

Interviewer: Stella Harbilas

Interviewee: Louis Gaitanis

UF 277 ABC

H: This is Stella Harbilas. I am here with Louis Andrew Gaitanis. The date is Saturday, February 25, 1995. I will be interviewing Louis for the University of Florida Oral History Project. It is February 25, 1995. Louis, if you could just tell me your full name and spell it also.

G: My name is Louis A. Gaitanis.

H: Your middle initial stands for what?

G: That is my father's name. Would you like to know how I got it?

H: Sure. The name is Andrew right?

G: Yes. There were eight children, four boys and four girls. They noticed most everybody else had middle names. So one day we got together and we decided that all the boys would take their father's first name as their middle name, and all the girls would take their mother's first name as their middle name. So all the boys have Andrew as their middle name, and the girls have Constantina as their middle name.

H: So your parents were Andrew and Constantina Gaitanis?

G: Right.

H: So you were not born with that middle name? That is really interesting.

G: We just simply voted on it, and decided to do that. The problems of the new generation. [Laughter].

H: [Laughter].

G: Nea yienea. That is Greek.

H: So it was kind of a democracy at home.

G: Definitely.

H: Where were your parents from?

G: They were from the southern Peloponisos, which the big peninsula in southern Greece. There are three fingers that go down into the sea there. They are on the western one in a town called Koroni. As you know, the second one is the Mani peninsula, and the third one in the northern part is the Sparta. They came from the west, the one from furthest west.

H: Koroni?

G: Koroni. The part of Dr. Turnbull's [Dr. Andrew Turnbull, physician, 1718-1792] group that were Greek embarked from Koroni when they came to New Smyrna, Florida.

H: They ended up in St. Augustine.

G: they went down forty miles or so to New Smyrna. You know why they call it New Smyrna I guess?

H: No. Well I assume there was an old Smyrna.

G: Yes, Smyrna which is now on the Turkish coast. I say now Turkish coast because the western part of Turkey for thousands of years was Greek. You go down there and see all the Greek ruins today. There was a town there called Smyrna, a big town. It was sometimes called the Paris of the east. Dr. Turnbull married a girl, a Greek girl, from Smyrna. So he named the place that he came to, with the

grant he had been given him by the British, New Smyrna in honor of his wife's place of birth.

H: How did your parents come to the United States and what year if you know, approximately?

G: I think my dad arrived around 1904. I am not certain of the date, but that is close. He was unmarried when he came, and young. After a bit, when he got economically established, he decided it was time to have a wife. So my mother came over on the ship.

H: Did he know her?

G: No.

H: How did this work out?

G: It was an arranged marriage.

H: Who arranged it?

G: The parents.

H: Were they teenagers or was your dad older?

G: My dad was older than a teenager at that time, but it took him a little while to get established financially. I would say that my mother was younger by seven years by some years, not a great deal younger, but younger.

H: Would you name for me your siblings and tell their birthdates, including yours? How do you all fit?

G: Well, it is possible that one or more of my sisters might be unhappy for me to do this.

H: [Laughter]. I will let you use your judgement on that.

G: I will tell you that we had four girls. There are two girls that are older than I am. I am third on the list. There

are two girls that are younger than I am. I had two other girls older than I was, and two girls younger than I am. To divulge the names of the respective positions might be ... [laughter].

H: I understand. That is fine. If you want to tell me names at random.

G: I am the oldest boy. The names at random are Mary, Dorothea, Pauline, and Toula for the girls. The boys are, besides myself, John, Mike, and Alex (Alexander).

H: Where did you grow up?

G: I grew up in a number of places.

H: I am sorry to interrupt, but maybe I should ask you first where and when were you born?

G: East Moline, Illinois on June 25, 1917. Then we moved to Canton, Ohio. That is where I went to school first, Greek school. I went to Greek school first. I was not old enough to go to the American school. Then we were in Buffalo, New York for a while. Then we were in Boston, Massachussets. I still remember my Greek teacher in Boston, Massachussets. He was a disciplinarian, but not brutal or anything. It was good for us. Even his name would strike a little terror.

H: What was his name?

G: I do not remember his first name, and probably never knew it. His name in Greek was Kyrios Katramados.

H: Do you know what that means?

G: No, I do not. All I can tell you is that it struck terror into us. We were there to learn Greek, learn our lessons,

and all that.

H: Kyrios means mister.

G: Right. The name itself sounds a little forceful you know. He was a nice guy.

H: Did you spend most of your childhood in Massachussets?

G: No. My dad decided that he would like to check that part of Florida that was supposed to be a little bit like his village with orange trees and all that. He is from very southern Greece. On the protected side, they grew a lot of fruits that are semi-tropical. I understand that area now grows early tomatoes for the European market.

H: In Greece?

G: In Greece, yes. He came down and checked out Florida, and decided it was okay, particularly an area called Miami, which at that time was not much of a place. It was not very big, I mean.

H: What year was this?

G: This was in 1927.

H: How did you dad hear about Florida?

G: Frankly, I read [about it]. The schools in Boston were very advanced so to speak. In the first grade, we were learning English, French, and geography.

H: In first grade?

G: First grade.

H: Wow. What happened to our school systems? What did your father do for a living?

G: Let me explain how he got [to Florida].

H: I am sorry.

G: One day in the geography, I read about a place called Miami in south Florida. Miami was mentioned, along with the things that grew there. I told him about it, and he said, "Well we will have to investigate this. It sounds very much like my village area." He came down by himself with my uncle. They checked it out, and then they came back.

H: How did he get here? What mode of transportation did he use?

G: Ship. Oh you mean to Florida?

H: Right, from Massachussets.

G: They had a great big Rio truck. I think it was a Rio. In fact, that is what we came down in, a sort of modern covered wagon. My mother being pregnant was set up front.

H: Oh really. How many children were born at that time?

G: At that time, we were probably five.

H: I see. She was on her way with the sixth of eight. So when did you end up coming down to Florida? Shortly after? 1928?

G: 1928 as I recall. Maybe I am a year off, but no more than that.

H: So dad just decided to pack up the family because this was a great place to go.

G: Right. All from the fact that I had geography in the first grade.

H: That is great. What does that say about your home life. It sounds like what the kids said was listened to.

G: Well, very frankly at that time, Greek people were mostly

paternalistic. Most everybody did what dad wanted to do obviously. So there was no question about moving to Florida.

