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McInnis, Austin and Frances oral history interview

Andrea L'Hommedieu

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Interview with Frances and Austin McInnis by Andrea L'Hommedieu

Summary Sheet and Transcript

Interviewee

McInnis, Frances

McInnis, Austin

Interviewer

L'Hommedieu, Andrea

Date

September 13, 2000

Place

Rumford, Maine

ID Number

MOH 220

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Biographical Note

Daniel Hased "Austin" McInnis was born in Rumford, Maine in 1914. His father was an electrician and his mother worked in the batting mill. He made money during the Depression working as a caddy. He attended Bentley College and then returned to Rumford to work in the mill. From there, he was hired as an accountant at a Chevrolet dealership and worked there until he retired.

Frances (Kowalzyk) McInnis was born on March 15, 1923 in Rumford, Maine. Her parents moved to Rumford around the same time that the Muskies moved there, attracted by the promise of mill jobs. She went to a French parochial school and then joined the military service. Ed Muskie was her high school English teacher during the one year he taught high school after graduating from Bates. After serving in the military, she became a teacher.

Scope and Content Note

Interview includes discussions of: Rumford, Maine community; beer gardens and prohibition; school with Ed Muskie; Lucille Hicks Abbott; Ed Muskie in high school, including sports, academics, and social life; Charlie Kayler; class reunions; Ed Muskie's siblings; the Great

Depression and its effects on Rumford; Frances' family and their friendship with the Muskies including shared Polish ancestry; life for the Kowalzyks in Russia and Poland; Frances' mother, who was Ed Muskie's godmother; Ed Muskie's relationship with Frances' mother: her loan to start up his law practice; Vito Puiia; Stephen Muskie and his tailor shop; Ed Muskie's relationship with Lucy (Muskie) Paradis; Austin's charcoal sketch of Ed Muskie that was put up at one of his banquets when he ran for governor, and his sketches of other Maine politicians; George Mitchell; and Lucia Cormier.

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Transcript

Andrea L'Hommedieu: This is an interview on September 13th, the year 2000 in Rumford, Maine at 14 Lochness Road with Mr. Austin McInnis and Mrs. Frances McInnis, and this is Andrea L'Hommedieu. I guess I'd like to start with you, Austin, if you could tell me the date and place of your birth and your full name.

Austin McInnis: I was born here in Rumford. In fact, on the other upper street there,

Urquhart, and we lived in that house up there and then my father decided to move here in this house, on the other side. But I was born in that Urquhart and lived most of my life on the other side. Then when Frances and I got married we decided to come here again, so this is why we're here.

AL: Yes, and what year were you born?

AM: 1914.

AL: And is your full, do you have a middle name as well, Austin?

Frances McInnis: Austin is his middle name.

AL: Okay.

AM: Oh, they gave me four names, Daniel Hased Austin McInnis. And I don't know how it all worked out but I think Daniel was my grandfather, Hased was a friend of my father, and Austin I never knew why it was. And then, but when I went to school I never knew I had the two other names and I always went by Austin. But an unusual thing was, when we were small and I was growing up, I was a little guy, very small, and didn't, one of the boys called me a guinea pig one year and the next thing I knew they were all calling me that. And then over the years I picked up the nickname Guinea. They dropped the pig, thank heavens. But, so it was an unusual thing. I went through the whole town as the name Guinea. And of course all my friends that were Italians could never understand that, that was a fighting word in those days. But anyway, I lived through it all and even today once in a while I'll bump into someone and that's what they'll say, hi Guinea.

But it was Austin I always went by. Never found out that I knew Daniel Hased until I went to the service. I volunteered to go to the Navy and they wouldn't let me in until I brought my birth certificate. I went to the town hall and picked it up and went down there. And the recruiter down there said, you have four names. And I didn't even know that, I didn't even read the form when I went, I just. And from that day on I did know then that was what it was.

AL: Well what were your parents' names and their occupations?

AM: My father was an electrician. He was self educated I might say. You remember these corresponding course companies, well way back there then, they were very popular. He took one and he happened, he got the grade and everything. And before that he was a logger, I mean cutting wood in the lumber mills and all that in Rangeley, Maine. And then when he became an electrician, I, he was living somewhere here in Rumford. I never knew very much about my mother or father's life, younger. My mother worked in the batting mill and my father somehow met her there and this is how they became tied up. And of course they got married and then he was electrician and got a very good job in a mill, considered for labor in them days. So it was, it all worked out pretty good.

But my father was a great believer in education. And he, he educated my two older sisters and

then of course I was the third and my sisters decided that I should go. But I worked in the mill before, and they said, you should get an education. My older sister wanted me to be an artist, but I gave that idea up because I said I'll never make a nickel.

But anyway, I went to Bentley College in Boston and they paid my way through and I graduated and I came back and I got a job back in the mill again, in the office. And from there on I left the mill and went to work in a car dealership as a bookkeeper, or accountant they called it. But anyway, and I stayed there until I retired. Gosh, it had to be fifteen or twenty years at -

FM: Oh, my word, much more than that.

AM: More than that?

FM: Oh yes, that's before Pamela went, well, Pamela had just started school, college.

AM: Yeah, I was, I got a nasty letter from the Social Security wanting to know why I was still working, I was over seventy-five and still working.

FM: Sixty-five.

AM: Huh?

FM: Sixty-five.

AM: Sixty-five. What did I say, seventy-five?

FM: Yup.

AL: Yeah.

AM: Sixty-five, and they wanted to know why I was still working and not receiving my Social Security. So I had to go over and straighten that all out and then, and with my boss I straightened it out. That was a Chevrolet dealership. Of course Chevrolet's were very popular, they was, Chevrolet and the Ford were the big competitors back there then. So I retired and then that's, I never did anything else after but drive my truck.

AL: So what was, you mentioned the Italian population in the community, what were some of the other populations in this area that -?

AM: Oh, God -

AL: That you interacted with and -?

AM: It was funny, they cliqued together, like her family, they were Polish and then we had the Italians, and then we had us that were generally all in this area, because this is built by the mill, this park, Mr. Chisholm, and he built it so that his workers could have a home. And you'll find

there was a pile of Scotch people then. And, I guess Irish here too, there was quite a few. All different names, and that's, and I said, but, and it became very clannish I'd say because we hung around here, were growing up in this area, we called them the Park gang. And down at Smith's Cross then we called those the Italian boys, and they were all mostly all Italian down there. And then we had the Lithuanians and they were over the Spruce Street, a pile over there. So I said, it was a mixture all the way through the school system. And Muskie, he was in Virginia and I think he's the only Polish family up there, wasn't he?

FM: Well no, the Jigunskis were there, too, they were Polish.

AM: No, they were on Waldo I think.

FM: Yeah but eventually they moved up to Virginia, Jigunskis. Yeah, they did live on Waldo Street, too.

AM: And then there was the Zeikels, but the Zeikels moved to Spruce Street.

FM: Well they lived in the McKenzie Building.

AM: Oh, that's right, going, first going (*unintelligible word*).

FM: Yeah.

AM: That would be in the center of the town over there where the business is. But of course there were maybe a few scuffles between the clans but -

FM: Well the French were here, too. A lot of French Canadians were in town.

AM: Oh, gosh, yes, I forgot them. They were the predominant, they were everywhere. They was a, that was, they came all from Canada I'd say, most of them. Well my parents came from Canada, Prince Edward Island, and they used to call them PI's. That was a fighting word back then because the beer gardens or whatever you call it, that's what they called them I guess, beer gardens, were down below us on Marlboro Street and there was a lot of scuffles down there. I'd say most of the time the, spent just trying to keep the, breaking up the fights because there would be plenty of them I guess at night after they all got down in the beer gardens. And of course that all disappeared in '32.

AL: So the beer gardens is what they called the area down on Waldo Street?

AM: Oh, there was a pile of them.

AL: And then in 19 -?

AM: And the one that, the real famous one I remembered was the McCafferty's. And when we were young and we used to, we picked it up from there, somewhere along the line, we used to always say, where do we go for from here, boys? Down to McCafferty's to get a bottle of beer.

