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An Interview with Dr. Jack Schofield

An Oral History Conducted by Claytee D. White

Voices of the Historic John S. Park Neighborhood

Oral History Research Center at UNLV
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This project was the brainchild of Deborah Boehm, Ph.D. and Patrick Jackson who taught at UNLV and resided in the John S. Park Neighborhood. As they walked their community, they realized it was a special place that intersected themes of gender, class, race/ethnicity, religion, sexuality and gentrification. Patrick and Deborah learned that John S. Park had been listed on the National Registry of Historic Places and that original homeowners, local politicians, members of the gay community, Latino immigrants, artists and gallery owners and an enclave of UNLV staff all lived in the neighborhood. Therefore, they decided that the history of this special place had to be preserved, joined with the Oral History Research Center at UNLV Libraries and wrote a grant that was funded by the Centennial Committee.

The transcripts received minimal editing that included the elimination of fragments, false starts and repetitions in order to enhance the reader's understanding of the narrative. These interviews have been catalogued and can be found as non-circulating documents in Special Collections at UNLV's Lied Library.

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Interview with Jack Schofield

January 13, 2009 in Las Vegas, Nevada

Conducted by Suzanne Becker

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Preface

In the dusty border town of Douglas, Arizona, Dr. Jack Lund Schofield was born in the family home in 1923. Due to the economic woes of the Great Depression, the Schofield family moved several times until 1937—the year that Jack's father took a position as a tungsten broker and moved his family of five children to Nevada.

For Jack, who was ready to start high school, the move from Phoenix to Las Vegas with a small population of 5000 was a shock. However, it did not take the gregarious Jack long to make friends at Las Vegas High School. He played sports and was a Golden Glove boxing champion.

As Jack's high school years drew to an end, two major events occurred: he met his future wife and World War II began. He proudly highlights his service as a fighter pilot in both WWII and the Korea conflict, his family genealogy, and his devotion to being an excellent educator, businessman, family man, and politician. In 1995, he earned his doctorate in education at the age of 72. His resume includes being an elected official, serving on the Board of Regents and having a middle school named after him. Jack and his wife, Alene, have resided in the John S. Park Neighborhood for over 50 years and describes his affection for the neighborhood and some of the changes that have occurred.

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Voices of the Historic John S. Park Neighborhood



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Jack Schofield 1-13-2009
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Interview with Dr. Jack Lund Schofield

January 13, 2009 in Las Vegas, Nevada
Conducted by Suzanne Becker

Dr. Schofield, thank you very much for talking with us today. First of all, tell me a little bit about where you're from. When were you born, and where were you born?

I was born on April 25, 1923 in Douglas, Arizona, right on the border of Mexico. And two blocks from the border, was our home. My mother birthed me in her bedroom. The doctor's name was Lund, Carl Lund; that's where my middle name comes from, because I was supposed to die when I was born. My chances for survival were slim to none, according to my mother. So he worked on me, whatever he had to do, for about three weeks and brought me back to life, so I'm still existing at age eighty-five. So whatever he did, he did a good job.

And why was there [a problem]?

Well, I was called a blue baby. So according to what my research has been, the arteries from the lungs to the heart did not connect properly while I was in the womb. And so afterwards it was just a matter of maturing and getting the connection there, and he did whatever to keep me alive while this connection process was taking place in my body. I'm very grateful to Dr. Lund, and my mother gave me his name for my middle name, and I like to use it for that very reason, so I could refer to my mother, who I consider to be one of the finest people that ever lived. She had strong, strict core values, and she tried to instill those core values into my life, as I was growing up. So she did a good job, and I've always felt that love from her and also from my father who fathered six children. I have five siblings.

Where are you in the lineup?

I'm number three in the lineup. And number four was a son. He died at age two. And there's his picture right over there on the wall. I'm the older one at five years of age (up above that football picture) and he's on the left, to my right, in the picture, and his name was Thomas [Schofield] Junior, and he passed away at age two from pneumonia and measles, a combination that took him out. His little body couldn't survive it. So it just about killed my father because he just lived and breathed his love for that little boy. And I remember my father grieving. It was really interesting.

What was your father's name?

Thomas Theron Schofield. And he was named after his grandfather, one of his grandfathers, his paternal grandfather. And he was named after him, Thomas, the Thomas came from there, and Thomas Jackson Schofield was his [paternal grandfather's] name. And he married my great-grandmother and she died in childbirth, giving birth to my grandfather, and she was only thirty-two years of age. He was her second child. So if she hadn't have had that second child, my whole line would not be here.

Amazing when you think about that.

It is. It's a miracle that we're here, the way we are.

Survivors. Perseverance.

You're right, I've survived, and John S. Park area, historical area [has survived].

I know. Did you grow up, then, in Douglas?

I lived to age eight in Douglas. My father was a manager of a J.C. Penney store there in Douglas for fifteen years. And after the [Great] Depression, after the stock market fell, we had the greatest depression in the history of the United States. I was a young boy during that period of time, and I remember the bread lines and I remember the lineup of

the National Guard to keep peace in the area we were living. We moved from there to Gallup, New Mexico, and then we lived in Gallup for four years, from the time I was eight years to twelve, and then we moved to Phoenix, Arizona, and I attended the seventh and eighth grade in Phoenix, and then my father became a mining broker, and he brought his family of five children and his wife to Las Vegas [Nevada] so that he could broker this tungsten mine that's a hundred and fifty miles north of Las Vegas, in a place called Rachel [Nevada] which now is [near] an area that they call it Area 51, where the Stealth fighter were stealthily training.

So was he working with the [Nevada] Test Site [NTS] at that time?

There was no test site at the time.

It was 1937 when this happened.

So there's been mining in that area.

He was prospecting for gold, for silver, or tungsten. At the time, tungsten was plentiful, in the mining area that he had claims on, at a place near Rachel.

You lived in Las Vegas though.

We lived in Las Vegas. I came here when I was a freshman at Las Vegas High School. I was age fourteen. So we've been here for seventy-two years.

So, when you arrived in Las Vegas, having lived in places like Gallup and Douglas, what were your first impressions of living here?

Well, at age fourteen, I had a lot of friends over in Phoenix. I had established my friendships in school and so on, and I was really reluctant to move. I did not want to move from my friends that I had made over there. And to me, coming to Las Vegas was like coming to a [small town]. Phoenix then was about ten times larger, about twenty

times larger than Las Vegas. The Las Vegas population at that time was five thousand people. It's two million now but it was five thousand at that time. There was of course only one elementary school and one high school in Las Vegas. And so I attended the old Las Vegas High School. It's called the Las Vegas Academy now. And I attended classes and I was an athlete. I went out for football, even though I was small. I still love football and I wanted to be a football star, so I played halfback for the Las Vegas High School football team, and I boxed. I fought Golden Gloves. Anytime there was any kind of tournament, I was fighting in the tournaments. And I was very active with other people, and the students, and as a result, I made friends fast and pretty soon I had a lot of friends. But I would go back to Phoenix, to visit with my relatives who lived in Phoenix, and my friends that I had established, you know, before I came over here. But that helped me because I'd go back about once every six months for a two-or-three-day visit and stay. I could stay with my relatives. And then I'd visit my friends, then I'd come back to Las Vegas. But I was able to adjust to Las Vegas and this environment, and as I gained the friendships here, I gradually weaned away from Phoenix. But I wanted to let you know that I would always go by air. They didn't have too much air transportation, so I'd go by ground air, which was with your thumb this way, air you going my way?