H: I mean the fact that he listened to your suggestion.

G: He would listen, definitely. He would definitely listen, but he made the decisions. He would listen.

H: What did he do for a living?

G: He was a wholesale fruit dealer.

H: Did he then just move his business down or start anew?

G: He checked it out pretty thoroughly. He learned they were growing limes in the Keys. Miami was a growing metropolitan area. He could haul limes from the Keys. He could haul fruit from 100 miles north, or up the coast a little bit. Before it was over with, he knew where every Haden mango tree existed in Florida, which is the kind they shipped. He even knew where back door plantings were. He knew where the June-bloom oranges were. They come in when there are no other oranges. At that time, they had no concentrate. So he could get oranges when nobody else could get them for the Miami market. He knew where the June-bloom trees were.

H: Did he have a store or did he go and buy from farmers and take it?

G: He would take it directly to the Miami Market.

H: I see. There was a big fruit market?

G: Not just fruit. There were vegetables and everything else.

H: A farmers market?

G: Sort of.

H: Where did you live in Miami, or where did you move to at that time?

G: We lived on North Miami Avenue for a while. We rented for a while. We obtained a lot, and built a house. It was in the vicinity of Tigertail Avenue--Coconut Grove. It was on the edge of Coconut Grove. It was a beautiful place.

H: Was that near the ocean?

G: It was near the bay. This was all on the bayside. It was a thin layer of soil above coral rock, ancient coral rocks. In fact, when we had the house built, the builder said, "I had not realized that the rock was that close to the surface. I am really not going to make any money on this."

So we gave him an extra \$400 for running into that problem

H: Did you go to high school in Miami?

G: Yes.

H: Where did you go to school?

G: I was in second grade in Boston when we had all of this. When I went to Miami, they wanted to know what grade I was in. I said, "Well I was in second grade in Boston." They said, "We do not know anything about the quality of the Boston schools, so we are going to put you in the first grade."

H: Without even testing you?

G: That is correct. So I was bored to death and told them so. They tested me, and they put me in the second grade. I was bored to death in the second grade, so they had a conference. They skipped me out of the second grade, and put me in the third grade. I was able to come to the

University when I was only seventeen because of that skipping. I was literally bored to death. I had done all that math. We were taking French, English, and geography, and others. Those I distinctly remember.

H: What a great education.

G: So I had a time of it in Miami. I went to Ada Merit Junior High when I got out of grammar school. I went to Alapada Elementary School, Ada Merit Junior High, and Miami Senior High School.

H: What did you do after school? Were you involved in other activities?

G: I had to work, frankly.

H: What did you do?

G: When I was eleven years old and about ten months, I went and applied for a job as a Miami Herald carrier, a newspaper in the morning. The Miami Daily News was the afternoon paper and our competitor. The gentleman's name was DeBona. I still remember it. He was a very nice Italian fellow. He looked at me, and said, "Are you twelve?" I said, "Sir, I am not twelve according to the way you may be reckoning it. I am eleven years old and ten months. In the Greek culture, I am twelve the minute I am over eleven." He said, "All right. We will give you a try."

H: Do you remember how much he paid you?

G: We were paid by commission, strictly commission. Your time was filled because you had to get up at 3: 30 a.m. every morning. I remember how I had to get up Sundays, Saturdays,

every day at 3: 30 a.m. You would go down to your route on your bicycle. We did not have cars. Then you would go to the stop off place where they left your papers. On Sundays, they left them at two or three spots because there were simply too many to put on your bike at one time. I do not mean too many, they were too thick. In the afternoons, you were supposed to go around and build up your circulation by soliciting new accounts, and make your collections. You were an independent business man. They really had no liability. You were an independent businessman. All of that could have been contested in the courts because there was a certain amount of instructions and so on. I do want to get into the legal aspects of it. It was a fascinating job. I held it for a little over five years. I never missed a day except when I had dengue fever, also known as bone-break fever.

H: How did you contract that?

G: I figured I contracted that at the municipal docks. They were part of my route. I was eventually promoted to the downtown route. That was the number one route. I was in DeBona's territory. I feel that a mosquito that was probably brought in by one of those boats from the Caribbean bit me, and gave me dengue fever.

H: Was this a common disease then?

G: No, it was not too common. Malaria was common. For instance, the year that I came here as a freshman in 1934, I contracted malaria.

H: Here in Gainesville?

G: Yes, but I got dengue fever in Miami, and malaria in Gainesville. In that year or the following year (I forget), over 300 died of malaria in Florida. All you got to do is go check the statistics over at Shands library, which I have done. So if you do not mind my jumping around a little bit, it worries me because they want to re-flood Florida back to what it was like originally in 1900 or something like that. If they do that, then they are going to get the mosquitos back. My dad also did a little farming in the Everglades with partners. The mosquitos were so bad sometimes they literally shaded the sun. My dad would say, "One hand for the lima beans and one hand to knock the mosquitos off your face." Even though you were wrapped and you had the 666 (or whatever it was then), you still had to wipe them off your face every now and then. I am quite concerned not only about malaria, but also about dengue fever coming back to Florida. Could you imagine what that would do to the tourist industry if we had 300 deaths due to malaria?

H: It would be incredible.

G: It would be incredible. My understanding is that malaria is back in Florida. You do not see it publicized, but it is back. It is back in Florida. It is not just when the tourists bring it in. Of course you have that horse disease, encephalitis. That is borne by mosquitos too you know. I am quite concerned about overdoing the re-flooding of Florida because of the mosquitos.

H: So they might bring back the bad with the good.

G: Because of the mosquitos. It would be disastrous to the tourist industry in my opinion.

H: How did the Depression affect your family?

G: We used to joke about that. I have eaten avocados green and smelly ripe. We survived on eating avocados. At that time, there was a lot of crawfish in the Miami area. We could catch crawfish. They were relatively easy to catch, and they were plentiful. I got tired of eating crawfish.

H: Could you eat them today?

G: Oh yes. They are quite an expensive thing today. In those days, you had to ask yourself, "Have I got so many that I cannot carry them back in the croaker sack?" They kept us alive

H: Right, you were fed.

G: I do not know why the people in the Keys stuck to grunts. It is a little fish that looks a little like a snapper. They grunt after you catch them. They survived on what they called grits and grunts. We survived on crawfish, grits, and avocado pears.

H: Avocado pears--is that what they called avocados?

G: Avocado pears, yes. They were sometimes called alligator pears.

