



Interview with George Jones

Under the Auspices of the
Monmouth County Library Headquarters
125 Symmes Drive, Manalapan, N.J.
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Date of Interview: September 8, 1999
Name of Interviewer: Flora Higgins
Premises of Interview: Eastern Branch of the Monmouth
County Library, Shrewsbury, NJ
Birthdate of Subject: November 13, 1923
Deceased: January 30, 2001



**Mr. George
Jones**

Ms. Higgins: Can you tell us something about the way Red Bank looked, and what it was like growing up in Red Bank?

Mr. Jones: Red Bank was a very small town. We knew most of the people in town when we walked down Broad Street, which was a main commercial street in town. You'd recognize about seventy to eighty percent of the people. It got a little busy in the summertime because Route 35 was the main access to the shore area, but we had no other traffic jams coming down from the New York and Metropolitan area.

Ms. Higgins: Before those supermarkets came to the area where did people in Red Bank do their grocery shopping?

Mr. Jones: Well, we had several independent grocery stores, and I may add, it was much more convenient than the supermarkets are today. Mother would get on the telephone and call Mr. Davidson and order her groceries for the week, and he would have them delivered within a couple of hours.

Ms. Higgins: That was a wonderful convenience. It beats pushing those carts through the parking lot. Also, Red Bank is known for having a lot of small retail stores. How many of those were there when you were growing up?

Mr. Jones: Not too many. There are not too many left. I guess Prown's is probably the one I remember most because if you needed anything, you could buy it at Prown's. Miller's Shoe Store is the oldest in existence dating back to 1865. John B. Allen Shoe amalgamated with Miller's in the 1940s.

Ms. Higgins: To this day, if you need that little gadget, you can find it at Prown's. And Natelsons, of course, has come and gone.

Mr. Jones: Well, before Natelsons, it was J. Kridel's, which was a good fashionable men's store, then Natelsons came along after that, on the same intersection of East Front Street and Broad Street.

Ms. Higgins: So, that's back with these family owned stores.

Mr. Jones: Mostly. I think we had a Woolworth's and a Leggett's Drug Store, but other than that, they were all family owned businesses.

Ms. Higgins: Where was Leggett's?

Mr. Jones: There used to be a church on the corner of Broad and Monmouth Street, which would be the southwest corner, and the church was moved, and they had Leggett's Drug Store there. Now they have another building, called the Mini-Mall.

Ms. Higgins: The Mini-Mall has never been successful, has it?

Mr. Jones: Well, it's only because of a lack of parking space right on that busy intersection. Red Bank throughout the years, especially Mayor McKenna, has pushed very hard, and they do have good parking now on either side of Broad Street, a block or so in with the municipal parking lots.

Ms. Higgins: Well, still if you buy something substantial at the Mini-Mall, it's a hike to the car.

Mr. Jones: I've been over to the Monmouth Mall, and I can find a closer parking place in Red Bank than I can at Macy's, when you go down on a busy weekend.

Ms. Higgins: That's right, because people have to walk to the stores. Red Bank has, however, seemed in general to have survived that.

Mr. Jones: It does have a good stable base. Places like Long Branch and Asbury Park, which were lovely in their day, have run through political situations, just like Jersey City has, and they went down hill.

Ms. Higgins: Everyone loves Red Bank. In fact, many people love Red Bank too much. Have you found it getting increasingly crowded and too upscale?

Mr. Jones: No, not at all. It has just advanced with the age. The youngsters, you know, they sort of enjoy it, and they do have good attractions for the children with the parks and things like that.

Ms. Higgins: The coffee shops are wonderful. It's a thriving town.

Mr. Jones: It is, although I can't see paying two dollars for a cup of coffee.
(Laughs....)

Ms. Higgins: I remember the days when the Count Basie Theatre was the Walter Reade Theatre.

Mr. Jones: The Walter Reade was the Carlton Theatre. We had another theatre in town at that time. The Strand Theatre, which was on the corner of Linden and Broad Street, where there is a financial institution at this time. Also, there was another theatre on Front Street, and the name escapes me, but that was in my very early years.

Ms. Higgins: Did you as a child go there on a Saturday afternoon?

Mr. Jones: Oh you had to, you had to go see Tom Mix and his cowboys and things like that. And, it was only twenty-five cents. Most people could afford it.

Ms. Higgins: From Maple Avenue you'd walk down town.