[Laughing] And how long of a journey was that usually? How long did that take you?

It'd take about seven, eight hours if I hitchhiked, and I was pretty lucky, to get rides.

And what road went to Phoenix at that time?

Not the same one that we have here now, except it goes to Kingman [Arizona], same road to Kingman, but from Kingman it was called Highway 66, Route 66, which still is now a

freeway. But you go on 66 towards Flagstaff [Arizona], but in Ash Fork, that's where the junction was, and you'd turn south at Ash Fork and go through Prescott, and then Phoenix. So that's the way the route was. There was usually a lot of traffic on the road so I'd catch rides pretty quick. I was young and foolish for doing it because I was risking [my life], but that was all right.

Seems to have worked.

I had a lot of courage.

And probably a lot of good stories.

A lot of them. I spent the night in a little community near Ash Fork called Seligman, and I only had three dollars in my pocket. I used one of the dollars to buy a room for a night's stay, and I used the other two dollars for food. And so the next morning I got up and I was hungry as can be but I didn't have any money. So I got up and I was standing out there with my thumb sticking out, trying to catch a ride, and some young cowboy came up to me and he said, hey, kid, you look kind of hungry. Here's a quarter. At that time, for a quarter you could buy a quart of milk. So I bought a quart of milk and drank that and then went right back on the highway and got a ride right to Phoenix. Feeling good. But those were the stories and the fun part of those experiences.

When you first got to Las Vegas, where were you living? What part of town was your family in?

North Las Vegas. My father was always a good provider, so he rented a home in North Las Vegas. You know where Jerry's Nugget [Casino] is now?

Yeah.

OK, just right in the parking lot of Jerry's Nugget, was a street called Glider, and that was the home that my father rented. It was a nice, three-bedroom, one-bath home for his five children. We lived there for about a year and then he bought a home across the street on the east of Jerry's Nugget, and remodeled it and made a lovely home out of a rundown piece of property, and that's where we lived all the way through high school. So I would go to school. We had no busing, of course, and it's quite a trip from Jerry's Nugget up to Las Vegas High School, where it is now, so I would also go by air to school: air you going my way?

[Laughing] So you did a lot of hitchhiking. [You were an] expert.

I did.

Tell me a little bit more about what Las Vegas was like during your high school years and when you guys first got here because I think it's a very different town now.

Yes, it is. My wife's aunt, her father's sister, was named Rose Warren, and Rose Warren was married to, we call him Uncle Warren. But anyway, she was one of the historical figures, one of the new people in Las Vegas, and they lived over off of D Street in Westside. At that time there was very few African Americans. It was all a Caucasian neighborhood.

And this is late 1930s?

In the late thirties, 1937 to 1941. That's when this period is. That's when we moved here, in 1937, which was seventy-two years ago, and I'm eighty-five now. And so, anyway, my wife was a teenager at the time and she would come down to visit her Aunt Rose, and by the way, later, the school district honored her by naming one of the first elementary

schools, which still exists, Rose Warren Elementary School. [Rose Warren] was my wife's aunt. And then they honored me later in life by giving my name to a school, the Jack [Lund] Schofield Middle School out on Wigwam and Spencer, near Silverado High School. And then Pat [A.] Diskin Elementary School here, Pat Diskin was my brother-in-law. He was married to my sister Geraldine. So they were married and Pat was our coach. He was like the Jerry Tarkanian of that era. And so he was well known and he was the man, the big man here in Las Vegas.

And so he was a football coach?

Basketball. He was the basketball coach. He came from the University of Pennsylvania, and he was a teacher at Las Vegas High School. And Harvey Stanford was the football coach, was my football coach, and Pat Diskin was also assistant football coach. And so we've got three schools that are in the family, that have family names on them.

And also of interest is Rose Warren had two sons, and their names were Ernest [James] May and Willie May, and there is a street over there by Rancho [Drive] and Washington [Avenue] that is named Ernest May Lane, because Ernest and his brother both were cops, and they were killed on duty. [Note: According to *Asphalt Memories: Origins of some of the Street Names of Clark County* by Mark P. Hall-Patton (2009), Ernest James May was the first Las Vegas policeman killed in the line of duty (1933).] And so we have family activity, way back then, historically.

Very much a legacy here, and particularly within education too, it sounds like.

So, what types of things did you guys do during high school? What was the development of the downtown area at that time?

Well, the development of the downtown area, the main thoroughfare of where gaming started, gaming became legal in the 1932 session of the legislature, '33, right in there.

[Note: Gaming was legalized in the State of Nevada in 1931.] So they had clubs, casinos, right on Fremont Street. There was no Strip. Las Vegas Boulevard was called Fifth Street. So we had Fifth Street and there were no casinos out there.

What was on Fifth Street at the time, anything?

Motels, restaurants, drive-ins. There was a drive-in called Tips that we used to frequent.

Where is that located on the Strip?

It's right over here, just through the block here, which was way out of town at the time. And the Foley family ([after whom] they named the federal building, the Foley Building), there were five sons, and they all became attorneys. And their father was a lawyer also, and he became a judge, Judge [Roger D.] Foley. That's why they named the federal building after him. And his brothers [sons?], Joseph Foley was one of them, Joe was my age, and he was one of my sidekicks, and we would frequent Tips Barbeque all the time. That was our favorite hangout there.

And then the other entertainment we had was at Mount Charleston, Kyle Canyon, because we could go up there and sleigh-ride, and if you were wealthy enough to have skis and know how to ski, you could ski there, but mainly just sleigh rides.

Was the ski area up there at that time?

No.

OK. You could just take your skis out there.

Right. The ski area was later, and that was over in Lee Canyon. There's Kyle Canyon first and then Lee Canyon is the next. But they did develop the ski run up there because it

was higher elevation and more runs they could make for skiing. And in the 1960s, I had all my children (we had six children), and all my children, I bought them all skis. I bought a family pack and had them all learn how to ski up in Lee Canyon, in the sixties, as they were growing up.

But those were the fun things in the area. And then the others were the parties and the girl-reverse dances and the junior proms, typically of what goes now, at that time.

Were you guys close? Was the high school population a close-knit population?

Very close. It was just like a large family, a large extended family, your school. Your school was everything, and all your life was all centered around school.

And then in the summers, my grandfather, William Jonas Schofield, the one that was born and my great-grandmother died giving birth to him, he married Sarah Jane Udall, from the Udall family in Utah and Arizona. Senator Mark Udall [Democrat, Colorado] from Colorado is my cousin, and his brother [Senator] Tom Udall [Democrat, New Mexico] in New Mexico, a congressman now, is my cousin, his brother. Stewart Udall who was the Secretary of the Interior [1961-1969], he was my cousin.