And it was not unusual to hear the young guys singing that, where do we go from here, boys. And that was a real famous one for the fights, oh, it was terrible. But anyway, over the years that, of course that disappeared, with Prohibition.

AL: Yes.

AM: I don't know, Prohibition came in after, I don't remember what year, must have been in the twenties. FDR took that away in '32 or '31. Thirty-two was the year we graduated.

AL: Right, so at that time, the year you graduated, were there still these beer gardens?

AM: Well they, it was all changed.

AL: It was all changed by then.

AM: Yeah, it became, well maybe we'd say they tried to dress it up a little, and the ones that did come in were very, well, they were. But they were all on the corners down on what we called Waldo Street, and then there was a few over town on the island. And of co-, but, and I can recall that when we were in school we all figured we would just graduate and go and work in the mill, that was our ambition. But of course I followed that route, too. I worked there I'd say about six years before my sisters got after me.

AL: Now tell me, oh, keep going. I was going to ask you about school.

AM: I was just going to say, of course, we were in school or high school and I would say I was not a very, well my school work, I just did enough maybe to get by, never pushed myself. But we, I was telling my wife that when I was in high school of course we took American history in our senior year and of course Muskie was in my class. And of course I was in a lot of classes with Muskie because we both took college course. I took college course with the idea maybe some day I would go, and they used to always say you would never be accepted if you didn't have a college course on your record.

And we had a teacher, her name was Miss Hicks at that time, and this is, this is very unusual, she was a debater, my wife told me, at Bates College, and a very good one. And of course I never knew that. Of course, every teacher, Muskie was maybe their model student because they all, and I said, I don't know, maybe we were talking and maybe she's the one that got him interested in Bates because he was a terrific debater. And during high school he was on a debating team, and I forget who the others were, and I had a yearbook and I've lost it over the years.

FM: Your granddaughter borrowed it, remember? She did a thing on Muskie.

AM: But, and I would have, I could have found out who the other girls that were with him on that debating team. And I figure he was the only boy, and they did well, you know, the state, you know, in the tournaments or whatever they held. And he did well. And of course Miss Hicks, where she was a debater maybe took a little more interest in him. But she was a terrific teacher.

AL: Tell me about her, I've heard a little bit about her but I didn't have the opportunity to interview her.

AM: Oh, she was excellent, oh man. Well, of course, now we go back a little bit more, during high school we had to try to make a little money. So I had a paper route and it was hard to make money with it because, but, I sold papers on, the railroad station had a train that pulled in in the morning going to Rangeley. And what I would do is try to sell papers to the people on the train. It would just be a stop maybe for a half an hour or so and then they would take off and go to Rangeley again. But, and I sold papers down there and that's, I had no established route or anything, just that. And I made money but it wasn't much.

And then I heard one day about the golf course, they had caddies. So a boy that lived up on the other street, Kenny Phillips, we took off one day and went down to the golf course and of course we got hired. But the trend was always boys from Mexico that got hired because they caddie master was a boy from Mexico who was a cousin of mine, Punk Bulger, and uh, maybe we had a little bit of help there. But anyway, we got hired and I caddied down there for six years. And you know, a funny thing, I heard Ed Muskie was working down at Poland Spring and I don't, I think he was a bellhop though, not a caddy. But I took off and went down with someone, and I forget who now, but we hitchhiked down to Lewiston and then got over to the country, Poland Spring, which was way off the beaten path in those days. But they wouldn't hire us because they hired all boys from Boston, Massachusetts. And it was unusual, and they gave scholarships I think to Bates and I think that's one way Muskie got in there, too, because he worked for years for Poland Spring. But I think he was a bellhop. I, I never knew.

But that was a, and I came back and finally I got into the mill because I, when I was caddy, and I hit up one of the higher uppers in the, I was caddying for in the, what we had here was the International Paper Company which eventually left Rumford, and he got me in. But as a only a spare, so you had to take your chance, if someone didn't show up you maybe get a call and go. But eventually I got into the lab work over there where they did all this testing. And I run into some tough luck there. The mill wanted to increase their taxes and the town took a vote to decide whether they'd let the mill have a decrease and my, the people in town went to the polls and they turned it down. So the mill did nothing but move right out of town, so I was back out again. But that's how I landed up finally, and I got into the mill down here through a neighbor that lived down in this next house. They were a Kilgore family and he was the boss or what they called the unloading crew. So it was the same old story, I was lucky I hit some guys that could get me in and I got into the mill. And I worked there for I think it was about six years, and then my sisters finally told me, you better go to school so I left and went to Bentley.

AL: Well, what do you think it was about Miss Hicks that made her wonderful, what was it about her teaching?

AM: Oh, man, to me she was, oh, well I rated her the best teacher I ever had. But she was very unusual. She'd, she didn't, she just presented her subject and it was American history, about all, well we used to have to go way back, come all the way up through the presidents and the wars and all that. And, but she knew her subjects very well, she knew, and I said it was,

when you went to her class, that's what I never got over, you never lost interest. You'd sit there to get what was going on. And I did fairly well with her, so, and of course maybe that helped make me like her, but anyway it was, and of course I said Muskie was in the class and he was, as usual he was un-, very, very unusual. And, well I said I think he was top in every class. I don't know if I was in every one but I was in an awful pile of his.

AL: Was he, what was his personality like in high school?

AM: Oh, I wouldn't say he was really, I don't think outgoing, I don't, he was just laid back. But he was very popular just the same. And he played sports and, he played basketball, and he played on the varsity team. He was a tall boy, he was very tall, and he made center. And back in those days there was no finesse in basketball, it was just, well it was just another football game (*unintelligible phrase*). And he could handle himself, you know, with that, I said, he took the bruises but he also handed some out I figure.

And the very unusual thing, our last year at school they built a gymnasium for the boys and basketball, and, the old high school there. And it was, we were so happy to be able to go into a game to watch because they held the games at what we called in the institute. And it was a very small area that you could, they only had a balcony and that I wouldn't say it seated about three or four hundred. And so they put in a bleacher on this side of the floor and shrunk the floor up and of course the contest would be that more rugged because they had no space. It was a very small floor.

FM: Where was this, the high school?

AM: Huh?

FM: The high school?

AM: Yeah, oh the high school was a good one, you know.

FM: You're talking about the institute.

AM: Institute, oh God, that's the one we, I said we. Man, you had a hard time to get into a game because. Of course and I can recall when I was young, younger with my wife's brothers were very sport wise and of course (*unintelligible phrase*) we used to go over there and you had a hard time to get in, oh man, you couldn't get in hardly. So I said, we got a break, well in the big games when they played Mexico they would shift the game to the municipal building, to the auditorium which was a bigger floor, and of course more seating, a lot of seats up above along the balcony. And so once a year they'd have one game in the, we could be able to attend over there. And I think he was in track, and I think he did well there, too. And I think it was a, I don't re-, of course I can't recall. If I'd a had my class book maybe (*unintelligible phrase*). I think it was, he was maybe a runner, and also I think he participated in the throwing, on discs you know, and the javelin and -

AL: Discus, yeah.

AM: And I wouldn't be surprised even the shot put because he was a good size. And, but I said, and I, that Mrs. Hicks though, of course my idea of, and I caddied for her a lot. She played golf. And so if I got a lucky break I'd be close enough to go out to caddy for her, I used to take it every time. So I was familiar with her in that way. She was a very nice person, and she had, and a lot of times she played with her husband-to-be. He was what we called a gentleman farmer back in them days.

FM: Farmer Abbott.

AM: Farmer Abbott was his nickname. And he was a, oh, he was a very outgoing, very vibrant, that's their boy that's up at Maine University now, he's tied up with the sports department. I think -

FM: Phys Ed.

AM: I think he's heading the whole thing. But that was her boy. And she had, of course they had a couple of boys.

AL: Her other son is an attorney in Auburn.

AM: No kidding, he's a coach down there?

AL: No, he's an attorney.