Mr. Jones: Yes, we'd cut over to Broad Street and walk all the way down Broad Street.

Ms. Higgins: Was there a lot of beach traffic? There was probably no light.

Mr. Jones: There were lights dating back, I guess, quite a few years, but there was always as I recall a light at the corner of Maple and Monmouth Street. There were no traffic problems, just in the summer time.

Ms. Higgins: Red Bank has probably had good governments over the years to maintain that base and build on it.

Mr. Jones: I would think so. Regardless of which party was in power, the mayors were non paid positions, and they had a genuine interest in the welfare and the good of the people.

Ms. Higgins: Wasn't Katherine White the first woman mayor?

Mr. Jones: Katherine Elkus White. Her father was the ambassador to Russia. They had a large estate on top of Tower Hill, and she, I think, was known

throughout the country, appearing later on in the later 1940s on TV Broadcast, as the first woman mayor in this country.

Ms. Higgins: Did you know her?

Mr. Jones: I didn't know her personally, but I knew of her.

Ms. Higgins: I wonder if you could talk also about the waterfront? What is your opinion on the various plans for developing the waterfront?

Mr. Jones: I think it is long overdue. Many years ago, they talked about access from Broad Street to the river, several small independently owned properties there, but they never did proceed. But, it is inevitable because it would add a lot to the downtown area.

Ms. Higgins: Do you remember swimming in the river?

Mr. Jones: Oh yes, but I am not a swimmer myself. There was more boating and fishing and crabbing. In the wintertime, they used to cut a hole in the ice and catch eels under the ice. In the summertime, of course, the sailboats were very popular, and everyday, you'd see a whole bunch of them out there and races, and the river area was very, very active.

Ms. Higgins: The Monmouth Boat Club is an old and memorable institution.

Mr. Jones: Right. It is right down the hill from Broad Street. I didn't spend too much time on the river. I was more into baseball and tennis, myself. But the majority of the young people would be involved.

Ms. Higgins: Was there more ice boating in the old days when you were growing up?

Mr. Jones: Yes, there was, and I can't understand why. Whether the temperature has changed, but I do remember that there was quite a sport, and one year they had good ice there and they wanted to develop an area where they do a lot of skating because the ice was rough. So, they brought the borough truck down. It was a water truck they used to water the streets with because some streets weren't paved. And they brought the truck over on top of the ice, and low and behold, the truck went under right to the bottom! (Laughs...) We're talking the 1930s.

Ms. Higgins: I remember it froze in the 1950s. I had my little son out on a sled behind me. I was skating, it was bumpy. One of these ice boaters were waving angrily at me. I later found out I was in the middle of the second heat of an international ice boating regatta.

Mr. Jones: Well, they had some big ones. Some of those iceboats were real big. They say that an iceboat can go faster than the wind speed.

Ms. Higgins: Back in the 1930s were they still cutting blocks of ice in the river?

Mr. Jones: Oh yes. Other people who had row boats or other places along the river would sell cokes or soft drinks. They'd cut the ice and then put them in a small enclosed area and put the ice in there and pack it with hay or straw and that ice would stay through the rest of the summer.

Ms. Higgins: Did you play baseball with your high school team?

Mr. Jones: Yes, I played for Red Bank Catholic High School three years. I wasn't a great baseball player.

Ms. Higgins: What teams did you play?

Mr. Jones: We'd play Red Bank. We'd play Long Branch. We'd play St. Mary's, Perth Amboy, and St. Peters, New Brunswick. We'd play Leonardo High School, which was the only high school in Middletown Township in those days.

Ms. Higgins: Did you have a form of Little League?

Mr. Jones: Well, Little Leagues hadn't really branched out in those days. At a later age they had the American Legion Baseball teams, where high school boys would play in the summertime.

Ms. Higgins: Did you play on those clay courts in Red Bank?

Mr. Jones: Well, I had my own tennis court. My brother and I became interested in tennis, and there was an empty lot next to our house, and Pop said, "If you boys do the work, I'll provide the material." So, he provided us with the cinder and the clay and had a gentleman who was knowledgeable of terrain and levels and things like that and set it up for us. My brother and I and our friends would cart the cinders, the base, and the clay and leveled it out and did all this and put a fence around it. It took about two months. Then, we started to play tennis. That is how we became interested in tennis. Later on when I was in high school, I formed the first tennis team at Red Bank Catholic High School. We used to play some of our matches at the Red Bank courts.