And so all the Udalls are my relatives through my grandmother, Sarah Jane Udall. But she and her husband, William Jonas Schofield, in 1899, moved to Alamo, Nevada, only they settled in a little [community nearby]. Eight miles up from Alamo is a settlement called Hiko, Nevada. You have to go through Hiko to go to Rachel. But they had family and huge ranches out there that my grandfather settled and created. So I would go up in the summer and work for him on the ranch because I got my free room and board if I would work and pitch hay and help them on the ranch this way, milk the cows,

slop the hogs, and do all the things that you do on a ranch. So that was my summer entertainment.

How did you enjoy that?

I loved it because on the weekends we would go hunt mustangs. So we'd saddle up our horses, our good horses that we had, and we'd go over to Delamar Flat, which is across the one mountain range from Hiko, and we would hunt those mustangs. And these mustangs would gather in great big herds, so we would cut off some of the herds and run them up a box canyon and then we had a corral fixed up so they couldn't get out, after we ran them in the box canyon, and then we would take and cull out the best ones, and keep them for ourselves and break them and tame them and use them for riding horses, those that we wanted to keep. The others we just let them go back on the range and be free. Free spirits. But it was fun because when you were chasing the mustangs, you're riding as fast as that horse would gallop, and it was just the biggest rush you could ever have. And it prepared me for going in World War II and flying in combat as a fighter pilot, because we were rushing after those mustangs. But that was the fun part. I'm writing a book now and I'm calling it "The Audacity of Hunting Mustangs as a Teenager in Nevada." That's one of the books I'm writing. So it's just fun. Beautiful memories of the fun things that you did.

Absolutely. So this was while you were in high school.

While I was in high school.

Right. And now, you graduated high school in 1941?

Uh huh, '41.

And what came after that? What was next?

Well, in August of 1941 I was eighteen years old, and my wife was nineteen.

So now, let's back up a minute. When did you meet your wife? How did you two meet?

We met in the Sweet Shop where the Golden Nugget [Hotel and Casino] is now.

There was a sweet shop there?

The Golden Nugget is on Fremont Street. Where the Golden Nugget buffet is, was about the location of the Sweet Shop. And next to the Sweet Shop was the Boulder Drugstore. And next to the Boulder Drugstore was the Oasis Café.

OK. And that's down on like First [Street] or Second Street by Fremont?

That was the 200 block of Fremont. Second Street. That's between First and Second Street on Fremont. That's Casino Center Drive now. And then on the next block is the Four Queens [Hotel and Casino]. By the way, the Four Queens was named after four girls that Benny [Ben] Goffstein had, his four daughters. And I taught them all how to swim, when I was a lifeguard at the Flamingo Hotel [and Casino] in the 1950s. And that's kind of fun because his daughters became schoolteachers, and two of his daughters taught school at the school that has my name on it [Jack Lund Schofield Middle School].

It is a small, small world. [Laughing]

It is, isn't it? But anyway, I went in there after football practice one day when I was seventeen years old. We'd usually stop in the Sweet Shop. That was our hangout. And it was run by a man by the name of Fair Lawrence, and he catered to young people to come in to have sandwiches and Cokes and malts and milkshakes. It was a food place and a hangout.

So I went in there to hang out after football practice one day when I was seventeen years old, in September of 1940, and sitting across the booth from where I sat was my [future] wife. At the time she was eighteen years old. And so I started getting acquainted with her, flirting with her. And so we met and we visited for about two hours. And then she had to go back to Utah where her home was. She was on her way to Utah. She was visiting her aunt, Rose Warren.

And so about nine months later she came back to Las Vegas to work. Because she was from Utah and was working in Cedar City [Utah], and they paid her a dollar a day for being a waitress, plus her tips, and she was making good money, and a bus driver one day told my wife, he says, why don't you go to Las Vegas? They're paying three dollars a day there, plus your tips. So she believed him and she came to Las Vegas and that's where I met her again. That was in May of 1941.

What was she doing here?

She went to work for Becky Jones, who ran the Boulder Drugstore food counter. Becky's husband was Sheriff Glen [C.] Jones. And so it was all small-town and we all knew one another.

So anyway, she worked for Becky, and we courted for that three-month period from May to August [1941], and then I finally talked her into getting married. She tried not to get married though because she said I was too young.

You were eighteen at the time?

I was eighteen. And I said, I want to get married to you, and she said, no, you're too young. And I says, I'm not too young, and I kept coaxing her, and she finally consented. But she said, you'll give me trouble, being so young. She was a very wise nineteen-year-

old girl. So I finally talked her into it and so we were married then, and that was sixty-seven years ago. So sixty-seven years with the same man and woman.

And you knew right then and there.

Well, I could see that she had values. She had certain core values that could make a marriage work.

And were you still in school at the time or had school ended?

I was still in school. When she came back, it was in May [1941], and then I graduated the first of June.

So you were just finishing.

Just finishing high school. And that's when I was fighting Golden Gloves also. And in June of that year, I won the Golden Gloves championship of the western states. And then I was invited to go to Chicago [Illinois] to fight in the Olympics. But on December the seventh, 1941, the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor [Hawaii], which changed everything for everybody, because then I had to go in the draft, and sign up for the draft, and they were going to draft me into the military. So before they did, I went to school up at BYU [Brigham Young University] in the following fall of '42, in September of '42, and in October of 1942 I took the aviation cadet exam to go in and be a pilot. They were taking anybody from age eighteen to twenty-six, and I fell in that category because I was nineteen years old at the time. So they called me and I went through training in the aviation cadet program and became a fighter pilot. And then I went to China and flew combat in China.

What were your thoughts about going into the military at that time?

Well, you couldn't think of anything.

[Dr. Schofield takes another call at this point.]

So we were just talking about you getting into the military and you'd taken your fighter pilot training.

And I took my fighter pilot training. The thing that I was impressed [with] more about the fighter pilot training than anything else was the amount of confidence they placed in each of us as a fighter pilot; the thing that they drove into our minds is that there's only three answer that you can give anyone in the military, and that's "yes, sir," "no, sir," "no excuse, sir." In other words, whatever mission you were assigned on, you could not renege on, you could not fail, you could not say no to. You went on every mission that they sent you on. And that's why and how we won World War II. Because we listened to Winston Churchill when he made his famous nine-word speech to his graduating class, which was, "You must never give up, never, never, never, never." And they instilled that in us so that we could do the right thing, so we could win that war, which we did, of course.

Now, what made you decide to do the fighter pilot training?

My decision was this. I was either going to be drafted to go in the military—if I was drafted, they would place me wherever they wanted me, and I might wind up in the infantry carrying a gun, a rifle, and walking and sleeping in mud and rain—or I could be trained as a fighter pilot, and fly back to my base after flying a mission, and get in between clean sheets. That was my choice. I had to fight a war, regardless. I might as well choose what I was going to do. And my choice was to fly as a fighter pilot, because there was a lot of glamour to it, too. There was a lot of hype that they gave us, you know, if we were a fighter pilot, and they treated us unusually nice, if you survived. If you could

survive the missions, they treated you nice. And that's what I looked like, right up there [*gesturing to photograph on wall*]. See that picture there?