H: Because of their skin?

G: I do not know. I guess so. We had a huge tree in our yard. We could eat them green, or we could eat them rotten. Not really rotten, but badly overripe. There is no substitute

for an avocado pear ripened on the tree. It is like a different fruit. They kept us alive because there is a lot of fat in them.

H: You were lucky then.

G: It was tough. I remember one time getting permission of a man to cut the radiator off of the wreck that was in his yard. I did not have a saw, a hacksaw. I almost had it cut to the bone, where I could take it down to the junkyard and actually get a dollar or two for it. Somebody else came along and hit it with a sledgehammer apparently and hauled it off. I spent hours and hours trying to saw that thing off. I had my route.

H: Did that help pay some of the bills for the family?

G: Yes, and I ended up after five years having \$500 in savings.

H: Wow, that is incredible.

G: That is what gave me the chance to come to the University of Florida the first year.

H: What year did you come to UF?

G: 1934.

H: You said you were seventeen at that time. Why did you decide to come to college and then to come to UF?

G: It shows you what examples can do. There was a boy down in Miami, I forget his name for the moment, but he is a great architect now. I knew his mother and father. They had the typical Greek, small olives and cheese retail outlet. So he came up here and I said if he could do it, why can I not do it? At first, I thought there was no hope for me. We were

very poor, not very poor, but you know there were eight kids. My father worked awful hard. Then I said, "I will go ahead and take the college entrance exams that the high school offered." When I realized that my teachers were congratulating me on the results of the exam **[[please finish thought]]**. They went out of their way to congratulate me. I do not think I ever got the score. With the example of this other fellow, I said, "I think I can go to college." I came here because I had what was known as a "crystal set" in those days.

H: Is that a radio?

G: It is kind of like a radio. It is a little, tiny thing. I started to bring it along with me. I still have got it.

H: I would like to see it sometime.

G: Yes. You would have to string a long wire outside. I strung it between two trees. I had a big arial. Then you would hear it with your earphones. I was impressed that I could hear over 300 miles in a straight line, a station called WRUF at a place called Gainesville at the University of Florida. That so impressed me that I said, "To heck with going to the University of Miami, I am going to the University of Florida. These people are advanced." I lived 300 miles away and I could get their messages clear on my crystal set. So that is why I came to the University of Florida.

H: How did you apply for school? Was it through the mail?

G: They encouraged me, in view of my results of the college

placement tests. I wrote a letter. I got an application. It was no problem whatsoever. I was virtually immediately accepted. By the way, before I forget it, I came up here with another fellow from Miami who had applied and was going to the University of Florida. We met each other on the bus. He had his suitcase, and I had mine. I said, "Where are you going?" He said, "I am going to UF." I said, "Good." So when we got here, we wanted to save cab fare.

H: From where?

G: From downtown Gainesville. We got the wrong directions.

Instead of going west, we went north. We went north. After a while, I said, "We should be at the University by now. There is something wrong here." So we knocked on the door of a rather fancy looking house, a big white house. A very charming lady opened the door, and said, "What may I do for you?" We said, "We are freshmen at the University of Florida. Can you tell us how to get there?" It turned out to be Mrs. Tigert, the president's wife [John J. Tigert, president, University of Florida, 1928-1947]. She says, "Yes, I can tell you how to get there." [Laughter].

H: Where was the house? Was it where the president's house is now?

G: Oh no. It was almost due north.

H: Was it around the Duckpond area?

G: Yes, the Duckpond area. It was on the south end. Do you know where the Pic-N-Save is that closed recently?

H: Yes.

G: It was in that general neighborhood. I do not think the house is there anymore. That was interesting. She said, "Yes, I can tell you how to find the University." So we had a long walk from there.

H: You walked?

G: We walked, yes. We had a long walk, but we finally got to the campus.

H: Where did you live? Were there dorms?

G: I lived in the dorms. I lived in both Thomas Hall and Buckman Hall. I cannot tell you which one I first lived in.

H: Are they both still around?

G: They are still there. By the way, there is an old interesting story about Thomas Hall and Buckman Hall. Some kids went to New York and registered as Thomas Hall and Buckman Hall from the University of Florida, and skipped out on their payment. They did not pay.

H: You mean while they were in New York?

G: It is my understanding that Dr. Tigert got a letter from the hotel saying two students, Thomas Hall and Buckman Hall, registered here, skipped out, and have not paid their bill. I never saw his reply, but it must have been interesting.

H: That is hilarious. [Laughter].

G: That was a joke around the campus for a while. It is supposed to be a true story. It was reported as having happened.

H: What did it cost to go to school in 1934?

G: It cost about \$405 a year. The costs were steady. When I finished with law school, the costs had only gone up to

about \$435.

H: Does that include housing?

G: That includes housing, dental work, and two trips a year to Miami at \$5 round trip--that is if you sat in the back in the center.

H: On a bus?

G: No, on a private car. Those were miserable trips sitting in the center. It took a long time to get to Miami from here in those days, but \$5 round trip, it was good.

H: You would just pay some private party to do that.

G: There were very few cars then. When you saw the notice on the board...[[**end of side a**]].

H: You were talking about getting home from school.

G: Once in a blue moon, you would try to bum your way to Miami, but that was pretty difficult. I have done it in those days. Of course, all the young ladies were over in Tallahassee, virtually all. We had one student in the law school because they did not have law over there.

H: A woman from Tallahassee in law school.

G: No, I think she was from Gainesville. Since it did not offer law, she could go to the law school.

H: That was before they admitted women in 1947.

G: Originally, I think it was that the women had to be to the west of the Suwannee, and the men to the east of the Suwannee. So we would wear our rat caps in those days, and sometimes there would be sixty or seventy guys out there on

the corner of University and 441. We would be all ranked by number. It was democratic. The first one there was number one. We would all be wearing our rat caps.

H: What is a rat cap?

G: A rat is a freshman. You know, orange and blue hats. I had my rat cap for a long, long time. I do not know whether I still have it or not. When somebody would stop, number one would get in, and then number two would become number one, unless the driver of the car indicated that he wanted somebody else. Once in a blue moon, the driver of the car recognized somebody and would take him.

H: How long did it take to get home?

G: We did not try it to Miami very often, but we would try it to Tallahassee.

H: Did you know somebody in Tallahassee? Did you visit somebody in Tallahassee?