Ms. Higgins: Did you ever go to those courts at Sea Bright?

Mr. Jones: Oh, yes, I was there. One thing about Sea Bright, it was so close by, you could see the best tennis players in the country because they had their annual tennis matches there just before Forest Hills. We'd go down there and buy tennis balls because they'd only use them for a set or two. There was a little

green from the grass on the tennis balls and we could buy them for a dollar for a tray, which was a good price in those days. But I was down there one time and it had rained the night before. Bobby Riggs, a well-known tennis player in those days, came on the court. He didn't like what he saw, so he went back and got a pair of shoes with spikes on them to go onto the main court. The officials of the Sea Bright Tennis Club said, "No, you're not going to play on our court with the spikes."

Ms. Higgins: What other tennis greats did you see down there?

Mr. Jones: I saw Alice Marble. And, when I was in Florida one time, I happened to be in a public court and I played against Don Budge and his partner, Gene Mako. Of course, Budge was internationally known. It just happened it was on a public court in West Palm Beach off Lake Worth. But it was interesting to me to play a person of that stature.

Ms. Higgins: Was there any bootlegging that you were aware of that was going on in the area?

Mr. Jones: Well, just by word of mouth, of course. The reason for the bootlegging was alcohol was prohibited in those days. A person could make a good living bringing liquor into the area, especially in the Bay Shore area all the way from Highlands to Atlantic Highlands, Leonardo. And, also it was reported that it used to come from the ocean down through Ocean Grove area. There were articles in the newspapers about the raids and things like that. Some of the people who were running the alcoholic beverages were known as mob leaders and things like that. But, I had no personal knowledge of it at that time.

Ms. Higgins: Was there any famous architect who worked on any of those buildings in Red Bank?

Mr. Jones: I am really not into architecture. They say there are some houses in Rumson that were designed by the famous Stanford White. The architect for our high school, Red Bank Catholic High School, was Vincent Eck, and he also besides designed the Zobel Building, which name is changed, but it is on the corner of Harding Road and Broad Street on the southeast corner. And he also designed a lot of the churches in Monmouth and Ocean County. But famous architects, I wouldn't have that knowledge.

Ms. Higgins: Where is your favorite place for ice cream?

Mr. Jones: Oh, gosh, it used to be Hess's ice cream store at the end of Broad Street on Front Street. And it was all homemade, and it was great. And you could get a quart for a dollar, and everybody thought that was pretty expensive, but it was great ice cream.

Ms. Higgins: It seems like a lot, although I have cranked ice cream. (Laughs...) Another thing I wanted to ask you, was Ludwigs around then, or Sal's Tavern?

Mr. Jones: Ludwigs? Well Sal's of course. Mr. Viati got one of the first alcoholic beverage licenses in Red Bank and he was certainly around there in those days. Ludwigs did not open business until after World War II, maybe a few years after that. It was always a good place to stop in and have a sandwich. My favorite place in those days was Strand Restaurant, which is on Broad Street just down from Monmouth Street, and Mr. Noglow ran a wonderful establishment and all the waiters there were men in black suits. Not formal as such but pretty much the uniform was a good dressed suit. They had wonderful meals and then after the repeal of prohibition, they were allowed to sell alcoholic beverages. In those days, no one could stand at a bar on Broad Street. It was prohibited. So, if you ordered a drink it would be served by the waiter at your table.

Ms. Higgins: Did Red Bank Catholic have any particular rivalries with any of the towns?

Mr. Jones: Our main rivalry in that era was Red Bank High School, which was on Harding Road. And they always had a greater student population. Of course in those days, we didn't have any facilities for sporting events. We'd have to borrow the gymnasium at the River Street School for our basketball. We practiced in a deserted building on Riverside Avenue, which in the wintertime, we'd have a potbelly stove in the middle of the court and every time we had a break, we'd huddle around the stove to keep us warm. And as I said, we didn't have a football team cause we were only paying ten cents a week for book rent and the parishioners couldn't afford the football and the uniforms and all that. And baseball, we'd go up to Newman Springs Road and there was a team that played there, a semi-professional team, the Red Bank Towners, and we were able to use that to practice baseball. Or we could use the Bergen Place Athletic Field, and the Red Bank Board of Education let us use that for some of our games.

Ms. Higgins: What happened to your tennis court eventually?