Above you and your brother? Yeah.

Now see the bottom picture there? That's when I was playing football for Las Vegas High School. That was a football picture. The others, I'm five years old and with my two-year-old brother who passed away.

Good pictures.

Come over here and I'll show you. [*Walking over to another part of the room.*] This is what I looked like then, too. That was a football picture. This is me, with my crew, on the fighter bomber that we flew to China. We flew this to China, fifteen thousand miles. I looked like that.

And this is one of your children?

That's the girl that you just met. She's sixty-three years old now. That's the girl that you just met and that was my wife at age nineteen.

You were a very good-looking couple.

Thank you. [*Showing family photographs.*] And this is about forty-five years ago, and this is my family about forty years ago, and that's my wife and the girl you just met, was this one right here, and husband, and their daughter who now is forty-three years old, and my two sons. He teaches out at the prison, and he teaches math at UNLV [University of Nevada, Las Vegas] and he's getting his PhD. And she's a cop in Atlanta, Georgia. And she's the mother of four children, and she's the mother of eight. She's the mother of four children and she's the mother of eight.

That's how you have so many grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

That's why. This is our home across the street that we were living in at that time.

[Indicating a photograph] Is this Helldorado?

No, that's the Rose Parade [in Pasadena, California]. I used to ride my horse with a silver saddle in the Rose Parade. For thirteen years I rode in that parade. And I would go down there, the main thing as a politician so I'd get the exposure. So, I don't know whether I gave you a card or not.

Yeah, yeah.

Did I give you the Congressional card? I'm running for Congress and I'll give you the Congressional card, and if you open it you'll see the fifteen rights that I believe that we have, and one of them is to have equal rights for women, because you don't have equal rights. Like they pay you half what they pay men and get away with it.

Or at least seventy cents to the dollar.

Right. I'm going to pass a federal law so they can't do that.

Bring the ERA [Equal Rights Amendment] back.

[Showing more photographs] This is the cop in Atlanta now. This is a year ago when she remarried. Her husband died. This is her husband. He died about six years ago, and so she decided to remarry a year ago, and so she's back in Atlanta, Georgia. She's a cop there now.

This is the new group of people. Most of those are my great-grandkids and grandkids.

That's the one that died up there, Rob Minette. He was a cop on Metro [Las Vegas Metropolitan Police]. He was a fugitive detective and he was a real neat guy.

And that's what I looked like when I flew the B-25 to China. I was a fighter pilot there.

And that's what she [my wife] looked like when we were married, right there. She was eighteen.

And this is the grandfather here, William Jonas Schofield and Sarah Jane Udall.

Wow, look at that! These are great.

Isn't that something?

Yeah. The photos are fantastic.

This is Pat Diskin and my sister Geraldine. And these are grandchildren and great-grandchildren of her. She has eight children. They're all adults now.

Now, that's forty-five years ago. That was me and my wife you met and the girl you just met.

Beautiful family.

Those were our two dogs. That was Duke and that was King.

And was that in the house across the street or this house?

No, that was out where the Renaissance Hotel is now, on Paradise Road, by Desert Inn [Road], the convention center. That's where that was. That was the house that Jack built.

[Laughing] Not this one?

Not this one.

Sounds like you might have built a lot of houses.

I did. Oh, let me show you this, too, while you're here. You may get a kick out of this.

This was the four daughters here, and this is out there by the Renaissance Hotel.

Very cute! That's a great picture. What a great picture. [Laughing] That's a great picture.

Yeah. And that's my two sons. On the back of his diaper there was "Don't spank."

That was my wife, when she was in kindergarten, or first grade. That was her first grade class and her teacher in Utah. Wasn't that something?

Yeah, that's a great photo.

That's the girl that you just met, with all her classmates.

Well, I've taken more of your time. I'm talking too much.

No, it's great, it's great, this is exactly the, you know, it's your life story, it's fantastic.

So, how long were you a fighter pilot?

I was in active duty from 1942 to 1946, four years. And then I remained in the reserves, and I flew in Salt Lake City [Utah] while I was going to college at the University of Utah. I flew in the Air National Guard there, and the Air National Guard was recalled for the Korean War [1950-1953], so I went back in for two more years as a fighter pilot for the Korean War. And the card I just gave you, did you look at the front of it?

I did. Yes.

See what it says there?

"World War II fighter bomber pilot, Flying Tigers, China. B-25, Korean Conflict, A-26 pilot." With your fifteen Bill of Rights.

So you've done quite a bit of military service.

Fourteen years. I should've put six more in, and I would've been able to retire with a retirement income, but I got busy politically, and didn't do that, so I really lost, money-wise. I lost a lot, by doing that.

After your service in Korea, did you go back to the University of Utah, or where did you go after that?

After I returned, I came back to Las Vegas, and I started teaching at Paradise School, and I was a coach. I was a teacher and coach and a school administrator for the rest of my career, until I retired.

And when you came back to Las Vegas, what part of town did you come back to?

Where were you living at the time?

I lived out there where the Renaissance Hotel is. That's where my home was. I built the house that Jack built. The sign that I put up there at that time [came from there]. And I lived there for about ten years.

What road was that?

Paradise Road.

It was on Paradise.

Sierra Vista Drive, right on the corner of Sierra Vista Drive and Paradise Road, just a block from Desert Inn [Road].X So I lived there most of the time. Right across the street from me was Governor Bob [Robert Joseph] Miller's home. His family lived there, on the golf course, at the time. And so then we moved to this home across the street that had the picture in the background that you saw.

Right. And what's the address on that?

1487 South Eighth Street, in the next block.

And what year was that?

That was in 1963. And I lived there for about seven years, and I built another home down on, you know where Eastern [Avenue] and Saint Louis [Avenue] is. There is a Jaycee Park there. Well, right across the street from the park is a two-story home that I built. That was the next house that Jack built, and I built that home, which still exists. It's painted green; it's a two-story Cape Cod-style home. I did about 98-percent of all the work myself on that, just building it. It was a project that I had part-time. I was teaching school at Valley High School and I built that home just after hours and weekends.

How long did that take you?

One year, two months, and twenty days.

Not that you were counting.

That's how long it took.

That's pretty good dedication to a project.

I did the plumbing, the electrical, I did everything, concrete, put all the nails in. It was just quite a project. It was fun.

I want to backtrack just a little bit. I've got a couple of questions, and I guess the first being, when you came back from Korea then, and you came back to Las Vegas, and you were living over by the Renaissance Hotel, off of Paradise, and then moved over here onto Eighth Street, why did you guys move? Was there something that drew you to this area?

You see, what I did is I'm a general contractor, and not only did I teach but I had a general contracting business, so I moonlighted with the general contracting. I ran into a burned-out home at 1487 South Eighth Street and the home was almost gutted, and I

bought the home—it was a fire-damaged home—I bought it and rebuilt it to what it was, into a beautiful, gorgeous four-bedroom, three-bath home. And that's why I moved over into this area at the time in 1963, and I lived there until 1970, when I built the home on Stockton Street. And then I moved there for about two years, and then I saw this home for sale, that we're in now. I did go to church across the street. The church now has been condemned and they're going to tear it down. So I bought this home at that time, and that was 1973, and so I've lived here since.