AM: Oh, I see, oh, I didn't, but anyway at that, that's the same family. What I said, I remember her then. And she, of course -

AL: I had a couple of people I wanted to ask you about. I don't know if you're going to know them or remember them or not, but one of them is Stephen Petkas, does that name ring a bell?

AM: Yes, they lived on Spruce Street.

FM: Plymouth Avenue and Spruce Street.

AM: Yeah, right, corner of Spruce and Plymouth Avenue. Oh yes, and they were, oh he was a -

FM: Great boys, one of the boys was in my class, Joe Petkas.

AM: Yes, and the one that was, was (*unintelligible phrase*), he was a year behind us. And was, he was a big boy and husky, and of course, and, oh, they're a very quiet type family.

FM: Very nice, very nice boys.

AM: Yes, awfully.

AL: Does the family still live here?

FM: They're all gone.

AL: All gone.

AM: Yeah.

FM: Yeah, my classmate died long time ago, and he was the youngest of that family. There was a Stephen and a Braung, Braung was the middle boy, and then there was Joe who was in my class.

AL: The other name is Charlie Kayler.

AM: Charlie?

AL: Because this seems to be somebody that Muskie knew for years.

AM: Yeah, well he, I would say he and Charlie were pretty chummy.

FM: Were they classmates?

AM: Yes.

AL: I think so because they started Bates together, too.

AM: Oh, gee, Charlie Kayler, he lived in what we called Roxbury, Maine. And no school busses in those days and the way they got to school was they rode down on the train that came from Rangeley, oh, I'd say about early in the morning. And of course a lot of those trains were bringing wood from Rangeley to the mill but they had a passenger car or a caboos on the end of it and the sch-, there was two or three families up there and their children all came to the high school on the train in the morning. And I can remember seeing them, they'd walk up from the station up through the park to go to the high school and Charlie was one of them. Oh yeah, oh Charlie, gee.

FM: Were they roommates, Austin?

AM: Huh?

FM: Were they roommates at Bates?

AM: I don't know.

FM: Seems to me I remember them speaking about that at one of the reunions.

AM: They maybe were. Oh, that Charlie was a, he just knew it all and, we had a (*unintelligible word*), oh Charlie.

AL: What was he like?

AM: I don't know, you could maybe call it, you could maybe call him on the sissy side.

FM: His sister was in my class.

AL: Okay.

AM: But, oh, anything that he was in he had to take over and charge of, jeepers. It didn't matter what it was, he had a finger in it. And I, one horrible thing I remember about him, we had a, what was that, the sixtieth reunion?

FM: No, fiftieth, fiftieth.

AM: Fiftieth. He lived in New York, he was a teacher or a professor or something.

FM: Teacher, high school teacher.

AM: And he showed up here, of course with a few of our classmates like myself, Mabel Perry, Thurston, the Thurston girl. And we formed a committee and the next thing we knew he showed up, and of course all the, everything was all changed and hell going over there and I don't know. But we ended up having it anyway. But the horrible thing I remembered about it, we invited Mrs. Atwood -

FM: Abbott.

AM: Abbott, rather, to come to the party. I mean, one of the girls that was on the committee, I think it was maybe Mrs. Thurston that did, but anyway one of them did, and she accepted, she would come. And out of the clear blue sky we hear, at one of the meetings we hear poor Charlie came back and told Miss Abbott that she was going to have to pay for her meal. Well, that floored us. Gee, well it really bothered me.

FM: She didn't come either.

AM: Hmm?

FM: She didn't come.

AM: Yes she did.

FM: Oh, she did?

AM: Yeah, she finally came. And guess who she grabbed a hold of?

FM: Charlie.

AM: Muskie. Muskie showed up, and he, she and Muskie sat together and talked all the time. We held it at the Madison's and we, of course they gave us a special room and special treatment and everything, and a pile showed up, a pile of classmates. Was he governor then?

FM: He was a senator.

AL: 1982 was it?

FM: Yeah, it would have to be.

AL: He had just got done being Secretary of State if it was '82, your fiftieth.

AM: Yeah, fiftieth.

AL: So you graduated in '32, so that would have been '82.

AM: I know he held a big office.

AL: Yeah, Secretary of State.

AM: And we were surprised he showed up. Well he bumped into you, didn't he?

FM: Yeah.

AL: Well how, what was, was that the first time you, had you seen him over the years at lots of class reunions?

FM: Oh yeah, no, not at class reunions.

AM: Yes, he came to every one we held. And the last time that I bumped into him, his brother-in-law at the church funeral for the brother-in-law. And, oh and that sister that was married to this -

FM: Chouinard.

AM: Huh?

FM: Was it Chouinard?

AM: No, the contractor, the two brothers, (*name*) and -

FM: Oh, Paradis.

AM: Paradis.

AL: Okay, Lucy.

FM: Lucy Paradis.

AM: Oh, Lucy and Edmund just, well he beamed all over when they mentioned Lucy. He and Lucy were very, very close in that family. And as I said, I met him there, he was outside with one of the boys, his boys, standing out there.

FM: Probably Stephen.

AM: And of course I'm always a little bit on the wise guy side so I went up to him and I said, when are you going to retire? He says, I can't retire, I got to work. And then, there, he had that big position and of course he was governor, and he was a governor when we had the one down to Bear Pond, a reunion.

AL: In the '50's.

AM: It must have been. He came to that one. And I think he was governor of the state at that time, I'm not sure.

FM: I don't remember (*unintelligible phrase*) at Bear Pond.

AM: We couldn't believe it, he showed up to every reunion that we held. And he was in a very big government position at the time, but he took time to come which was very good.

FM: I think that was one of his, one of his qualities, he was very humble, he wasn't arrogant, he knew everybody. He was just an, you know, an ordinary man, but he was special, you know.

AM: Then I had a daughter that got involved in politics, remember that, Marcia. She came home one day, she said to her mother and me that we should be getting involved in politics. So we attended one Democrat meeting and guess what happened?

AL: I don't know.

AM: The crowd there elected me to be the chairman of that committee.

AL: Wow, good for you.

AM: And of course we put on a big splash over to the American Legion Hall and he showed up for that. What, it was -

FM: I don't remember that (*unintelligible phrase*).

AM: I remember that, and of course I was chairman, he sat next to me. Of course he was high

up in the Democratic Party, so, and I was high up in Rumford. Well, but anyway, so I always remembered that. And I had some paper clippings and everything of that and I never, I don't know where they are of course.

FM: Yeah, I saw that picture of you and Ed in the paper.

AM: Yeah, we took a picture together and they splashed it all over the local paper. I looked very impressive. But anyway, I said, he always had a, well his roots seemed to always bring him back, he had to come back to see Rumford. And then one time I met him at, over to, we held something over to the, the Democrats, over to Freddie's Lunch.

FM: Yeah, I remember that.

AM: And he showed up for that.

FM: That's just after he come back from meeting the Pope, and he said to me, he said, he's Polish, and he said you'd be so proud of him, he's a wonderful, wonderful man. He had a private meeting with the Pope.

AL: I'm going to have to stop right here for a minute so I can flip my tape over.

FM: You talk so...

End of Side A, Tape One
Side B, Tape One

AL: We're now on side B of the interview with so far Austin McInnis and soon his wife Frances. Let's wrap up with you a little bit. So you got a little bit involved in Democratic politics. Did it stick? Did you, have you continued to have fun with politics over the years and getting involved, or was it -?

AM: Well, I stayed with it for, I don't know, not too long, maybe ten years or so. And, but of course I've always been, well, I've always been on their list since then, you know, and every now and then, but I don't go out and work any more but I just am interested in what they're doing.

AL: The one other question I had for you was what were things like in the Rumford community? Just about the time you were graduating from high school the Depression hit.

AM: Oh, it was bad. As I told you that of course I went to work as a caddy and that was all the money that I would make, and of course a lot of the caddies. And that's why it was so hard to get into the mill, when we graduated it was the worst depression in it at all time. Jeepers. Well we're going to, I might as well spin a joke. They used to always say you had, if you had a relative that was very sick and it wasn't hopeful that you went down and put your name in for his job so you could get work. But it was about that way, though. But, and, oh, it was, what I said, it was bad. Yeah.