G: What would happen in Tallahassee and in Live Oak especially was that we would try to travel in groups. Once in a while, you could get a car ride to Tallahassee and back. You would either sleep in the car. We had a very lovely lady in Live Oak who would allow us to sleep in the bed like this [the interviewer is pounding on the desk to indicate one next to another].

H: Several of you lined up in one bed?

G: In other words, there would be five of us sleeping across the bed rather than lengthwise. The rate would be rather inexpensive.

H: I would hope so.

G: We could do that because we were all together in the car. I forget what the going rate was to Tallahassee and back, two dollars or whatever it was.

H: For each of you?

G: Roundtrip.

H: For each person.

G: Yes. Then I think it was fifty cents a night sleeping like this. That is how we would get to Tallahassee. Sometimes up there, there were very low price accommodations. It is all relative of course.

H: Was this as an undergrad?

G: As an undergrad, and as a grad for that matter.

H: What is your undergraduate degree?

G: Bachelors of science in business administration.

H: What year did you get that?

G: 1937 or 1938. I majored in economics.

H: I happen to know that you did go visit somebody up in Tallahassee at some point--your wife.

G: Oh yes.

H: When did you meet her?

G: I met her at a dance here in the old student union which is now the building that they have the languages in and so on, the Greek Studies Program and so forth. I just saw her dancing in there. She was not waltzing quite well I thought. I watched her a while, and finally said to my friend, "Do you know this young lady?" I think she was

wearing red that day. He said, "Yes." I said, "Introduce me to her. I want to teach her. I want to teach her how to waltz."

H: Very presumptuous.

G: When I was a kid, I was a wallflower. I would not dance. One day my mother came and said, "Here is \$1.98." I said, "I have money mother." She said, "No, this is my present to you. Here is \$1.98 and a coupon. I want you to go to Professor **Kale's** studio, and take his twelve lessons for \$1.98." So I went. Professor **Kale** was a very fine, tall fellow. I think he was from Germany. I learned to waltz there, along with other dances. When the twelve lessons were over, he said, "If you would like to continue, I will not charge you anything, but you are going to have to teach the young ladies how to dance." So I danced there for months and months before it was over with, and I was not being charged. I did learn something about teaching waltzing. Whenever I can, I love to waltz.

H: I know. I have danced with you before.

G: I have been known to ask a lady that I have never danced with before waltzing when she is real good. I said, "Would you like to try waltzing back to back?"

H: What does that mean?

G: Back to back.

H: Literally.

G: Literally. I will slide her around here, and we will slide here, and we will waltz back to back, then I will slide her

back. I do that with my daughter. Every now and then they will say yes, and it works out. I knew a little something about waltzing. What I really meant was that I could improve her waltz, not teach her how. I could improve her waltz.

H: So that is how you met her? What was her full name?

G: Her name was Sarah Elizabeth Adams.

H: So then you started dating?

G: We had a long courtship.

H: And it was long distance too.

G: Yes, she lived in Tallahassee. It was a four year courtship.

I am really unhappy that I did not think of that when she was dying. We had been married forty-six years, and if I had added the four courtship years, I could have had a fiftieth anniversary shortly before she died.

H: What year did she die?

G: She died in 1987 on January 31.

H: What year were you married?

G: We were married in 1942 in May.

H: That was after you graduated from law school?

G: Yes. I was a stickler. I insisted on being financially independent. I had to have a job before we got married. So we did not get married until 1942. I had a job with the Federal Security Agency in Washington D.C. I was making pretty good money for those days, \$2100 a year, I believe.

H: And was Sarah still here in Florida?

G: She graduated from what they called **FLASFW** or something like

that. It stood for the Florida School For Women in Tallahassee.

H: What was her degree?

G: She was a music major. She was the first public school music teacher for the public schools of Alachua County.

H: Oh really. Did she continue teaching throughout?

G: She taught in at least three schools. I forget how many. She had to furnish her own car, I remember. She was paid \$1800 a year, and nothing was allowed for the car. When we married one of her choirs sang at the wedding.

H: Oh really.

G: I remember one little boy was very upset. He must have been only about six or seven years old. He looked at me with daggers because I was going to take his teacher away.
[Laughter].

H: They get very attached.

G: He was very attached. I guess he was maybe as much attached to her as I was, so to speak. That boy was most unhappy, but he sang.

H: Hopefully he got over it.

G: He sang. He was the one on the end over here.

H: Were you involved in school activities as an undergrad, like Blue Key or any clubs on campus?

G: My problem was that I had to work. I started working as laborer on the grounds at eighteen and one-half cents an hour.

H: On the grounds at UF?

G: Yes. I have learned a lot about maintaining the grounds and pruning. One day, Mr. **Leroy** Schoth, the superintendent of buildings and construction, asked for volunteers to pull nails out of old boards. The boards were in good condition, but they had nails in them. I volunteered. I pulled nails until I really learned how to pull nails. Let me tell you, I can pull nails. One day, he lined us all up again, and said, "I need a volunteer for a special job. I will not tell you the job, but it is kind of a rough job." I stepped forward. I said to myself, "What have I got to lose?" I was kind of skinny in those days. He asked me if I was strong. I said, "Yes, I am stronger than I look." He said, "Okay." He took me into the office. He said, "Your job is to go to the septic pools on the University of Florida campus, and with a high pressure hose walk down between the pits on the concrete ramp, and break them up."

H: How much did he pay you for that?

G: I think I was advanced to twenty-one and a half cent an hour. That did not bother me. I went with my high pressure hose. Of course I had to take a real good bath every time I went home. I broke all that up. He seemed impressed. One day, he said, "Can you type?" I said, "No sir. Give me thirty days and I will learn to type. Why?" He said, "I need an office manager." In other words, I got my opportunity. So thirty days later I came in, and I typed for him. He said, "You have got the job." Eventually, I was paid big money of forty-two cents an hour.

H: Wow. More than double what you made as grounds keeper.

G: Yes.

H: For which department again?

G: I was the chief student assistant for the superintendent of buildings and construction. I learned an awful lot. Before it was over with, I would order materials by railroad cars. We had a railroad spur down, and they would bring them right on in. He was not only the superintendent of maintenance, but also the superintendent of construction. We renovated Buckman Hall and Thomas Hall. He was the builder in charge of P.K. Yonge. This may be prior to my being his office manager. We had some follow-up stuff to do. If anybody wanted to change their offices, we did it. I remember one time I was in too big a hurry. I did the little odd jobs sometimes. I did everything just about. I would type payrolls on Friday. I would be up typing the payrolls for the non-salary people until 2 a.m.