Now in 1963 I guess when you came over here, what was the neighborhood like?

What type of, I don't want to say reputation, but what was the general feel of the neighborhood?

It was good. It was very good. People like the homes. For example, to give you an idea on who our neighbors were that liked this area—you know the Thomas and Mack Center? Jerry [Jerome D.] Mack lived right through the block here, on Sixth Street. And his neighbor across the street was Jack Binion. And his neighbor just a few doors up was Irwin Molasky of the Molasky Group.

So there were some pretty big names.

And down the street from there about a half a block was Hank Greenspun's home. The Greenspuns lived there.

Still in the Sixth Street area?

Uh huh, in I'd say a six-block area in here. And then Chester Simms lived over there with his family, Don Simms and Doug Simms, the two children, and he left them quite a wealthy estate, and they lived right over on Sixth Street with that wrought-iron fence around it there. He still owns the home.

And then Bob Stupak bought that one right there on the corner, over there on Sixth Street and Franklin [Avenue].

And Bruce Woodbury, you know, the county commissioner, lived right on the corner right over here. He grew up there and went to Las Vegas High School and so on. His father was a dentist [Howard Woodbury]. And Bruce grew up right there. And Bruce married my cousin, Rose Stewart, whose mother was Josephine Schofield, my first cousin. So we're all intermarried and connected up. And Rose Stewart's mother was the granddaughter of my grandmother you just saw up there in the picture. We're all a big family.

But that's how fine this section [of the city] was. This was some of the finest land. Oh, [J.] Kell Houssels, Senior the one that owned the Showboat [Hotel and Casino] and many other things, he lived right over there just on Sixth Street and Charleston [Boulevard], just two doors from there, and the home that he grew up in and lived [in], the Houssels home, is now situated on the UNLV property.

Right, that's where the new Multicultural Center is, I think.

And then Art [Artemus W.] Ham of the Ham family, they were right on the corner, right next door to Kell Houssels. So this area was a beautiful area and very fine people [lived here].

A lot of the key names that you see and that helped found Las Vegas as it is today.

Lived there, right around this area.

And what was going on with the development of the Strip at that time? What types of things had started to happen?

When I went into the military, when I joined the aviation cadet program [1942], the first hotel was being constructed out on the Strip, the El Rancho [Vegas Hotel and Casino]. And that's when I went in the military. When I got out of the military after World War II and came home, then the old Frontier Hotel [and Casino] was built where Donald Trump's tower [Trump Hotel] is now. That was developed and built. And [Benjamin] Bugsy Siegel then built the Flamingo [Hotel and Casino] out on the corner of Flamingo [Road] [Note: This was originally Monson Road. It was renamed Flamingo Road in 1974. See *Asphalt Memories: Origins of Some of the Street Names of Clark County* by Mark P. Hall-Patton (2009).] and the Strip [Las Vegas Boulevard]. Those were the three major hotels in Las Vegas. They still had, on Fremont Street, the Boulder Club, the Horseshoe Club, [later Binion's Horseshoe] and they were developing Fremont Street also, so two developments. But the major one on the Strip that was developed was by outside Mob money that was coming in that was backing that, and that was backing Bugsy Siegel. And by the way, let me show you [walking across room]. I just received this from my daughter in Atlanta as a Christmas present, and this is all old Las Vegas with a lot of the [old] developments. It starts right out and it shows you the developments of the hotels and even to 1905 in there, some photos. Isn't that terrific?

This is terrific. I haven't seen this yet.

So she sent me that as a Christmas present.

Great pictures!

And Bugsy Siegel is in there. It even shows his body after they shot him to death.

Are you in here anywhere?

No, I'm not in there. I was looking last night.

That's surprising.

Look at the index.

I'll bet there are some good names in here.

There are. But the index, I was looking for Schofield all over there but they didn't have my name in there. I thought they had me on a horse on my silver saddle in there, but it was another gentleman.

So you mentioned a little while back that you worked at the Flamingo.

Oh yeah, I did work at the Flamingo. I worked in two different jobs there. When I came back in 1953 after the Korean conflict, I came home and got a contract. I was going to teach school at Paradise School. I was going to teach the eighth grade self-contained classroom and coach four sports. I coached football, basketball, track, and softball. And then I taught for six years there. And that's when I started my political career also, because I ran for the secretary of the Paradise Valley Improvement Association. For two years I handled that job and then I ran for president and I held that job for about ten years. And also town board member, along with Wilbur Clark of the Desert Inn [Hotel and Casino] and so on. So anyway, then I ran for the [Nevada State] Assembly in 1968 and lost in the primary, and in 1970 I ran again and won, and I served four years in the Assembly, and then I ran for [Nevada State] Senate and served four years as a state senator in Carson City [Nevada]. And then, in 1978 I ran for governor, and I lost in the governor's primary to Bob [Robert] Rose.

So your political aspirations started early.

Very. I've been in it for fifty years.

Yeah, and you've had quite a straight run through.

Yeah. I'm going to get something and let you read it. Just a moment. I have it in my old jacket here. Form B, for this Congressional race. And I'm kind of building one like [President Barack] Obama's, so I can get contributions from people so I can have plenty of money to run.

It's a good strategy.

But if you'll take one moment and read that, that kind of gives you a little history, too.

Terrific. So how is the website coming along?

Good. We're about 30 percent completed. But you see that?

"The Audacity of Running for Congress at Eighty-Five." That's great.

Because this is what I want to do. This is what I want to make accountable. The fat cats and all the sleazeballs, I want to make accountable. And I can't make them accountable unless I'm back in the Congress.

"Respect for those who teach." Very important.

Read this last one right here. The bottom one.

"Fight for respect for teachers so the brightest will teach." Well, education is important, particularly in this state.

And the sad part of it is, and another reason I'm running, it's like Obama said. If states can't fund their own projects, then the feds need to step in and help. So, in 1864, we became a state, and we constituted. And since 1864, education has had to fight for money. We've never, ever funded education like it should be funded. And so that's where the feds have to step in because, like our present governor [Jim Gibbons], no new taxes. OK, so they don't want to fund it. The people don't want to fund education.

Which is just amazing to me.

It is. It's so foolish because education is the foundation to society, to a successful society, education. If you don't have it, you're going to go down the tubes or you're not going to make the gains. That's why I backed Obama from day one, because he talked about what he was going to do, that way. He sounded so good. And this is what I want to do. I want to get back in Congress and get money for the State of Nevada to fund education so we can pay teachers what they deserve and what they're worth, so that they can help us, because that next generation then will also pay more taxes like we did with the G.I. Bill. And I want to get everybody educated because if you read that next to the last one right there, please, read it out loud.

“Fight to educate our children. Repay costs by public or military service.”

Now, like we did in World War II. I came back out of World War II as a fighter pilot, and I got my degree at the University of Utah in 1949, using the G.I. Bill. I'm a first-generation college graduate out of [a] three-generation American [family]. But I wouldn't have been able to do it probably, you know, unless I really was motivated to work and do everything I could to get that degree. But it helped me. It helped me so my generation, so my kids could go on to school. I encouraged them to go, too. So this is what we have to do.