AL: Did -?

AM: But we all survived and I think, well of course I remember my father, that poor man, he worked from the hour he got up, he worked in the mill, but when he came out he bought a used truck and we used to peddle wood to the homes. Everything was burning then, coal and wood in those days, oil was, the oil was never even heard of I guess. And then, one thing he did say when they put the oil burner in his house, he says, that's the greatest invention I've ever seen. So, ah gee, but -

AL: But what evidence did you see of the Depression in the community, do you have sort of recollections of that?

AM: Oh yes, the parties disappeared and there was no, well I said, from what I remember most everybody picked up playing cards, that's about all they could do. There was no, and like I said, the, all the beer gardens were closed. And that beer gard-, the Prohibition was, '32 they took it off, and of course then things started to change a little bit. But, well all the community here I guess put on all their own shows at the municipal building, that was the big thing. And I guess the high school maybe put a play on maybe now and then, yeah, because I got caught up in one. But, there was not that much entertainment. Oh, the institute maybe had a dance every now and then. Of course we still comment about it, Al Melanson's orchestra.

Oh, it was horrible but it was enjoyable. They was mostly all family members that played in the band and they, oh gee. And they'd be over there. And of course in those days all they did was waltz. As I said, over to the institute they had one dance, it would be one big one, and that would be held in the municipal building. Oh, and then the, of course the churches here put on minstrels, that was a big event. And I don't even know what they charged. They must have charged something because the church wanted to raise money for the, of course, I don't even know if it was a dollar. Be twenty five cents or fifty cents maybe. And the poor people they maybe let in free. And there was a lot of poor people, jeez. But I said, of course my family was no different than the other ones, they were all trying to work and make money. But, (*unintelligible word*), well we got a break, my father educated the two older sisters like I said and they became school teachers.

AL: Oh, your sisters both became school teachers. Did they teach in this area, or did they move away?

AM: No, they all come back home.

FM: Susie taught in Kennebunk, though, after she got married, Kennebunkport.

AM: Yeah, the oldest one. Well, well in the summers, they'd teach all year and in the summers they had to go to work at all the resorts. They worked for years up in Rangeley and then I don't know how they got contact with Kennebunkport and they went down there and started working. And my older sister married a boy from down there, a (*unintelligible phrase*). And of course they're all old families down there that, he was one of them, they were, their

histories tied up with way back early settlements. And I said, he ended up owning a gas station and he did fairly well.

But, and then I said, when they became school teachers then that's when they started to work on me to go to school, which was a good break. I got a little taste of city life and, was in Boston, and of course all, and here in Rumford the skiing became very popular, it was just starting. Of course we had a famous ski club here, and we had that carnival we held every year, they were very popular and known for all over the east. They had one of the first jumps, ski jumps in the United States, the ski club. So that helped the town a little because it did draw a little attraction and everything. And of course that all faded out, too. Of course they had the ski area but -

FM: The war came along, that's what (*unintelligible phrase*).

AM: It's not the same as the carnivals.

AL: Let's start with you now. And if you, you relax and if you think of something more then we'll add it before we end today, okay? If you could tell me your date of birth and your full name.

FM: I was born on March 15th, 1923. And what?

AL: And your full name, including your maiden name?

FM: Okay, Frances Kowalzyk McInnis.

AL: And how do you spell Kowalzyk?

FM: K-O-W-A-L-Z-Y-K. My older brother, my oldest brother, changed the spelling from K-O-W-A-L-C-Z-Y-K, the -C- he left out because he said there were too many consonants and it caused too much trouble in school so he changed the spelling.

AL: He changed the spelling of his name, or the whole -?

FM: All, the whole family's.

AL: The whole family. Now, did you grow up, you grew up in Rumford as well?

FM: Yes I did, I was born here and my two younger brothers were also born in Rumford, but the two older brothers were born in Ansonia, Connecticut where my mother and father met and were married. And it was through Adam Jugelevich, who was a first cousin to my mother, had come to Rumford when it first became a town, when it was really very, very primitive. None of the houses were built or anything. But he came here and he advised my mother that it probably would be a very good place, my mother was twenty one at the time, or twenty two, for her and my father to come here because it was a boom town. They were going to hire a lot of people and the mill was being built. And at the same time I'm sure that he got in touch with Mr. Muskie who was in Buffalo because they were related through marriage. And he, the Muskies and my

family came here about the same time. But they had known each other previously. My mother and Mr. Muskie were born in the same Russian town, which was Bialystok. Today it is, it's part of Poland but at that time it was part of czarist Russia. And my mother was Russian and my, and Mr. Muskie was Polish, but they were still very good friends.

AL: Was that unusual for a Polish and a Russian to be friends in that -?

FM: Well, as my mother, as my mother explained it yeah, because the Poles were always considered a lot more refined and the Russians were considered almost barbaric, and so there was a little bit of a friction there. But they always got along very, very well. And she said in that particular part of Poland and Russia that the reason why there were both Polish and Russian families living together is that sometimes it would be part of Poland and then there'd be a war and then it would eventually become Russia and then it would go back and forth. And then when Poland became a nation in, I guess right after the First World War, it became part of Poland. But they had known each other and been friends as young people, children.

AL: Did she talk to you about what it was like living there?

FM: Oh, yes. My mother, my grandmother was married three times. She lost two husbands, and I don't know whether she outlived the last husband or not but she was well into her eighties. And, you know, just sort of piecing things together, my mother had told me her name was Victoria Rose, my grandmother's name was Victoria Rose, and she wished that if I ever had a daughter that I would name it Vic-, name the child Victoria Rose. And of course I've had three daughters and I didn't. But I always remembered that, and she said it was such a beautiful name because it, it was in remembrance of a great war that was won. So when I thought, you know, my mother came here at the turn of the century, and my grandmother had lived a few years after that, I never knew just exactly when she died, but she would have to have been in her eighties. And so I thought that has to be about, you know, eighteen twenty three, and that's of course the Napoleonic wars.

So there was exactly about a hundred years difference between my grandmother's birthday and mine. So I was very sorry after I started putting all those things together that I didn't name one of my children Victoria. But they were brought, both the Muskies and the Kowalzyks were brought here by this Adam Jugelevich who was also a tailor, and he worked -

AL: He was a tailor?

FM: Yes, and he worked for John [James] Shea, he was a tailor, and his son lived on this street. And he never married, Adam never married. Let's see, what else can I tell you?

AL: Well, I guess, your mother grew up in Russia and then moved here as a young woman just as Ed Muskie's father Stephen did. Did your mother relate to you what it was like in Russia or Poland?

FM: Yes, that, she had told me a story that when she was thirteen that she was a servant in a doctor's house, and that she was serving soup at the dinner table at a dinner party and she spilled

some soup on the physician's lap, and she said he got so angry that, she said, if he caught me he would have killed me. And his wife interceded and saved her. She said, and you cannot believe, you know, that the rich had so much power over the poor. And she said that, that her, her whole idea of coming to, leaving her family, she had a brother that was a year older than she and they were real brother and sister, they were, the others were all half. But he was a year older than she and he had come here and worked in Ansonia, Connecticut in a copper mill and he had sent for my mother and his wife, young wife with one child, and they both went to America and stayed there. And that's where my mother met my father.

But her thing was that she couldn't believe that everybody would be allowed an education and that, to her, that was a very, very important component of becoming American. And all but one of my brothers and me have a college education. One of them just decided no, he just didn't want any part of it, and he probably had the highest I.Q., even though I.Q.s weren't given then. I found out from somebody who had given him a test that he had scored very, very high. And they informed me because they thought (*unintelligible phrase*). But my oldest brother graduated from, he was exactly nineteen years older than I. We were both born on the same day but different years, so my mother always said, I started and ended on the same day. But he was, he went to Annapolis and graduated.