Mr. Jones: Our tennis court was very active until the time of all us went into the service and there was nobody to maintain it. After my brother and I came back, we spent a couple of days getting it back into shape, but we were in the middle of returning to college and having to work. The weeds started coming in. My father maintained the integrity but not to put it in good condition, and the property was sold to a Dr. Hindle. He occupied 231 Maple Avenue as an office. My folks then moved over the Shrewsbury.

Ms. Higgins: Can you tell us something about your father and about your parents? How did they happen to come to Red Bank, or were they always there?

Mr. Jones: My mother was born and raised in Red Bank on Herbert Street. My father was born and raised in Vincentown, NJ, which is a very small rural farming community in Burlington County. The Campbell's Soup Company had a lot of tomato fields there to help them with production of their tomato soup. Actually, Pop was a farm boy and then he went into WWI and served in the European theatre, and then he came back. Then he worked for the railroad and he was a station agent in Farmington, NJ. After WWI, his sister had a date with a fellow by the name of Jim Hogan, and Hogan was later one of the editors of the Red Bank Register. So, my father came up with his sister. My mother was a blind date and they took it from there and subsequently my father opened up the first gasoline station in Red Bank, which was on the corner of Bergen and Maple Avenue. He opened up three other gas stations in all four corners in Red Bank. During the second World War he had a tough time getting employees because they were always going up to North Jersey and working in the automobile plants. So, you're talking during the Depression. Making about fifteen dollars a week. Can you imagine how fifteen dollars can go? So, it was hard to get reliable employees, so he leased the stations he had to the various oil companies and... and took it from there.

Ms. Higgins: Entrepreneurship seems to have been the hallmark of Red Bank's development. I see it with the Seals and the Kolbys and Kislins.

Mr. Jones: I remember the Kislins. I know Eddie Kislin. The son was in my period of time. You can still go to the second sub basement and you can find every kind of galoshes in the world.

Ms. Higgins: But now there seems to be a lot of what I can only call money management business in Red Bank. Is this a good thing?

Mr. Jones: Well, it certainly is a clean operation. They don't have to clean up after them. And it is attracting people from the surrounding areas who are interested in investments and things like that. I think it is very beneficial for this town. Who knows, if we have a deep depression, what will happen?

Ms. Higgins: Would you like to talk about that railroad visit in Red Bank?

Mr. Jones: I lived at 231 Maple Avenue and the King and Queen of England came in and stopped at the Red Bank Station. That evening, the train pulled in and the King and Queen in their Pullman car were about 200 yards from where I was sleeping. And then they pulled in and they had the official ceremony. There Charles English, the mayor, in his high hat and pinstriped trousers greeted them at the station. They proceeded to go out to Sandy Hook and there was a royal yacht moored there. All the school children in town lined the streets in Red Bank. All St. James students were lined up on Harding Road just right off Broad Street. They came by and waved and proceeded to Sandy Hook.

Ms. Higgins: What king and queen was that?

Mr. Jones: King George and the Queen mother.

Ms. Higgins: That must have been a lot of fun for you.

Mr. Jones: It was interesting.

Ms. Higgins: When you went over to practice your sport, wasn't that on the west side of Red Bank?

Mr. Jones: If you divide the town by the railroad tracks, it was certainly on the west side. But now that developed area, you'd say probably in the area where the bowling alleys are now, the eastern end of Newman Springs Road. There were three baseball fields on Newman Springs Road. We had a team they called the Red Bank Pirates. Other days they called themselves the Bay Parkway Baseball Team. They were a professional team, very good baseball players. Then you had another ball field on the corner of Newman Springs and Shrewsbury Avenue. And there was the team called the Colored Giants used to play there. So, there was a lot more baseball played because, well, there was much more room and less expense. I mean you could go to a baseball game. A man would come around with a hat and get a donation and that is all it would amount to.

Ms. Higgins: I think minor league ball is trying to make a come back with the Trenton Thunders.

Mr. Jones: I think it is a great thing. I think as far as the youngsters are concerned, as far as the parents are concerned. Now if you go to New York to see the New York Yankees it is going to cost you a lot of money and if you drive, you've got to pay a fortune for a parking place. I haven't gone to a professional baseball game in years. I don't know why, but they say you can spend \$200 to \$300 on a ballgame, and it is out of the reach of the average person.

Ms. Higgins: Has the west side of Red Bank always been an African-American community?