I definitely want to talk more with you about this because this is such a crucial issue, you know, and given the time that we're in in Nevada, particularly what our education system faces right now, so I want to come back to this. But before we get too far away, I want to hear about your experiences at the Flamingo and the types of work that you did there.

OK, when I got back out of the Korean conflict [1953], I got a job at the Flamingo. I had juice [influence], because my mother babysat Suzie [Susan] Berman, who wrote a book. Her father was named Davey [David] Berman. Davey was part of the Mob. He had brought himself up so he was a gentleman mobster. He would come in dressed in hundred-dollar suits, five-hundred-dollar suits, and so on. He had this baby named Susan. My mother babysat for them, so through my mother's connection to Davey Berman, he got me a job as a casino cashier at the Flamingo Hotel. So I knew all those mobsters that were running it. I knew Benny Goffstein. I knew Elias Atoll, Chester Simms, I knew Gus Greenbaum, I knew Ross Miller, Bob Miller's dad. Bob Miller's dad was never in the Mob, I don't think, but he was connected some way, somehow.

He was involved in the [casino] industry.

He was involved. And so, anyway I got a job there and I worked there for the summer before I started teaching.

And what year was that?

1953. And then after I went back teaching for nine months, they [the Clark County School District, CCSD] paid me four thousand bucks, thirty-six hundred and four hundred extra for coaching, for nine months. Well, I had five children I had to feed and clothe, so I needed extra work other than I had. The best, [most] lucrative job was [as a] lifeguard, so I went over to the Flamingo, got a job as a lifeguard, still using my mother's juice (influence), to work there, and I got a job and I worked two summers at the Flamingo Hotel and I made five thousand bucks for three months. Made four thousand teaching school for nine months. But I was able to make it, then.

And then I went to work over at the Riviera [Hotel and Casino] because they had built the Riviera then, and all the Mob bosses moved over there. So I worked there two summers. And I could've held the job forever there as a lifeguard, but I decided I'd do something else and so I did, and then I went politically and so on from there. But that was my connection with the hotels.

Not a lot of people can talk about that.

They can't. They don't know those names. But Nick Chappell was the manager and he liked me. I could've worked for him forever because he liked me.

What were those hotels like then as compared to what we know of the Strip now?

They were run like, oh, small businesses and the Mob men were able to give away a lot of stuff, and they did. They had a lot of giveaways, you know, freebies, dinners, comps, and so on, and they just ran it like a business, like a personal business.

Having lived in the area, did you and your family spend any time on the Strip or go to any of the shows that were there?

We went to a lot of them, definitely, because I was younger. Now I rarely ever go to a show because it's same old, same old, and I don't have that motivation. I have other things, you know, a family and writing my books and all the things I'm doing. I'm just too busy to keep going.

Well, you got a lot going.

I do because I have a business also. The business is a general contracting business, but I'm concentrating on patios and patio covers. I'll give you a business card, and on the back it tells you what we do.

Yeah, patios and sun rooms. All good for Las Vegas.

Yeah. Landscaping. Everything.

Siding. Carports. Carports are very important.

Sure. Especially in Las Vegas. If you ever need anything on your home that way, we'll give you a bid and give you a gift for letting us give you a bid.

That's good to know.

Yeah. And we have financing, too, with Wells Fargo Bank and with Mutual of Omaha.

We can finance whatever you want to put up.

Very good. So, let's see, you were working at teaching in the 1950s. What school were you teaching at again?

Paradise School. It's right across the street from the Thomas and Mack Center, at UNLV.

And what was the size of Las Vegas at that point?

When I moved here in 1937 it was five thousand, and by then, in the fifties, the beginning of the fifties, it had jumped to twenty-five thousand, fifty thousand, and then I think in the early sixties it reached a hundred thousand. And then it started going because people, when they come to Las Vegas and they see weather like today, and yesterday—it's Indian summer, it's gorgeous, and so they want to move to Las Vegas. We have seven thousand a month still moving in, and we're up to two million now, they tell me, and they're projecting to go to three million.

I have no doubt we'll make three million at some point soon.

I don't either, if we have the water. The big thing is the water. Look, you see this right here? Let's look at number thirteen. Read it out loud.

"Fight for water for Nevada. De-salt ocean water."

There's no other place to get water. Like, for example, yesterday's headlines, they're telling Obama to get water out of the Mississippi River. The lady in charge of our water here, Pat Mulroy [General Manager, Southern Nevada Water Authority], was telling Obama, start getting the flood water out of the Mississippi River, and make use of it, because it's all going right out in the ocean. That's what we have to do. We have to be smart. We have to do things smart from now on in order to survive, because we're exploding in population on the Earth, and if we don't get desalinated ocean water, there's no other place that we can get water.

Particularly for the West here, water is so important.

There's no other place. So we could do this with using renewable energy. We could take ocean water, desalinate it, use the energy that we capture from the sun and the wind, and give that energy to pump the water across California into Nevada, so we can have our water.

I hope you do make it into Congress.

Well, I need your help, though, and so if you have any desire to jump on the bandwagon and help, I'm inviting you to come on board, especially if you have any skills on computers, anything, any way that you feel that you could get the word out. "Back Jack."

"Back Jack." I like it. So, speaking of politics, you've been so involved in politics your whole life on both a local level in Nevada and a state level. I'm wondering, on a really local level, you've lived here in this neighborhood for quite some time. Are there politics that are unique to different neighborhoods in Las Vegas, and was there anything that went on this particular neighborhood that you were involved with?

Well, I would say that, yes, there were. The people that lived up and down these streets I got on my bandwagon to help me get elected as Assemblyman [in 1970] and then as a Senator [in 1974]. And now I'm using the extended ones like Irwin Molasky. He helped me to get reelected for the Board of Regents for six more years. And so it's kind of an ongoing invitation for any politician like me to keep spreading out and getting new people like you, or like others, to come on board my bandwagon and help me get that because this is going to be a two-year campaign now, to 2010, and it's a big, big thing, because it's the whole State of Nevada. The whole State of Nevada is [Congressional District] Two. District One, [Representative] Shelley Berkley's, is right in Las Vegas. And {Representative} Dina Titus's is right here in Las Vegas, in Clark County. [Representative] Dean Heller, whose [seat] I'm going after, who's a Republican, is the whole State of Nevada. So what I'm going to be doing is I'm going to put a billboard in each town, one in Elko, one in Carson City, one in Reno, one in Winnemucca, one in Pahrump, so that the people see it every day, for the next two years, so it becomes a household word, and it's going to look like that card [that I gave you], so they're going to say, well, who's Jack Schofield? Well, I'm going to have the website, these websites here, on the billboard, so they can get on the website and find out who Jack Schofield is. And they see the fifteen, and I'm changing it, not to the Bill of Rights, but to the All-American Rights. Those are all of our American rights, what I've put down there. I believe they're for you, and me, and any American citizen deserves what's there on that All-American Bill of Rights. So, we just need to get on the bandwagon and work, like they did for Obama.

Absolutely. And that was a hugely successful campaign.