And I smiled about Miss Hicks because I remember we had a book, a gradua-, the graduation from the Naval Academy, and I look through that very often. And my brother, there was a write up, there was a column that was written up, and it said, it made a reference to a girl who went to Bates and was a great debater. And there was some kind of a reference, I can't quite remember it, it's been years since I read it. But I know it was Miss Hicks because he came here in 1955 when one of my brothers was dying from cancer. And he came and he stayed, and he went overtown and he came back and he said, I met Mrs. Abbott. And he said, and he told me that he had dated her in high school and that she-. And I said, well is she the one that was being referred to in your graduation write up? And he said, yes, he said, because I dated her for quite a while. But she was a beautiful, beautiful woman. So there was sort of a tie in there with her.

The most important thing that my mother wanted for all of us was an education. And my brother, that was my brother Alex, and incidentally, when Edmund was governor my brother was sent by the government to bring the flag from the battleship Maine and present it to Edmund, so I never did go, we had small children at the time so I didn't go to see the ceremony. But it was kind of interesting, my mother would have been extremely proud.

AL: Sure.

FM: Her godson and her son.

AL: That, yeah, tell me a little bit more about that. Your mother was Ed Muskie's godmother.

FM: Yes.

AL: Do you, how was that arranged?

FM: I have no idea, except that that group, there was the Zykos. And I don't know whether the Zykos came from the same place that they did, but they were very, very close friends and, they're all gone. And I tried to talk with one of the girls, the daughter, a Zyko, Ann Zyko, about it and she didn't want to have, she didn't want to talk about it at all, I don't know why. But, so I never really got any information from her, but I rather suspect that the Zykos were also involved with Bialystok. I think they might have lived there because those three families were extremely close. And there was another family of Polish, the only other family that I know of, the Jiglinskys. And, but there was never any, you know, the baptisms, like the Muskies and the Zykos were all, and my mother, were all involved with being, you know, godparents of each other's children.

And my mother I know was Edmund's, and she just loved him. She thought he was the greatest thing that ever, you know, she just. She said, he is the most wonderful boy, that every time he came to town he would come and visit with her and they would talk, and he spoke perfect Polish. I never did, nor did my younger brother. My older brothers all spoke Polish, but we refused to, we said, no, we're American, (*unintelligible phrase*) in Polish. And there weren't enough Polish people really that you could converse with. So, let's see.

AL: Well, did you, would your mother talk about, well, how long did your mother live, until 19- ?

FM: She died in 1955, '45, excuse me, she died in 1945, she was sixty-five years old. And I was in the service at the time, I was away and I was stationed in Pensacola. And all of my brothers, of course Alex was in the Navy and Henry was a medic in France, in the Army, and Teddy was, he was a Marine. So we've represented all of, my mother was very proud of that.

AL: Did she have, I mean what were her impressions of Ed Muskie as he was growing up and then went to Bates, and -?

FM: She said he was very shy, you know, he was very withdrawn. But, you know, they were very, like my mother was, was very, very tough as far as behavior was concerned, and so was his parents, you know, they didn't tolerate very much. And, and I think he spent a lot of time reading, you know. He had, he had, I'm s-, she said he always knew that he wanted to do something, that he wanted to go to school. And it was almost impossible for a kid with his background, you know, to be able to go on to school and, but he did, to his credit. I mean, he always knew what he was going to be, you know. My mother just thought he was, you know, wonderful.

AL: So when you were growing up I know that Ed Muskie would have been quite a bit older than you, nine years?

FM: Yes.

AL: And you had some older brothers that were around his age, or how much older were they?

FM: Well, Teddy would be two years younger, there was seven years difference between Teddy and I. And then Henry was, he graduated in 1928 so he was quite a bit older. And then Eddy and Alec, there was just a year and one half, a year and a half between them. So -

AL: Did you, I mean do you remember going over to the Muskie's house as a kid?

FM: Oh yes, in fact I went to the, I went to the memorial, you know, when they, the service that they had there, and Stephen, the son, was reading from a, from his father's book.

AL: Journeys.

FM: And he talked about the cars, and I remember the one with the jump seats in it because we were visiting. My mother and father were divorced and so my mother and I used to make the rounds, we'd, to visit all the, all the, the friends. And I remember it was about, just almost nightfall, it must have been on a Sunday, and Eugene, Edmund's younger brother smashed my finger in the door. And I was sitting in the little, in the jump seat and I was so happy. I thought it was, you know, it was just so wonderful. I can remember playing, I probably was under five years old at the time, I could just barely, but I remember that. And so it brought that to mind because when I, I spoke to Stephen afterwards and I told him, I said, I remember that car.

And I also remember the Galusa farm, that was another Russian family that had a farm on the South Rumford Road, and every once and again the group would meet there. And I remember jumping in the hay, and Edmund said he jumped in the hay as well. But the thing that I remember about those things, the faces, the smiles, the people were so happy to be together. The Galusas were just wonderful people and it was just a joy being in that group.

AL: Do you think it was because you got to experience the culture, because you were (*unintelligible phrase*)?

FM: Yeah, yeah, but it was special because it, you know, as he said, I can remember, I went to French parochial school and, it was rather extraordinary but my mother wanted me to learn French. And there was such a, there was such a division of groups. There were the French and there were the Polish and there were the Lithuanians and there were the Irish and Scottish, and it was just, you know, nobody liked or trusted anybody else. You know, you don't, if you're a girl you don't try to get, you don't even think about dating somebody who is of a, of a different nationality. It was, you've got to think of a good Polish or a good whatever. But after the war that all changed. And it was changing even in the thirties but it was still there. You remember that, Austin.

So, yeah, I, it was, you know, those moments that we spent together. The Zykos I don't remember that much, I remember the Muskies and my family and the Galusas. And the Galusas, they had a farm but didn't work it, you know, as far as farming was concerned. What they did is they lumbered on it, they did very hard work. And they moved it to Bath, because one of the boys, I think it was right after the war, became the chief of police there, I remember reading about it. And Claudia, Claudia Galusa lived with us while she was going to high school, the last two years. It was, you know, they did, they, another thing is when Edmund, Edmund, after he

graduated from Bates he taught at the high school for a year.

AL: Yes.

FM: And I was in high school at that time. And he taught English, he took Frances Martin's place, she had a breakdown or something and he took her place for a year. And I remember coming home and he'd be sitting in the kitchen talking with my mother. And I'd be so embarrassed because there was a teacher sitting, you know, it was -

AL: Is that how you viewed him, more as a teacher than as a part of the family?

FM: Oh yes, I mean, you know, and when he spoke he used, you know, he used perfect English, he spoke well, his vocabulary was very good. And I thought, how am I ever going to talk, so I just scooted into my room, I didn't (*unintelligible phrase*). So that was the end of that. But my mother just, I remember she said that, after that one time I walked into the kitchen and when we were having supper she said to me, she said, some day Edmund's going to be president of the United States. She says, he is just, he is just so wonderful. She just, she raved about him all the time. And she also lent him the money to buy the practice in Waterville.

AL: Oh, really? So that's how he was able to get started?

FM: Yeah, yeah. She really believed in him, she wanted him to, you know, and his father couldn't do it probably because he had the six other child-, five other children. And everything he got he earned.

AL: Do you have a sense of why he picked Waterville to open his practice?

FM: No, I don't. I don't remember that except that the man must have been elderly. And it probably was near Augusta, and I think he had, you know, he must have had some inclination toward politics, you know, that's all I can think of. I've thought of that but I, I'm not sure. But he must have, somehow or other, my mother said, some day he will be president. So maybe that was, you know, maybe he had mentioned that to her although she hadn't said anything to me. But it's funny how, you know, every once in a while something weaves back and we touch base again even though (*unintelligible word*) separately.

AL: Do you, did you live physically, your houses were near each other?

FM: No.

AL: No.

FM: We lived on the island and they lived up in Virginia, up over the hill.

AL: Okay, okay. Um...

FM: No, whenever we went in, we didn't even have a car, we used to walk.

AM: Oh, I guess Muskie did, too.

FM: Yes he did.

AL: I understand -

FM: No, their father had cars, he had three cars.