H: What kind of a typewriter was it?

G: It was just an ordinary, nonelectric [typewriter]. You had to pound it real hard if you had to make too many copies. I remember one time there was an emergency call. They forgot to put the pencil sharpener in. I hurried and did not give them enough room to put their hand in, so I had to run back and do it over again.

H: This was in somebody's office.

G: Right.

H: What did that wage increase from eighteen cents an hour to

forty-two cents an hour buy you?

G: It is relative again. For instance, you could eat a good breakfast at what we used to call the Tomaine Tavern. That was the University Cafeteria. They were very nice people. In those days, you could buy a good breakfast for seven cents. I mean a good breakfast for seven cents.

H: Were you able to pay for all your meals. With your job, were there any expenses you could not pay for, or did you pretty much handle all of it?

G: I got through college in a number of ways. For instance, I had a good stamp collection. I had some really good stamps. I had to sell that for my second year.

H: Do you remember how much you got for it?

G: Yes. A dealer actually paid me about \$225 for it. I had a lot of good stamps. I remember some of them now. There were some of those ten cent greens around the 1860s. I must have had forty of those. Today they would probably be worth \$5,000 just for those. They kept me in school. I won a HEPA scholarship.

H: What is HEPA?

G: American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association.

H: Is it a fraternal organization?

G: Yes, but it has education in its title. So I won one of those \$300 competitive scholarships. That is the majority. I held other jobs because my savings were good for only one year. I used to work at the Kitten as a waiter.

H: What was the Kitten?

G: The Kitten was a restaurant across the street from where the library is now. I used to park cars for games. I would lease a lot fronting on University Avenue from a guy. I would get two or three students to help me put the cars in. I would split the money with them.

H: So you were an early entrepreneur.

G: Yes. I even occasionally would buy books and resale them, but I did not do much of that. I did all sorts of things wherever you could earn an honest dime.

H: When did you have time to study?

G: Well, that has been my problem all my life, finding time to study. However, I never missed a class unless I was really sick. I sat up near the front, and I took notes.

H: Where were your business classes? What building?

G: It is a kaleidoscope because ever since I came, they have been constantly building. We just had them everywhere. We had them at temporary buildings that they had gotten from military surplus. I remember being in temporary buildings. We finally got Matherly Hall rebuilt. That was when I was faculty. It was just everywhere, wherever they could find a place.

H: What made you decide to go to law school, and why UF?

G: From 1934 to 1937, jobs were a bit scarce. I think we were still in a depressionary stage. I said, "Well I am here. I am doing okay. Why not get another degree." Actually, I wanted to be a forester. When I arrived, I signed up in the College of Agriculture. Then I found out they only offered

six hours of forestry, which is not even a minor. I said, "Gee, I cannot become a forester here." I looked around to see what I could do. I said, "I will go into the College of Business. It is fairly broad." So I had to resign from the College of Agriculture and apply to the College of Business.

I really wanted to be a forester, and I am a forester. I have been a forester all my life.

H: In what way?

G: As soon as I was able to, I acquired forest land.

H: Here in Gainesville?

G: Yes, my first tree farm was in Gainesville. Since then, I have tree farms in Georgia, for instance. If it had not been for tree farming, I do think I could have educated my children.

H: If you would just give me the names of your children and their ages.

G: I have two boys that are twins. They are about forty-eight. My daughter is eight years younger. She is about forty. The older boy is Robert, and the younger boy (five minutes difference) is Thomas. My daughter's name is Sarah Katherine. She likes to go by Katherine.

H: Named for her mother?

G: Named for her mother. She has a little daughter named Sarah. I have seven grandchildren and one great granddaughter who is about six weeks old.

H: Congratulations. What do your children do? What are their occupations and where are they living?

G: My son Tom teaches at Dunnellon High School and occasionally at the junior college in Ocala. He majored in math and physics and he teaches math mostly. My son Robert is in the mortgage business. In college, he was a finance major. My daughter Katherine majored in mathematics, and also minored in computers. We felt that if she did not go on to a higher degree, she needed something else. She actually worked for the University and was one of the early people in setting up the computers in the Registrar's Office. She would come home and be pondering problems while she was eating. Every now and then she would say, "I got it!" She would sit down and write something.

H: Where did your children grow up--here in Gainesville?

G: Yes, they grew up here in Gainesville on a tree farm. I still have parts of that tree farm. I still have sixty-two acres of that tree farm. That is where I live.

H: Have you been in the same house for many years?

G: Yes, many years. The kids grew up there. They definitely have rural background. I was concerned about them taking care of themselves so I taught each one of them how to shoot a pistol, shotgun, and a rifle. I encouraged them on bow and arrow. They are all pretty good shots. My dad was an expert with a pistol.

H: Did you hunt back down in Miami when you were growing up? Did you dad hunt?

G: Yes, I would hunt in the Everglades. For instance, I would get on the bus with my shotgun, but it would be open.

People would know what it was. It would be broken. The bus drivers at that time permitted it, and I guess the laws permitted it. This was a long time ago. I would go out to the furthest point that the bus would take me. Then I would hunt. I would then catch a bus back and get on it with my game, which was usually rabbits. Occasionally it would be doves or ducks. Then I would ride the bus back. The Everglades was a fascinating place in those days. We would have the wet seasons, dry seasons, and fires in the Everglades. You would have to be careful because you would be walking along in the Everglades in a burned area and then you would sink because the muck had burned down to the coral rock at the bottom. You could suffocate if you fell in it.

After a while, I got to be able to recognize on sight. The color would be slightly different where it was burned deep.

You would just circle that.

H: If I may go back to you law school days here.

G: I should mention that in conformity with the usual Greek insistence, I am strong on education.

H: Your parents were as well?

G: Yes, even though they were both illiterate. My mother finally learned to read and write. One of my sisters taught her how to read and write. My father could never do anything but sign his name.

H: And run a business.

G: Yes, and definitely run a business. He was a terrific master of human nature. You have to be in that position. One

thing they would always say **[[Greek--please translate]]**,
which means diplomacy my boy or my son.

H: In relation to dealing with people.