Mr. Jones: No, no. Basically it was an Irish community. Then, it was an Italian community. And now I would think it is predominantly Afro-American, but I remember some time ago, that a lot of the younger people could not afford houses on the east side of town and they revitalized, and have very nice residences there.

Ms. Higgins: So, you decided to go into the Air Force in World War II.

Mr. Jones: Right.

Ms. Higgins: In the Mediterranean Theater?

Mr. Jones: Well, that was the theater. Called the Mediterranean Theater of Operations. I had completed a year and a half of college at Seton Hall in South Orange, NJ, and everybody was signing up for something or another. I told my mother I wanted to go into the Marine Corps and she was having apoplexy. Actually, it was a subterfuge because I wanted to go into the Air Force and I thought my mother would accept that.

Ms. Higgins: Like most Americans, you probably put your college education on hold?

Mr. Jones: That's right. For three years or more, I put it on hold. I was interested in the practice of law, so I thought I would be better shape for that by going to a school that had a Law School. Seton Hall didn't have a law school at that time, so I went to Georgetown University in Washington, DC and got my Bachelor's degree there and went to Georgetown Law School afterwards. I was there about a year and a half. My father took ill, not terribly ill, but he wasn't able to perform his work, and so I took off from law school to help him for a year or so and then, I had an opportunity to go into the FBI. The FBI needed men to build up their complement because of the Korean War situation and I was accepted, one of the very few accepted. Before that it was mandatory you had to have a law or an accounting degree. But, there was a tremendous shortage of agents, so I was accepted and took it from there.

Ms. Higgins: I am particularly interested in this Communist Party investigation during the Nixon and McCarthy era.

Mr. Jones: Well, that was part of it, and certainly, but this was in a political area and you had people who said yes and nay. But as far as I am concerned, Mr. Hoover was one of the greatest dedicated American citizens, and he certainly did a great job. As far as McCarthy is concerned, I didn't necessarily agree with everything he did, the way he did it, but the people who he targeted were certainly a hell of a lot worse than he. Because if we had followed those people, we would be under the Soviet Rule now. My first FBI office was in Butte, Montana. I went to training school at Quantico, because the FBI training school was there. And after going to the training school, I was assigned to the Butte, Montana office. It was quite an experience, although I had traveled a lot as a youngster with my folks or in the military service, I had never been in Montana, and it certainly was a great area, and I certainly enjoyed it very much. The people are just fine. You know it is a long way between gas stations there. If you go through a town, especially in the wintertime, if your tank wasn't filled, you'd be in trouble, because you could travel eighty to ninety miles without running into a filling station. But I enjoyed it. We had an unusual jurisdiction there because the FBI has the primary jurisdiction on Indian reservations. Things such as murder, rape, and so forth, which are normally crimes against the state, not against the

federal government. But FBI has primary jurisdiction in Indian reservations. I thought the Indian people were just tremendous people. They did have one failing and I think it was biological. They could not handle alcohol. I remember July 1951, I was assigned to the Great Falls Montana Resident Agency which was a four man resident agency out of headquarters Butte. I got a call in my hotel room there to go up to Browning, Montana which is the headquarters of the Black Foot Indian Reservation. And I went up there, and they had these five or six men in jail, in the local jail, which is not as big as this room. And, they either had shot their wife, their mother, or their sister. That was all caused by their over indulgence in alcohol; and they just couldn't handle it. So, we had to go to interview each one independently and present this incident to the United States Attorney who had authorized prosecution in this manner. One interesting fact is when I did the background investigation on these men, each one of them were heroes in their own rights because they had been in WWII and had gotten all kinds of honors and commendations for heroism due to their service in the military during WWII.

Ms. Higgins: What happened to them?

Mr. Jones: Well, they went to jail.

Ms. Higgins: Indians are not United States citizens, are they?

Mr. Jones: Oh sure. Oh sure. They are.

Ms. Higgins: What is their peculiar political status that makes them under the jurisdiction of the FBI?

Mr. Jones: Because the reservation is government property.

Ms. Higgins: It is becoming more and more of a concern to me that the Bureau of Indian Affairs is notoriously under funded.