AM: Yeah, but he walked to school every day, him and Frank.

FM: Well they walked, they walked down in the morning, back at, for lunch, then back for the afternoon session and then back after school.

AM: That's about a mile.

AL: Now you said Frank, Frank who?

AM: Anastasio. That was an Italian family that was living right next to them up there. And he was very involved with the Anastasio family, I mean they were very good friends. Frank was a year ahead of us. Frank is still living I think.

FM: Yeah, but he's very ill. I don't know (*unintelligible phrase*).

AM: Yes, he's up in the nursing home I think.

AL: Yeah, there was, there's an interview that was done with him a while ago before our project began so I have heard that name. And Vito Puiia?

AM: Oh yes, they were good friends.

FM: Oh, that's a friend of his, was a classmate of his. Vito.

AM: Oh, Vito Puiia? Oh, God, yes, oh Vito, he and Puiia, Vito was, was he the secretary of the class or the -?

FM: I have no idea.

AM: There was, let's see, of course, there was the president and then the vice president, and Vito was there. I think he was treasurer because I used to always joke and say you made your money off of us. But Vito was a nice guy, though, honest to God.

FM: He still is, he's still here.

AM: He's still here. I don't know if he could give you some stories about Muskie, he maybe could.

AL: Well, tell me what, do you have a sense of how the Muskies were viewed in town, for instance -

FM: He was a, he was -

AL: Stephen Muskie?

FM: Who?

AL: Stephen, Stephen Muskie and, and his tailor shop, did you have a sense of how he was viewed?

FM: He was an excellent tailor. I know when he made clothing, it was just, they were -

AM: Well back in those days you didn't buy a suit, you had to go get one made, generally.

FM: If you were rich enough.

AM: Yes.

FM: But he was, he was an excellent, and Mr. Soebbel used to work for him and the Umbro, remember the little short guy?

AM: (*Unintelligible word*) Umbro.

FM: So they worked there with him. But Mr. Soebbel was there for a long time, but he was a nice man, Mr. Muskie was a nice person. Very quiet. But of course he was deaf and he had, toward the end when, when I remember, he had trouble hearing, so. But, oh my mother and he, my mother would be so upset, got so upset. She said how could a, how could a good Pollack change a beautiful name like Marciszewski to Muskie. And he kept trying to tell her, he said, well you know, the plate glass window can only take just so much, so many letters and he said, I. That's a shame, she said, anybody with such a beautiful Polish name to change it to Muskie, that's terrible. She would never forgive him for that. But they were good friends. And Mrs. Muskie was a nice lady, too. In fact I think, I think Edmund looked a lot like his mother. Eugene looked like his father.

AL: Were Eugene and Ed close?

FM: I don't think so.

AM: No.

FM: Nineteen thir-, he graduated, he graduated while I was in the lower classes at high school, I think I might have been in the eighth grade. He was a big tall guy, but he looked like his father, and Edmund looked like his mother. But one, during, when his father died we were at his

funeral and Eugene came up to me and he said do you remember? He said, do you remember the time I shut your finger in the door? I said, I'll never forget it. I never, and I never will, it was this finger. I never experience such pain.

AM: No, he was younger than Muskie.

FM: I think he graduated in 1937, I was in junior high.

AM: Lucy was the one, he and, she Ed (*unintelligible phrase*).

FM: That was the only time I think he came home was when his father died. I think that was the only time he came home.

AM: No (*unintelligible phrase*).

AL: Came home during what?

FM: The mother or anybody else, I think. The only, maybe he's dead, you know, I don't know. He used to do mechanic work, right? He used to work on cars, I remember seeing him come down with the little Anastasio there, what was his name that died?

AM: Well, there was -

FM: No, no the youngest guy. He was in his class anyway, he was a little, he was short little guy.

AM: Oh, he, yeah, (*unintelligible phrase*) Hancock, yeah.

FM: He died young. But anyway -

AM: Joel, Joe Anastasio.

FM: No, I don't think so, but anyway it doesn't matter. I used to always see him in greasy coveralls and so I just thought that he was working at some garage.

AM: Well he moved, he moved away very fast from here.

FM: I think after the war. That's what, most of the people that we knew moved away after the war and I think he was one of them. Because, you know, he'd never had the ability to go out in the west coast, I think he was in California he told me. But Elizabeth and I were in the same class, Frances was two years ahead of us. And Irene was the youngest.

AL: And they all stayed in this area, didn't they? The girls, all the girls?

FM: Irene and, yeah, and, yeah. The one that was married to Paradis, she was a hairdresser.

AL: Lucy?

FM: Yeah.

AL: And they're, you're saying that's the one you remember as being closest to Muskie personally?

FM: Oh yes, oh yes.

AM: Very close.

FM: Yeah.

AM: They walked to school I think pretty near all the time, too.

FM: When he was running for president we had horses. Our daughter showed horses. And we were in the barn, you and I, and we were cleaning up, doing something, and she and her husband came in and it was right after the presidential race. And she was, you know, feeling terrible, I could tell just by looking at her. And I said, well you know, I said, it might be the best thing because after all, you know, John Kennedy was assassinated, Martin Luther King was assassinated, and Bobby Kennedy was assassinated and they were all Democrats. And I said, "Lucy," I said, you know, "I felt terrible that he didn't, didn't get to be the vice president." But I said, "God," I said, "there's another way of looking at it, you know." Maybe this is, at least he would be safe, you know, you won't have to worry about somebody shooting him.

AM: And he had an older sister -

FM: Irene.

AM: That was two years ahead of us?

FM: Irene.

AM: Irene. And she married a -

FM: I don't know.

AL: I'm trying to thing. Chasse?

AM: I remember her.

AL: Chaisson?

FM: Chaisson.

AL: Chaisson, okay.

AM: Yeah, right, that's right, yeah. And they stayed right here. And Lucy stayed here, but they moved to Worthley Pond.

FM: Yeah, that isn't too far.

AM: No.

AL: They moved to where, Roxbury Pond?

AM/FM: Worthley.

AL: Worthley.

FM: Yes.

AM: And they made a -

FM: My son and one of their sons are very good friends. In fact I had one of them in school.

AM: And Frances was a teacher.

AL: Frances was, yes, okay. I think I'm going to stop and change the tape because I do have a few more questions.

End of Side B, Tape One

Side A, Tape Two

AL: We are now on tape two of the interview with Frances and Austin McInnis. And we were talking about some of Muskie's siblings and his parents, and I was wondering if you could think, if you think of others that are still living in this community who may have known the Muskies?

AM: Vito is still living, Vito Puia. And I imagine, I said he may be able, but he's very sick, too, but he's living at home and getting around.

FM: Ted Zyko might be somebody. I've tried to get in touch with him and I haven't been able to.

AL: And how, what age is he, (*unintelligible phrase*)?

FM: He would be, I don't know, maybe, did he graduate about -?

AM: Oh, jeepers, about four years behind us I think.

FM: That would be '36?

AM: Something like that.

FM: I think, I think '35. Didn't he, didn't he play ball with -?

AM: Tony.

FM: Yeah.

AM: Tony Puia.

FM: Tony was '35 I think, was he? Or was he '36? I think he was '35, well it doesn't matter.

AM: Same year, I think he and Tony -

FM: But Ed Zyko, he's in the telephone book and I've tried to get in touch with him but I haven't had any answer, and I know he's not well.

AM: No, he's not well either. He's home.

FM: But he might be able to give some kind of information, you know, because he's older, he'll probably remember more. There was, there was a tie in with that family.

AM: Oh, I have another classmate, Mabel, Mabel Perry, I bet you she, she had a sharp memory. I wouldn't be surprised if she, and I wouldn't, I think she was in the same classes that we were in, I think she was a college course. And what was the, the Thurston that -?

FM: Yeah, but, Charlie, oh no, wait a minute, I was thinking of Taylor.

AM: Oh Charlie, no, Thurston. Jeepers, poor Charlie, he had to run things. But -

FM: Thurston? What Thurston is that?

AM: His wife was married, they live up here on, going towards Roxbury Pond.