G: In whatever you do. Diplomacy or diplomatia. That is another one of the numerous words we get from the Greeks. Every now and then I kid people a little bit. I say, "You are speaking Greek all the time and you do not know it." I tell them about half of the English words are Greek. When you get into the medical book, about three-fourths or higher [of the words] are Greek. I tell them that I could describe every bit of your body in English words that come from the Greek. I remember one lady who had a rather formal thing and made a speech. I think she was trying to use sophisticated words. I got out a piece of paper immediately. Every time she spoke a word from the Greek roots, I would write it down. When she was finished, I had several sheets. I said, "You know, you do really well speaking Greek through the English language." She said, "What?" I said, "Here are all the words." I handed her three sheets. I made quite an impression with that speaker.

H: Did you siblings go to college or were you the only one?

G: Very frankly, I was determined to go to college. My siblings did not have much of a chance. However, they all finished high school. Toula taught in the public schools with a high school diploma, and then began to go to college at night. I think she was in Denver at the time. She got a degree in mathematics in night school, and a minor in art. She has

taught for a number of years, mathematics and art. She is an artists. She has painted and sold a lot of her paintings. She is in the process of painting this church.

H: A scene of it?

G: Yes, from color slides that I have sent her. She painted the church at Daytona Beach. If you ever go there again, as you go to the social hall, you come down the steps, and look across, there are three pictures of their churches--their old church, intermediate church, and current church. The intermediate painting, the one of the **Batista's** old home was painted by my sister Toula.

H: I should say that we are conducting this interview at St. Elizabeth's Greek Orthodox Church here in Gainesville in the community room. You mentioned earlier that you went to law school because you thought it would be a good idea.

G: A good idea to get another degree, and I was kind of interested in law. I had taken business law in the College of Business under rather difficult circumstances. We were practically told that a certain percentage of us were going to fail.

H: In business school?

G: No, in the business law course. In view of that warning, I studied that course.

H: And you passed I assume.

G: Yes, I did well in that one. I did fairly well in my grades in spite of all the work. The jobs that I mentioned to you were not all the jobs. I have done all kinds of jobs. I

jumped trucks for Burdines during the Christmas holidays.

H: What do you mean jump trucks?

G: As they come up to an address, you would be hanging onto a bar, and standing on a step.

H: Outside of the truck?

G: Yes. You jump off the truck, run to the back, pick up the package, and take it to deliver it. It pays well during the Christmas holidays that we have. I sold retail at the fish market. I quit that job though.

H: Where was this?

G: This was in Miami.

H: Oh I see.

G: I discovered that they were selling barracuda as kingfish. The minute I saw that, I said, "This is fraud. I am getting out of this place." So I quit that job. I have washed bottles at a dairy. I have done all kinds of things.

H: You could write a book on all the kinds of jobs that were to be had.

G: I hope to write a book someday--if the Lord lets me live long enough and if I have the time.

H: Did you keep the job that you had with the Department of Buildings and Construction?

G: Yes.

H: Did you keep that through law school?

G: Absolutely.

H: And the reason that you stayed at UF was because you were already here I assume.

G: Yes. The times were rather difficult to get good jobs. I said, "Why do I not just grab this opportunity and get another degree here?" I liked business law. It kind of opened my eyes to it.

H: Did you consider other law schools at all?

G: No, I liked it here. I was impressed with the long-leaf pine trees. The University of Florida was small. I think we were the first big class. We were 1,000 freshman strong.

H: In the undergrad?

G: Undergrad. The tomaine tavern would cook our rabbits for us. We would go hunting up here at the houses up the street, and a few blocks up.

H: Across from Millhopper Road?

G: No. Across from the campus here. You just go north a few blocks and you could hunt rabbits. The cafeteria would cook them for us. Those were the days, I tell you. I had a little problem adjusting. For instance, I thought grits were ground rice. So I asked them, "Why do you ground your rice here?" I still remember them laughing [at me] in the old cafeteria. For instance, with succotash, I would say, "Why kind of vegetable is that?" It is a combination of vegetables as you know. That kind of stuff.

H: Did you find north Florida to be more southern than Miami? It sounds like a southern [town]? **[[End of tape]]**.

G: Speaking of food, there was one place on my route that was really unusual. They had chili. They had this great big sign out there that said, "Chili Number One." I forget how

they described it. When you got to five or six [spoonfuls], the hotness of the chili increased. I am not exaggerating at all. Number six says, "This one will grow hair on your chest." I never tried that one. I did not dare.

H: This was on your paper route in Miami?

G: Yes, on my paper route in downtown Miami. Where were we? Were we talking about law school?

H: We were talking about law school, and you were talking about the cafeterias and how they used to cook your meals.

G: I liked it here. I liked the forests around here. People were rather friendly. About the only thing that I was not real keen on were the pajama parades.

H: What is that?

G: In those days, the freshman, on orders of the upper classmen (there was hazing even in the dorms), had to line up in their pajamas and march downtown. This was usually before games. When we got down to the town square, we formed a cheering squad--all the freshman. The upper classmen were really kind of rough on us. That to me was a little degrading. I do not go for hazing.

H: I do not blame you.

G: You were adequately covered with your pajamas. You looked kind of silly walking down the street in your pajamas. Those were the pajama parades that the upper classmen imposed on the freshmen.

H: What was downtown like at the time? What were some of the businesses?

G: There was Louie's Captains Gallery, a restaurant on the corner. The railroad train would come through town. The railroad train would come right by the old courthouse. On this side, on the other corner, was Blizioties Hat and Cigar Bookshop.

H: Is that Mike's bookstore?

G: Mike's Bookstore. On the other corner was the Pfiefer State Bank, I think. It was not much of a downtown.

H: When you went to law school, what did you need to qualify for admissions? Did you take an exam? Was it pretty competitive or did you go right in?

G: I took what was known as the combined degree. You could use some of it to finish your four years of the College of Business, and use a little of your law. At the time, I was in a hurry to get my law degree and get out.

H: So how many years of undergraduate did you have?

G: I had six including summers. I went to school in the summer too. It would be six plus years.

H: So undergrad plus law school was six years.

G: No six plus. I had to go to summer school some too.

H: I see. You said earlier the cost of law school was just about \$35 more than undergrad.

G: The costs held steady for four or five years, and then it began to go up.

H: Were you involved in any law school activities or were you working?

G: Again I was terribly busy working. I had these odd jobs. I

was constantly doing odd jobs wherever I could find an odd job, in addition to working for the University.

H: Do you remember who the dean was then of the law school?

