, you know, and you can see her just as plain, just taking it all in. No, she wouldn't have missed an opportunity like that.

Another funny one was when the Queen Mother came to visit at Campobello, and dad went through all these very careful preparations for the Queen Mother's visit, Queen Mother Elizabeth, and she's still alive, by the way, she's ninety nine. And she was coming over on the royal yacht Britannica. So you know, you've got them gliding right up to the cottage and the wharf down at the end and come up and (*unintelligible word*). And the day the ship arrived was the fog of the century, I mean you couldn't see, you couldn't see the end of wharf if you wanted to, you couldn't see the Britannica, you couldn't see it arrive, just kind of, you know, whoomf, there it was. One of these Quoddy fogs that, you know could cut with a knife, and dad was so disappointed. But she was very gracious and it went off. My mother particularly got a kick out of Lady Bird Johnson when she came, because she was just so wonderful and so easy to talk to. LBJ was, you know, around the press there was this kind of an aura, you know, you just don't approach him, but she was just as sweet and nice and she could be and my parents commented on that. Particularly my mother, she really liked her, and they got along great.

AL: I think that's all the questions I have. Is there anything you think I've missed?

AM: Anything what?

AL: Do you think I've missed anything that we should talk about?

AM: Oh, I'm sure after you've gone for five minutes I'll say, darn, I wish I'd thought of telling that one. But no, I kind of have been kind of thinking about it and I did want to tell you the story, I've never told anybody that one about the shingles in the barrel and I think that's just so wonderful, I mean, because that captures the man perfectly. I mean, here he is a multi millionaire selling shingles off the roof. I just, you know, it just blows me away.

AL: Well thank you so much for your time, and especially for the song.

AM: I hadn't planned on that one.

End of Interview