FM: Oh, oh yeah.

AL: Who is that?

AM: Oh, God. I think he died.

FM: Classmate, a classmate of his.

AM: Yeah, a classmate.

AL: Last name is Thurston?

FM: Yeah.

AM: Yeah but she's married.

FM: No, that's her married name. Her daughter's name was Karen.

AM: Yeah, Karen.

FM: Karen Thurston.

AM: What her name was before she married now I can't recall.

FM: Doesn't matter.

AM: No.

AL: Do you remember her first name?

FM: What's her first name?

AM: No, jeepers.

AL: That's okay. Did you know Bob Chassie?

FM: Robert Chassie. Farmington.

AM: Oh for Christ's sakes, Farmington.

AL: Yeah.

AM: Well he was a year behind us, or two years behind us, he wasn't in our class. But he was another outgoing guy, though, like Charlie in all the affairs up at the school, Robert. Oh, I remember him well. Yeah, but I forgot all about him, yeah.

FM: Brother ran a store.

AM: Yeah, he might know something about Muskie, too because -

AL: I interviewed him last year.

AM: You did?

AL: Yeah.

AM: Did he remember quite a bit. Yeah. Bob Chassie.

AL: Do you think, you've mentioned that, for instance, one of your sons is good friends with the son of -?

FM: Lucy.

AL: Of Lucy?

FM: Yeah.

AL: Would, are there any of those family members that you think would have a sense of the family and Ed Muskie?

FM: Um, what the dau-, what's Lucy's daughter's name that married, that lives in Greene, that we bought hay from?

AM: Oh, Elliott

FM: Yeah.

AL: What's the name?

FM: Elliott.

AM: Elliott, Dave -

FM: Dave Elliott.

AM: Her husband's name, Dave Elliott.

FM: She is a Paradis.

AM: She's Lucy's -

FM: Because I stopped and spoke with them, they were at the memorial and I didn't recognize them right at first. But, I said, "Oh," I said, "Then you have to be the Paradis, you were the Paradis girl." She said, "I still am." I said, "I know what you mean, I'm still a Kowalzyk." So, yeah, I'm sure she'd be able to give you some information, especially some insights that her mother had, you know?

AL: Yes, yes.

AM: And Edmund was tied up with the Jannaces but there's -

FM: There's nobody here from the Jannaces.

AM: No, the only one is Anthony and he's up in Rangeley, and if you get tied up with him

he'll talk your head off, he'll go forever.

FM: He grew up in Virginia, didn't he?

AM: Yes.

AL: He lives in Rangeley? And how do you sp- ?

FM: Anthony Jannace, J-A-N-N-A-C-E, Jannace.

AM: J-A- yeah, Anthony. And he is the guy that when Edmund was running for governor, he's the guy that came to the Democratic thing and we organized a big pow wow to raise money for Edmund down at the VFW.

FM: Oh yeah, but Teddy, my brother Teddy was the one that had a big fund raiser for Edmund when he ran for governor the first time.

AM: Yeah, this, and you know, I did a charcoal sketch of Edmund and, for Ed, he bumped into me one time and he said, what ever happened to the sketch you made of me? And I, it was a big one, I had a little flair with, I can do a little bit of drawing. So Anthony came to me and he said would you draw a picture of Ed Muskie. I said, "Holy cow!" But the likeness of him came out all right, and when we had the big banquet for him it was Jannace stuck it up on the wall right down at the whole, where it was all, you could see it all framed. And it disappeared, I never got it back, it disappeared. And we, and Edmund asked me one day, he said, "Whatever happened to the charcoal drawing you made of me?" And I said, "Jeepers, I don't know." I found out later that it ended up I guess in the scrap heap somewhere. He wanted it I guess. Because I made one of -

FM: Well that was when he first ran for governor and he surprised everyone when he won.

AM: And of course from then on I had to do one of Mitchell, and I had to do one of Lucy Cormier.

FM: Lucia.

AM: They were running for office. Mitchell kept his. They told me he's got it hanging up in his office in Washington. I don't know.

FM: I doubt it because I don't think he's there any more, is he?

AL: He's back and forth, yes, he has, well he's on so many boards.

FM: He was, you should have gone to that, told you, you should have gone to the memorial because he was there.

AM: Yeah, yeah, I would have liked to talk with him because I, I worked on all his campaigns.

AL: Oh, really?

AM: Yeah, Mitchell's. I was, and I think I was still chairman then, I don't know. But anyway Joyce, Joyce, oh, did he like her. Joyce -

FM: The one that just died. The one that just died. The one that just died, the Roy, Joyce Roy.

AM: Yeah, Joyce Roy. Did he like her.

FM: She was a doer.

AM: She put on a lot of things for him, and he took his to Washington and the first. Because that I know, I went to his office in Lewiston once for, I forgot what now, I don't know, I had to find out if I could get something from the government or something. And I had made a little sketch and they had it hanging up in their office. I said, "You know who drew that?" And the little girl said, "No." I said, "I did."

FM: Had to take the credit.

AM: He had an office in Lewiston at that time when he was in, what was he, a representative or -?

FM: He was a senator, he was the leader of the house, he was a senator.

AM: And he had an office in Lewiston where the people could go.

FM: Too bad he still wasn't there.

AM: But, and then Lucia Cormier, poor Lucia, she lost out, she was running for something, she got beat. But she got a big job, they gave her the head of all the -

FM: Was it customs?

AL: Yes. Well, she ran against Margaret Chase Smith.

FM: Oh yeah, she was an (*unintelligible phrase*).

AM: Well I did one of her and the guy that worked with her is another boy from Rumford -

FM: Kelly.

AM: Yeah, he told me it was hanging up in her office. I said, well she must have liked it. But I say, I was involved with politics quite a while.

AL: What was Lucia Cormier like?

FM: She was my French teacher.

AL: She was your French teacher in high school?

AM: Oh, yes.

FM: Yeah, the thing I remember about her -

AM: She was a business woman.

FM: Well, later.

AL: Later, yeah. What was she like as a teacher?

AM: Oh, very strict, oh.

FM: No fooling around, just business.

AM: No fooling around in her class.

FM: Just conjugate the verbs. You know, it was just that, there was no personality at all, it was just a job that she did and did very thoroughly. But you know, it was, she did it for years and it just slipped right off her tongue, you know, you just sat there and you were exposed to it and it was up to you to get it.

AM: And she decided to go into business.

FM: She was a nice lady, but as a teacher she just, I think she was just bored to death.

AL: She didn't inspire the students?

FM: No, well not me. But I had her in junior, in my sophomore and my senior years and we had some little French guy that came in, he just came from France, and we used to call Monsieur Flowers. He was completely different, you know, and we had a good time, we laughed a lot. Because he had all those little mannerisms that we could imagine French people from France had, you know, he was very emotional on some things.

AM: And I got to talk to her, I don't know who talked her into going for the politics, but anyway I got to talk to her quite often. She had a store on Congress Street. What was it, of books?

FM: Books and records and sundries.

AL: Cards and gifts?

FM: Yeah, sundry things. She wasn't there an awful long time.

AM: No, well, she did well and left. And I say, she got that appointment that was -

FM: Yeah, well she had, she was gifted, she had, she was a debater. She was a person that really developed her speaking ability by debating.

AM: Yeah, you could find that out.

FM: But teaching I think was a, you know, was not something that she really enjoyed doing, she wasn't -

AL: Now you didn't have her as a French teacher?