G: Dean Trusler [Harry Raymond Trusler].

H: Do you have some recollections of your favorite or most memorable professors?

G: Oh yes. TeSelle [Clarence John TeSelle, Professor of Law] unquestionably. In fact, TeSelle was a marvelous teacher. By the way by coincidence, the day before yesterday, I bought a box of books. I found a book called School of Law by Dean Trusler. I was hoping he had signed it. I have not had time to examine it carefully. I love books. Let me digress for a moment. When I got hold Lorna Doone [author is R.D. Blackmore] about the six or seventh grade, I read it straight through. I read it through the afternoon and into the night. I read all night long. Lorna Doone is about that thick. I re-read some of the areas, particularly where some guys tripped that huge log and crushed some guys. My mother thought I had gone insane. You know how Greek mothers worry about their kids. She thought I had gone nuts. I just kept telling her, "I just want to finish reading it mother." She would come out every few hours and I would still be reading it. I read the whole thing straight through, the night and on into the next day. I digress. Where was I?

H: You were talking about finding a book by Dean Trusler, and we were talking about your law professors. You mentioned

TeSelle.

G: I think I know his full name. He was trying to teach us how to think on our own feet. We would have oral recitations pretty regularly. Even Trusler had oral recitations. TeSelle called on me one day. He tried to trip you up on your feet. I was desperate one day. So I said, "Sir you have got me completely mixed up. Do you want me to sit down or continue?" Old TeSelle reared back, you know. He used to chew a cigar, unlit of course. He chewed that cigar around, looked at me, and squinted at me. He said, "Take your choice son." You want to guess what I did? I sat down. [Laughter].

H: Was he a nice man?

G: Oh yes. He was a prince.

H: Were you able to go to their offices after class and talk to them?

G: Oh yes. You could see the dean just about any time. Dean Matherly [Walter J. Matherly, Dean of College of Business Administration], for example. I am jumping ahead. Let me get back to my student days in law school. Trusler was very interesting. For instance, he could not pronounce my name, Gaitanis. Finally one day, somebody went up to him after class and said, "This is the way you pronounce Gaitainis." From that day on, I was called on every day. The dean would pronounce my name right, look around, and smile like see I got it, which meant that I had to be ready every day. I made an A in his course. I made on of the few A's I made in

law school. In those days, out of a class of fifty students, there might be two or three A's, four or five B's, and that is it. It was tough to make an A or a B. I got an A in that course. I had to be ready every day.

H: I want to digress for a second because you had told me a story about somebody else who had trouble pronouncing your name.

It was the dorm mother.

G: I thought about that a while ago, but I hesitated to put it on tape.

H: It is up to you.

G: Maybe in the interests of accepting various cultures, I ought to repeat it. I was warned that the house mother at Tallahassee was trying to do a real good job about protecting her girls. They said, "If she finds out you are Greek, you are going to be in trouble."

H: Why?

G: You have to pass the house mother to see the girls.

H: What did Greek have to do with it?

G: In those days, our reputation was not so good. In my humble opinion, mostly because of things like today the Vietnamese competing in the fisheries. The Greeks came over and competed in the sponging. In fact, two Greeks (I understand) were burned alive deliberately in a jail at Cedar Key at one time. There is a Ph.D dissertation on file about that.

H: So there was a lot of discrimination against [Greeks].

G: Oh was there discrimination.

H: I imagine [it] was against many cultures.

G: Let me digress for a moment.

H: Sure.

G: There were signs at Lake Okechobee. They would say, "No Greeks, niggers, or Indians allowed in here." Greeks were number one. I am quoting now. "No Greeks, niggers, or Indians allowed in this place." I have personally seen those signs, and I am sorry I did not photograph them. Again, in the interest of broader acceptance of nationalities and so on, I will tell the story.

I had to figure out a way to get through this lady to see my girl. I went in there, and I came in with a great big dog about this big, a stuffed dog. They were not so strong on the Gator bit at that time.

H: You mean the rivalry was not there.

G: What I mean is you could have an orange and blue dog.

H: As opposed to an alligator.

G: There were a few other things that were orange and blue including alligators. I called this dog stand-in. The idea was that I would present it to my girl, and say, "If I am not here, and you get lonely, you will have this dog. He is my stand-in." That is why I called him stand-in. When I went in there the first time to introduce myself, I had this big dog. I sat it up on the counter and said, "Mam, may I put my dog here for a moment?" That distracted her. She said, "What is your name sir?" I said, "My name is Louis

Gaitanis." She said, "Oh, Mr. Thomas we are so glad to meet you."

H: [Laughter]. You tricked her.

G: Do you know that the other kids called me Guy for at least a year afterwards, on the campus?

H: Oh, she thought your first name was Guy.

G: She thought my name was Louis Guy Thomas. I had slurred the Gaitanis, you know. She said, "We are happy to have you." I got to see my girl. In those days you had to sit in a parlor with a light on. Anyone could walk in at any time. There would be somebody else or two to three couples in the same parlor. Maybe I should not say this, but in the interest of _____, I will. The next time I went there, I saw the same lady. I said, "Mam you have been mispronouncing my name all this time. My name is Louis Gaitanis, and I am a Greek American." The woman nearly fainted. [Laughter]. I will give her credit. She pulled herself together instantly. She ended up giving me a smile. She got to where she liked me. I thought I would be honest with her, even though it was pretty late in the game. By that time, we were engaged I think.

H: It was too late for her to do anything.

G: Yes.

H: I like that story.

G: I am saying it with the idea that it might help. This country is [made] of a whole lot of different nationalities. We must get along with each other. The better we can do it,

the better we can get along with everybody. Now we are getting Vietnamese in here, and so on. We need this. It is too bad we have those things. I will never forget the signs around the Everglades.

H: Did you heed those warnings and stay out of the way?

G: Oh yes. My dad would say, "There is no need in causing trouble son."

H: Did you meet with discrimination otherwise in Miami?

G: Oh yes.

H: Face to face?

G: Oh yes, definitely.

H: Were there many Greeks there at the time?

G: I was going to tell you what happened with the high school annual. I do not mind telling you. They kind of put the foreigners together.

H: Oh really. In the book?

G: Yes. [Laughter]. It was something. The "foreigners".

H: Foreigners from Massachussets right?

G: Yes. They did not know that I had started in the finest schools in the nation. I learned some French. I still remember that la plume is the pen. We were so far ahead in Boston on the math. They were astounded when they finally got around to giving me the test on what I could do in math.