Mr. Jones: They certainly are under funded, and I don't know how it evolved. Many years ago when they established these reservations, the system of taking care of these people was an allotment or something; they'd have to get it at the reservation headquarters. Now, you had a lot of Indians 100 to 200 miles away and had to get on their pony and go in. They didn't have mail service or anything like that. Now if they sent their checks to them where they were, they'd still be hunting and fishing in the mountains. Now, to get their check on time, they'd go to the headquarters on the reservation. That is the situation in Browning, Montana. They all get their checks, and they start drinking and they'd lose their check. But, the simple fact that they were drawn out of the mountains or out of their farms to pick up their largess or whatever you called it, it brought them into these towns and that caused moral decay.

Ms. Higgins: That's very interesting. What you are implying is that with a simple way of delivering mail to them where they were working, on their farm and reservation, they might not have been so prone to alcohol in excess?

Mr. Jones: Right, absolutely.

Ms. Higgins: Makes sense. Then, I see you worked in Newark for a while.

Mr. Jones: Oh, I worked in Chicago, and after that from until 1955, I was transferred to the New York office, which is the largest FBI office in the country. In fact, when I was there, one fifth of the agent personnel world-wide was in the New York office. Of course, New York is a little different because it is a big port city. Also, it had the United Nations there when it was used as a recruiting ground by the Soviets and the KGB for gathering information regarding our military. Political, economic, the whole thing. These were in the Soviet legation in New York, which caused a drain of personnel there. And then I got to Newark just in time for the Newark riots.

Ms. Higgins: And then it seems back home to Red Bank.

Mr. Jones: Yes. I had been working for it. There was a fellow who graduated from high school with me that came into the FBI about six months after I did. Spent time in one office. I guess he had some kind of a hardship and they brought him back to the Newark office and then Red Bank and in a couple of years. It took me from 1951 to 1970 to make it back to Red Bank.

Ms. Higgins: And along the way you married?

Mr. Jones: Yes, I married Jo-An Frances Layden, from Kenilworth, Illinois and we lived there until 1955 when I was transferred. There it was another big problem, when I was transferred back. We only had two and a half children and a lot of fellows in the New York office, lived in Stuyvesantown, a large apartment development near the office, which was a very desirable area for young people. But, if you have two kids and one on the way, it is not desirable because if you are on the fifteenth floor of this complex and one kid is healthy and the other has a cold, the wife can't be in two places at once. So, I had to make up my mind. Is it me, or is it my family? So, I opted for the family. My folks were still living in Red Bank at the time. I bought a house on Arthur Place, which backs up to the house I used to live on Maple Avenue. But at least I took the 5:45 a.m. train in the morning and got back, if I was lucky, at 8:00 at night, but at least my children were in good shape, and my wife was in good shape.

Ms. Higgins: How many years did you commute like that?

Mr. Jones: I commuted from 1955 till I guess 1968 or so to New York, and then to Newark. When I got to Newark, I worked in Newark for a couple of years and finally came down to Red Bank.

Ms. Higgins: The Newark train station had a wonderful trolley car subway.

Mr. Jones: I never had the occasion to use one. Is that right?

Ms. Higgins: Up hill and down hill.

Mr. Jones: People didn't even know about it. I understand they did some work on it recently, but to the extent of that I don't know. I can remember in high school my mom and dad would get my brother Bill and me in the car and drive to Newark to buy clothing for the school year. Hahne's, Bambergers, Kresges. Newark was a very large, modern clean city. And then, I guess because of WWII, it became rundown and the political situation destroyed it economically. It was a lovely city. They have beautiful parks.

Ms. Higgins: Did you ever consider political office yourself?

Mr. Jones: No, I wouldn't like it. I think there are too many people trying to make money out of other people and it wouldn't be my bag, really.

Ms. Higgins: What is your opinion on the controversy of the apartment complex they wanted to take down in Red Bank?

Mr. Jones: You're probably talking about the Rullman House. Dr. Rullman had a house on the river there.

Ms. Higgins: Yes. Do you have an opinion on that?

Mr. Jones: Well, actually it is historical in that regard, not that anybody of any great importance lived there other than Dr. Rullman, who was one of the few first physicians in Red Bank. But, there was a need and I find it interesting that most of the people who were for preserving it lived in Rumson, Holmdel, Fair Haven, and Little Silver, but the people in Red Bank were for destroying it because it costs the taxpayers a lot of money, and there was loss of a good ratable.

Ms. Higgins: Did your children go to Red Bank Catholic as well?

Mr. Jones: Yes. I had four children. They all went to Red Bank at St. James Grammar School and Red Bank Catholic High School.

Ms. Higgins: A venerable institution in the area.