AM: No, I had a, it was a lady from Lewiston, Maine and, man, I run into trouble with her because -

FM: But the funny thing is, the funny thing about teachers that came here to Rumford in those days, they stayed forever, you know? Like, I had teachers that my brothers had. And when my brother Alec came to visit when Henry was dying, he said to me, he said, "I used to date the girl that used to live in this house." And he said, he said, "Is, what's her, what was her first name, Ireland? What was her first name?" I can't remember, but he said, "It was a different kind of a name," he says, "Do you know anybody by the name of something Ireland?" And I said, "Yeah, she lives right up there." He said, "She does?" And I said, "Yeah, but she's not there." I said, she, it was wintertime, and I said, "She is gone to Europe," because it was cheaper to travel during the wintertime. When she came home she said, "That was a big mistake because I very nearly froze to death," there was no central heating at that time. She said she'd get up in the morning to wash up and the basin was right in the room, it would be ice, you couldn't even wash your face in it. So she said that was a very poor idea, but probably saved a lot of money. Her husband had just died and she went with a friend. But he said, the last time I saw her, he said, was right up there and she was on a horse, she was, she loved horses. In fact, we brought the hor-, one of, the pony, when Pamela had a pony, we brought the pony here before we brought them to the barn and she came down and she was all excited about that. She was a horse person.

AM: Yeah, we went horse crazy.

AL: Oh yes.

AM: We had how many, five or six horses, and we ended up with one little pony.

FM: He's about that big. My grandchildren are allergic to them. In fact Pamela was allergic to them, too, but she, she toughed it out. She just loves horses, animals period.

AL: Did teachers, well let me ask you this, you said teachers stayed forever.

FM: Yeah.

AL: Were they mostly women, and were they mostly single?

FM: No, Murphy was, Julia Murphy was single and she taught Latin. And she taught, she taught Latin to my brothers and she taught me, because there was always a comparison, you know, which was not very favorable to me. And there was Baum, Mr. Baum, he taught for a long time, (*name*) taught for a long time.

AM: Oh, jeepers, yeah.

FM: Who else, who was the lady that taught ancient history? Miss Farnham, was a math teacher in the eighth grade, and she taught everybody. She retired when she must have been close to eighty.

AM: Yeah, Mrs. Farnham.

FM: And Bessie Higgins, Poulin -

AM: For years and years that were here. And the principal was -

FM: Lord.

AM: George Lord, and man when you went into his office it was only one way conversation. He didn't want to know what your side of it was. I know, I met him two or three times.

FM: That doesn't happen any more.

AM: I was a little bit on the wise guy side and always got a little trouble, I don't know how but I did.

AL: Well, you know what? That clock just ran three which means I've all the time I'm supposed to have, take up with you this afternoon.

FM: Yeah, but I thought you'd be out of here in a shot, I didn't think we had that much to tell you.

AM: Well, you made a mistake, you're running with a couple of chatters.

FM: Well, you can take the credit.

AL: So as we end here, is there anything you feel is significant that I haven't asked you or we haven't added to the record?

FM: No.

AL: No?

AM: I say, of course I didn't know very much about his personal life, you know, I mean -

FM: Nobody did, he was a very personal kind of a person.

AM: (*Unintelligible word*) but he, he said, I guess he worked with his father I think after school, I don't know.

FM: Yeah, he did, he did some sewing for his father, he said that in his book.

AM: And I set up bowling pins in the alley at the institute.

FM: She's got to leave.

AM: Oh.

FM: Her time is up, Austin, she has heard enough from us, I'm sure.

AL: Oh, no, no, just that, I just, we always make an agreement not to keep you guys sitting here more than two hours because it's not fair to keep you guys sitting for more than two hours.

AM: Well, if somebody will listen -

AL: I'd stay all night long.

FM: If somebody will listen, that's great.

AM: I'm pretty hard to shut up.

FM: Amen, I can't argue that point.

AM: (*Unintelligible phrase*).

FM: That's why when he goes shopping it's, you know, five minutes and, five minutes and have all that he had to do done, and he comes home, you know, hours afterwards so I know he's bumped into somebody, somebody or some people.

AM: Yeah, she hates to send me down to the store to get some potatoes, it'll take me a couple of hours, I should be back in fifteen minutes. But he was valedictorian, I think, wasn't he, of the class?

AL: May have been.

AM: I think he was. Of course I say that -

FM: I think, I think that was important to them because my oldest brother, you know, was very

bright, too.

AM: Oh, was he, yeah.

FM: And he was a great athlete.

AM: I said, when we were younger we remember her brother, jeez, brothers.

FM: And Eddy he died before the w-, well, he died in '43. But he went to, he went to Temple, he graduated with highest honors. For a long time I remember he used to play with his little medals that he had, they were gold. His daughter, when he died they belonged to his daughter.

AM: And it's, the president of our class was Elizabeth Tinney, and we voted her in for four straight years, the class. She was elected when she was a freshman and she had it from then on. And I don't know Edmund must have held one of the offices, I don't know, but.

FM: He probably didn't have time for that, too, you know. And she was very good, she was an organizer, she was very bright.

AM: And everyone liked her.

FM: Everybody in that class got along pretty well.

AM: Yeah. And then, oh, and they had a debating team when we were in high school. The English teacher we had was Miss Clary, and that was another one that I caddied for, and for some strange reason, and I don't know why, but she proposed to having debates in class. Oh, jeez.

FM: Who did you debate against last time?

AM: Muskie.

AL: How did that go?

AM: I don't know, I guess, she must have gave me a high mark -

FM: I could guess.

AM: I said, nobody else would have dared to do it, I says, but I tackled it but, and I spent a lot of time at the library. And I forget what the subject was, but oh my gosh. And I forgot who his partner was, maybe it was Davis Hines, I don't -

FM: The important thing is, Austin, you were, you know, yeah, you were debating against Edmund, chances were nothing to almost.

AM: I had a partner, I had a partner, a boy by the name of Garrier and the poor guy, they hung

a name on him, Goofy, he was known as Goofy Garrier. And we, there we were at the front, we had to go down in front of the class and they generally used to be, what, at least twenty students or maybe more in each class.

FM: Probably a lot more.

AM: Yeah, and we had to, yes, maybe thirty.

FM: But a lot kids, I, you know, a lot of kids during that time didn't go to school, to high school, so maybe you were right. They had to work.

AM: But anyway, so Goofy and I were up against Muskie and his partner and we, I said I hope she can give me a high mark, I don't remember. I didn't get many A's.

AL: Do you remember what she was trying to teach you about debating that, what was she emphasizing was important when you're debating?

AM: That's, well that's what I think she, she wanted to make us all understand, you know, that we had to dig into stuff and find out all about it and then try to present it. As I said all we had was the public library, we had a library at the school but the one at the school was very -

FM: A couple of books.

AM: Yeah, not very -

FM: There weren't that many.

AM: And so I did go to the, and Goofy did. Of course Goofy -

FM: A lot of kids used that library, though, a lot of people used that library.

AM: Oh, I, well I said, I spent a lot of time for the boys, that we used to go to read the stories over there to the Rumford Library that, the ones that would be the knights and King Arthur and, we'd dig those up. We didn't read them in school but we did over there. In school we had, what, Ivanhoe, and -

FM: That's a great story.

AM: Yes, oh, I loved it. And we used to come home, we'd make Indian stuff that we could go around whooping and hollering. What was it, what was the author that we -?

FM: Oh, the one from the northern part of New York.

AM: The teacher's name we called Cannonball Hayes, I don't know.

FM: You're talking about -

AM: English.

FM: You're talking about the Indians?

AM: Yes, Ivanhoe, who was the author?

FM: James Fenimore Cooper.

AM: Oh yeah, that's it, we used to go look for his books.

AL: Last of the Mohicans.

AM: Yeah, they had quite a few of them. And I guess you could get those at the library.

FM: They don't read them any more.

AM: No. Once in a while we see a -

FM: He was a racist, they claim.

AM: Once in a while we see a rerun on TV, it brings back memories. Yeah, Cannonball Hayes. And she loved that Cooper, wow.

FM: Well, he wrote very interesting stories about a very interesting time in our history.

AM: And I, as I said, that Miss Clary now, she was, she came from Livermore Falls and drove up here every day.

FM: That would have been something in the winter time.

AL: Yeah, back then, oh my gosh.

AM: Well back there then the roads aren't too well taken care of.

FM: No, but they had those high fenders.

AL: Yeah.

AM: Big wheel tires.

AL: Well, thank you both so much.

FM: Well thank you for coming.

AL: I appreciate it.

End of Interview