He's my idol that way, what he did with the websites and with the computer. Computers moved the people to the support group that he got. That's what I'm hoping and praying for.

Well, it's a good role to follow, good model to follow, his model of campaigning.

And his book that he wrote, *The Audacity of Hope*. The audacity of him even running, an African American, and the audacity of him winning the presidential race, which gives a positive image to everybody in the world. They're talking about it in Europe now. The African Americans that are in Europe, who have been put down by the whites, now are starting to have some hope, that they too can be another Obama, maybe in Germany, maybe in France, wherever they are.

I think it will definitely be an image change for the U.S.

It will. He's set the pattern for us all. The audacity of an eighty-five-year-old person running for Congress. It's crazy. Nobody but [Senator] Strom Thurmond [Republican, South Carolina], who was a hundred when he finally died in the Senate [was that old].

[Note: Senator Robert Byrd, Democrat, West Virginia, is ninety-one and still serving.]

But that's what I want to do. I want to keep active as a public servant, as long as I live.

Absolutely. So what inspired you initially to get involved in politics way back when you ran for Assembly and started out in neighborhood politics? What inspired you?

The inspiration was the unfairness of the system to people: the unfairness to the African Americans, the unfairness to women, the unfairness to all of us.

Were there specific events at the time either here in Las Vegas or maybe nationally that just really caught your attention and got you thinking about it?

Yes, all of them where they weren't doing the right thing. For example, even as of recently in the past eight years, when I saw [President] George W. Bush and [Vice President] Dick Cheney torture people, and they're sending that message out to the world that it's OK, it's OK to torture, it's OK to waterboard and to have the Guantanamo Bay [Cuba] [and] Abu Ghraib [prison in Iraq] type of things going on there that way, where you don't give a person their right to a fair trial. All of these things.

Where women get half-pay. I've got four daughters and half of my grandchildren are women, half of my great-grandchildren are women. I don't want them to be a second-class citizen. I don't want to see them get beat up because they're women. Men are so egotistical that you, as a woman, could not even vote until 1920. You could not even vote. They didn't think you were smart enough to even vote. Well, I think that is such a discriminatory insult to women. It's an insult to all of our intelligence as members of the United States of America. We're Americans. Like Obama said four years ago at the [Democratic National] Convention [in 2004], we are Americans. This is the United States of America, and those American rights that I've listed there, to me, need to be followed, and we need to get in there with our dukes up and still fight. As long as I live and breathe, I will be fighting for the right.

We have a long history of fighting for rights.

From Abraham Lincoln on, who is my hero, too, even though he was a Republican.

Not all Republicans are Republicans.

That's right. [They're not all] the Bush-Cheney Republican type who's done so much to damage the image of the United States of America. He'll go down as the worst president

we've ever had, because of all of the stupid things that he's done, and mistakes he's made even his attitude, the way he walks, the way he talks.

We are near the end.

Thank God.

So my question is, here on a local level Las Vegas and its history has had a lot go on in terms of race relations and that kind of thing and I'm wondering what you remember about the city and, on a local level, racial politics or interactions, and being involved in education, the whole issue of desegregation. Were you involved in that at all?

I've always been involved in trying to correct the injustices that the African Americans have received. You just saw a photograph of my brother-in-law and my sister, Pat Diskin. Pat Diskin was the basketball coach, and they took some of the basketball players to Reno to play in a tournament, and they stopped in Hawthorne [Nevada], at the El Capitan Club casino to serve dinner to the basketball players. Well, he had several African Americans on his team. And they El Capitan Club at that time, this is in the early forties, the El Capitan Club would not allow the African American boys on the team to come in and sit in the restaurant and have food. So Pat pulled them all out and left, showing his disgust for the racial discrimination that they were given even at that time. Now, those kind of things went on.

We had a Moulin Rouge club [casino] here in Las Vegas, and the reason why they created the Moulin Rouge was to give the black entertainers, who were out on the Strip, to be able to stay in a hotel that they were not allowed to stay out on the Strip in. So they had the Moulin Rouge.

So they would entertain on the Strip but they couldn't stay there.

They couldn't stay there. So those were the injustices that were taking place that I saw that disgusted me. And the football players that were on my football team at Las Vegas High School, some of the best players we had were the African American players. And they were neat guys. But they were treated like dung by people, so-called white people out there that had these prejudices that they had.

When you were in high school after you moved here and playing football, what was the makeup of Las Vegas High? Did you have African American folks in school with you?

Yes, we did. We had about 5 percent, I would say, a guess-timate, about 5 percent African American kids. But the best athletes on the basketball and football teams were African American kids. They just have that natural ability. Their muscles and their bodies were just real gifted, physically.

Were there racial tensions at all in your high school, do you remember?

Mm hmm. Yeah. There were still some [whites] that received prejudicial attitudes in their homes and they would bring it to school, and we would have that, but not too many. Most of the kids understood, and had compassion, most of the kids in the school. It's when they went home that they got their prejudices, from parents and relatives and so on. But we're going to be fighting that for years to come. Even though Obama is in there, we're still going to have that and my prayers are that God looks out after Obama s that no racists do him any damage or ever try to do him damage, because he's going to be one of the saviors of the world. I mean the world.

We could use something.

We surely can. We got to have that inspiration that he has and that he's willing to and he's smart enough to be able to implement it.

He's very inspired. Very inspired.

I want to shift gears for a minute because I know I've taken up a lot of your time this morning, but I wanted to talk about—you're part of the LDS [Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, known as LDS or Mormons] community, and it's a big community here, and in this neighborhood, and I'm wondering if you could talk about that and talk about the history of it and particularly here in this neighborhood. I mean that church is kind of a landmark cornerstone of this neighborhood and I think it's a shame that they're looking at taking it down. I'm wondering if you could talk a little bit about the population here and the church and the history of it and maybe the history of the Mormon community in this neighborhood.

OK. I'm happy to. In 1953 when I got out of the Korean War, I came back and, as we've already talked about, I taught school and was a coach. This chapel was under construction when I came back in 1953.

And was this just an empty lot at that point?

Mm hmm. Empty lot. And the Church's philosophy at that time was that the members would help build the chapels, and they would do half the work, raise half the money, and the Church would put in half. So it was a fifty-fifty proposition. So I worked as a laborer on this part-time. After I taught school during the day, I'd come and work at the church, and I'd work on Saturdays. We never work on Sundays, of course. And I helped pour the concrete on the inside of that chapel in the main auditorium of the chapel. I helped pound

nails in the floor in the recreation center. I helped put the roof on, and build the roof. I helped finish inside the rooms with finish carpenters. One of the finish carpenters was a member of the Church, and his name was Jack Davis and he lived right over on Seventh Street there, in the second house from the corner. Jack Davis was a full-time employee of the Church, and the superintendent, and his name was—it'll come to me. But anyway, the superintendent and Jack Davis were the professionals and were getting paid out of Church funds for being full-time on the job. Lee was his name. Anyway, they worked full time on there. And so those of us, the members of the ward, then worked on a semi-professional basis, and worked as the laborers. So I helped build that chapel, in other words.