Mr. Jones: Oh, I would think so. Of course, the Church had been there before the turn of the century. My grandparents were parishioners there. And of course my mother went to St. James when it was a ten year school. The St. James school later became a lumber yard. Right in the area where the Schwartz car dealership is. But now they have changed it into a senior citizen's building. Well, my mother went to school there and graduated in 1908.

Ms. Higgins: Are your children now in the area, making it a multi-generational?

Mr. Jones: No, my first was a boy and was named after me, and he is an instructor and teacher at Middletown North High School, and he lives in Red Bank on Arthur Place. My second was a girl, who has a special education background, and she is in charge of special education at a school district in Vermont. Then my third is a girl, Patricia, who is Vice-President of Cash Management for the State Street Bank in Boston, MA. And my fourth is a boy, who lives in Little Silver, and he is in the computer business. He recruits computer experts for the industry. They are all doing fine, thank the Lord.

Ms. Higgins: Can you tell us about The Morro Castle? What was it like to be a person going to see that?

Mr. Jones: Well, I was just a youngster at the time, and the radio broadcast alerted us to the beaching or the location of the Morro Castle after the fire right off of the pier in Asbury Park. So my father drove us down. And there was a continuing storm there in this area, for a couple of days. It was foggy and we got out of our car and walked over to the Boardwalk. The Morro Castle was still ablaze and they had this Breeches Buoy there that was sort of a rope arrangement where they put a man in this seat and take him off of the boat and bring it into land. So it was a horrendous event. There were a lot of people with relatives there, and there was a lot of weeping and gnashing of teeth, what you would expect for such a traumatic thing. But I had no independent knowledge, although I later learned, that one of the personnel may have been responsible for it. But it was just such a crowd there, such anxiety and it was an international news item at the time, which occurred twelve miles from Red Bank.

Ms. Higgins: Did they take the survivors needing medical care to Riverview?

Mr. Jones: I think they may have taken some to other hospitals. There was Fitkin and Asbury. There was Long Branch Memorial Hospital and Riverview was the remaining hospital available at that time.

Ms. Higgins: I wanted to talk to you about FBI activity as recently as May. How did you help as a volunteer for that Operation Busy Signal?

Mr. Jones: As a volunteer. There was a friend of mine who is currently an F.B.I. agent who was deeply involved in this, and needed people who would be quasi-

undercover status to elicit information from these people who tell us how we were going to make a million dollars. So, we were given recorders for our telephones and we got a call and they took it from there. And it is just based upon the false promises and enticements that these subjects were susceptible to and I don't know what this number is, but all throughout the country there were a lot of indictments.

Ms. Higgins: And the prosecution was able to proceed because of actions of people like yourself?

Mr. Jones: Right. Many did testify in the trial. There have been many convictions, but I don't know what the status of it is because I'm not privy to the information. I don't like people getting hurt, especially older people who have only their life savings. I think it is probably not as bad as murder, but the poor lady that is eighty years old and she is living on a pittance and somebody is trying to steal her money from her. I think that is the most despicable thing in the world.

Ms. Higgins: Is there anything you would like to have on record to address to future generations that will listen to and/or read this interview?

Mr. Jones: That's a pretty broad observation. I would think the most important thing is for the older people, the adults, to maintain a good, solid family, and to teach your children that morality does count in spite of what you may hear on television. Good family relationships, hard work - these are sort of looked down on these days, but this country has survived because of this, not because of the pop artists, the politicians that have gone bad, etc. The emblem of the FBI is inscribed with Fidelity, Bravery, and Integrity. This is not a mere motto, but a way of life which every one of us should follow. I feel very fortunate having been raised in Red Bank and having parents who instilled in me a strong sense of morality and patriotism. I feel very fortunate in being able to attend St. James Grammar School and Red Bank Catholic High School where I was able to obtain an excellent scholastic and religious education. The highlights of my life are as follows:

- 1.) Enlisting in the US Army Air Corps Aviation Cadet Program
- 2.) Being accepted by Mr. John Edgar Hoover as a Special Agent of the FBI (1/29/51).
- 3.) My marriage to Jo-An Frances Layden (8/9/52).
- 4.) The births of our four children.

5.) Being inducted into the Red Bank Catholic High School "Hall of Fame" at "Induction Ceremony & Dinner" held 4/30/99 at Navesink Country Club, Middletown, NJ.

Ms. Higgins: Thank you very much for giving your time to this project and this interview.