And then the President of the Church at the time was David O. McKay. And when we completed the chapel, David O. McKay came down from Salt Lake City and he dedicated it to the Lord, as the President of the Church.

What year was the church completed?

About 1955. About two years after I came back out of the [United States] Air Force. Then from then on, all the interior and everything was paid by fifty-fifty. What we do is we have a way of paying tithing, 10 percent of what our earnings are, we would pay for it and then it's listed on there as Other, so under Other our contributions then would be towards the church, whatever you want to put. So that's the way it was, and that's the way we finished the church up. And I've got some photographs here. I think I've got an extra set.

I would love to make some copies of those and include them with the project. You don't have to get them now.

I think I've got some right here.

Oh, OK, that would be terrific.

I was looking at it the other day. If I can't find them, I'll locate them and get them to you and let you make copies of them.

Yeah, and I can always stop by and pick those up. That would be terrific because that's such a huge part of this community.

Was it even an issue?

I've never, ever felt that it was an issue, personally in my life, because I've been a part of the city, the John S. Park group, whatever, I've always felt as a citizen of the United States of America, that it's my duty and right to be a participant in anything that has to do with growth and development in a positive manner.

So speaking of growth and development, I mean you've been in Las Vegas a good amount of time.

Seventy-two years.

And you've lived in this neighborhood now for thirty-plus years.

Fifty.

Fifty-plus years. Oh, true, yeah. But in this house you've been for quite some time.

In this house here it's been about thirty-five years.

Particularly in this neighborhood, how has it changed? What types of changes have you seen?

Very few. Very little change. If there's any change, it's been in the landscaping. In other words, now that we're seeing a movement toward desert landscaping, and I might even consider it someday. My son lives over on Jessica [Joy Street] on the other side of

Maryland Parkway, east of it, and he's done his desert landscaping at his place. And my wife enjoys the lawn and so on and as long as we're doing the Pat Mulroy thing on the timeframe of watering and so on, she's [my wife is] willing to pay for the water. But when it gets to the point where we're not good citizens to use water for our lawn, then I will seriously consider changing to desert landscaping, like [the house] three doors down. They did a beautiful job. It looks real nice.

There is actually some really great desert [land]scaping in this area. I noticed that.

And basically that's about the main thing and I've noticed that, like in my business there, I showed you the windows, the double-paned windows, I'm going to put double-paned windows all over in my home eventually, when I can afford it. It just makes sense from the standpoint of savings in energy costs.

Absolutely. So, I don't know, could you describe, I guess, what the area looked like here in the neighborhood when you [moved here], some of your earliest recollections of it?

It doesn't look too much different. The only thing I'm observing though, too, is that we're having more Hispanics move into the area. I'm noticing that. And I have no problems with that because, if a person is able to make the grade, money-wise, monetarily and so on, and they're willing to keep their places up there that way, more power to them. I'm proud of them.

But other than that, I don't notice too much difference in the people. Irwin Molasky now lives wherever he lives, in another area. He's upgraded his place, I'm sure. And Jerry Mack's widow (of Thomas and Mack fame), she's living in a different area

and upgrading her. Thalia Dondero used to live right over here, and she lives over in a gated community on the golf course now. And I have no problems that way.

I choose to stay here because I love the area. It's very centrally located. It's easy to get on the freeways or the highways or the roads to get anywhere quickly there. And I feel it's safe. I don't feel that we have to worry about any negative people. Twenty years ago, the alley was open and they were stealing out of my yard, and I was getting a lot of theft. And then also, twenty-five years ago they broke into this home about three different times and stole all my wife's jewelry that I bought for her from all over the world. She rarely ever used it but she had it stored and so on, and it was safe. But all that's gone now but, you know, you learn to forgive and forget, and it wasn't that important anyway.

What do you think about the designation of historic neighborhood, this historic district?

I have mixed feelings on that one because what it does is it limits you. By living in a historic area, it limits you in the fact that you have to get permission to do different things to your [house]. The disadvantage of having a historical area is if you want to do anything to your home, you have to get permission from the historical officials, whoever are there. So it's kind of like living in a homeowners' community, where you have the homeowners association and you have to get permission, and it just limits your freedom to do what you want to do with your home.

Have you had to deal with that at all?

Well, I haven't here because the [historical district] boundary is Franklin [Avenue]. You have to be concerned about it, you do, and those that live in there. But I don't, so far. And that's why I'm not anxious to expand [the historical district].

We've been talking for a couple of hours now.

We have been. Boy, I just noticed that.

I appreciate you taking the time. I know you've got a lot going on. I'd love to come back and chat with you again.

I'd love to have you do it, too, or I could stop by your place. What's your address again?

I'm at 1263. It's like five houses from here, or six houses, I guess.

Four from the corner. Mrs. Earl is on the corner.

You know Bob Bellis? I live right next door to him, on the north side.

Then you are in George Wright's old home then.

What was he all about?

George was an entrepreneur that came here and he was a carpenter to begin with, but he became a very wealthy land developer, and he owned a wedding chapel, and he made a lot of money, and he knew how to manage the money. And his wife's father made even more money. Let's see, I'm trying to think of her maiden name. But he owned a cement block company, her father did, in town, and made a lot of money, and he left a lot of money to her, so her estate is very wealthy. So she moved about ten years ago, before George died. They moved up by the [LDS] temple, up in that area. They wanted to be closer to the temple, because they both were temple workers. So they moved up there. George's daughter Barbara I taught when I was teaching over at John S. Park [Elementary] School. I taught half a year there, and that was the year I ran for governor. I went back to teaching because I had more latitude and more time to campaign for governor. And so I did that. And that's when Barbara lived in your home. And Barbara was one of three daughters and one son, David Wright. And I'm not sure what David

does now. I think he's in Texas, though. But anyway that was interesting. Do you live alone there?

Yeah, yeah.

Well, I admire you for living alone. Very interesting.

It's fine.

For a young lady. Yeah.

Well, you know, I'm here working on school things.

I think it's wonderful. I admire you for working on your PhD.

Well, thank you.

And I would enjoy stopping by and feeling free to do that if you don't mind.

Sure. Absolutely.

And you feel free to come over here at any time you want.

Well, I appreciate that. I walk by your house almost every morning with my dog.

I'll be darned. Do you have two dogs?

Just one.

I see. What kind of a dog?

He's a mix. I couldn't tell. I think he's a shepherd, got some shepherd in him, and I couldn't tell you what else is in him.

How big is he?

He's about sixty pounds. About that big.

Yeah, pretty good sized dog. Yeah, that's the way my two dogs were.

Yeah, they look like good mid-sized dogs.

The boxer was a beautiful dog. I bought him when he was a little pup. And the white German shepherd too. They call them Alsatian.

Those are beautiful dogs.

I got him when he was a little pup, too. And I kept having dogs until my wife refused to clean up poop.

[Laughing] Well, that is definitely part of the job.

When she refused to clean up the poop, then I discontinued having dogs.

That's definitely a part of the job but, you know, it's worth it.

Yeah, yeah, it is, if you love your dog, it's worth cleaning up after him.

Well, thank you so much for taking the time to talk with me.

It's a pleasure.

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