H: Did you have any military experience?

G: Yes.

H: In what rank?

G: I was in the field artillery. I was a four year ROTC graduate

from the University of Florida. I had postponed my summer training. Generally, you get it between your junior year and your senior year. I had a good job that summer. I wanted to work to keep going. When I graduate from here, I owed about 100 people money from five cents to **[[please fill in]]**. I had it all written down. I paid them all off by the way. I even borrowed money to lend other students money to be frank about it. They were desperate. They were in their senior year, so I actually borrowed money to lend to students. Where was I?

H: We were talking about military experience.

G: I did not get to go to camp until after my four years were finished. When I got to camp, I did real well. I was appointed chief lifeguard where the kids swam in the rivers. I used to be a lifeguard in Miami. I was also a first aid instructor.

H: Where was the camp?

G: The camp was at Fort Benning, Georgia. I remember how I would get the highest spot where I could watch my assistants. We would have hundreds of guys swimming in the river. I did real well in camp. About five days before graduation ceremonies, I was told that I had to see the commanding colonel.

H: Are these all students?

G: All cadets with second lieutenant commissions. My commission was in camp right on his desk. When I went in there, he said, "Cadet Gaitanis, I am sorry to have to tell you that

you will not graduate with the rest." By the way, I was not the only one. There was a line of them out there. I said, "Sir what is the problem?" He said, "I will be frank with you. We did pass your physical when you came in. You passed. They have strengthened the regulations. We cannot accept you now." Boys that had athletes foot lost their commission.

H: Really.

G: Yes.

H: And this was commission into actual military service?

G: Yes, reserves. I would have been second lieutenant in the field artillery.

H: Army reserve?

G: Yes, army reserve. Seventy-five millimeter guns is what we were using. He did not want to talk too much about it. I investigated it later, and what I found was that the reservers were given the same medical rights as the regular army during that spring?

H: What does that mean?

G: You know medical benefits. So the order apparently came down to bust everybody that had anything wrong with them. What happened to me was that in my senior year, I had a slight internal injury because of the stirrups on my horse. I was riding a horse without being tied to the artillery pieces. It was sort of a parade. My horses equipment broke. Both stirrups broke. Eventually, I lost my saddle and I was riding bareback. The horse got frightened. I fell. The

colonel say, "You rode that horse from the top of his head back to his tail before you fell off. I will give you credit." I was injured. It was a minor thing, but that is the reason I lost my commission.

This bothered me. I wanted to get into the service. All my buddies [were in it]. So then I volunteered in the Coast Guard. I was honest with them. By that time (this was some years later), they accepted me. I did some duty in the U.S. Coast Guard Reserve T.

H: What was the T?

G: Temporary. We did guard duty. We did target towing.

H: Where were you located?

G: St. Petersburg. I had a job then as manager of the Social Security Board Field Office at St. Petersburg. We would drag targets around Tampa Bay, and these planes would come shooting at the targets. One time we got the order of overboard because the captain of our boat thought that we would be in the line of fire. There were not but three or four of us on the boat. Just as I was about to go overboard he said, "Hold it. Stop." You could see the bullets, but they missed us. We did not have anything really hazardous. It was useful. We were able to do a little something useful.

H: When was this?

G: I was married in 1942. It was about 1944.

H: I see. How long were you in?

G: I was in quite a while. You would only go to duty when they call. They call you when they needed you and this sort of thing. It was very limited actual duty. A lot of my classmates were either killed or mixed up when they got back.

H: They went to serve in World War II?

G: Yes, we were all line officers. Some of them got to the rank of captain, battlefield promotions, and all this stuff. Who knows? Maybe it was the Lord's doing, and I was not supposed to go there.

H: I want to get a little bit of your professional life and then move into your teaching at UF. Give me a chronology of the jobs you had after law school.

G: In law school, one day we were talking about the newly formed, federal job called the junior professional assistant. They had various options like zoology and legal options. At that time, the federal government was on the verge of expanding and taking over what states were doing. There were jobs opening up. They rushed these junior professional assistant ads. We saw it on the bulletin board in law school and said, "There is a lark. Let us take the test and see who makes the highest grade." None of us intended to work for the federal government, but it was a challenge. Let us go down, take the exam, and see who makes the highest grade. So we went down and took the exam.

H: Where was this?

G: Downtown at the post office building. When I graduated, I

went down to Miami from law school. I took my federal bar exam. At that time, they would honor the UF degree, maybe others. I do not know. You would not have to take a federal exam to be admitted to the bar of state courts.

H: There was no state bar exam?

G: No. There was, but they would take the degree from the University of Florida in lieu of the exam.

H: What degree did you have from UF?

G: LLB--later changed to JD, juris doctor.

H: What year was that?

G: It was 1940 or 1941. You had to take the federal bar exam to be admitted to the federal courts. I went down, and did my review. The federal bar exam was strictly oral. It was rough. You went in there, and there was about six or seven fellows behind this long table. You had to stand all the time. They would ask you a question on admiralty, and then jump to a question on the new federal rules. Thank God TeSelle had insisted that we learn the new federal rules. I passed. I was admitted to the federal bar. After having done that, I was looking for work. The jobs were scarce even then. There were jobs, but the pay was nothing. We called it streetcar and lunch money. That is what we called it. We were recent law graduates and they wanted to pay us so little. We said, "Gee, this is only streetcar and lunch money."

I got a telegram saying that I had passed the junior professional

assistant legal option, and was offered a job as assistant adjudicator (a beginning job) for the Federal Security Agency at \$2100 a year. I grabbed it because I could pay off my debts. The total was not so much, it was just that I owed a great number of people something. I borrowed money to help out other kids.

I have been education minded all my life. If I had all the money that I have given out for people to get educated, I would have a tidy sum just from that.

H: Just from helping students along the way?

G: Students and relatives in getting more education and this type of thing.

H: Your first job was in Washington?

G: My first job was in Washington D.C. It was a fascinating job because we would review claims against the government. I remember paying at least \$100,000 a day many days, and sometimes considerably more. The General Accounting Office would only review about one-half of 1 percent of the claims. You were it. As I say, it was rather interesting. I was not happy in Washington D.C. For one thing, I just did not like the way they were telling us to pay the claims. It was a relatively new agency. They wanted us to pay if it was at all possible. I remember my Texas subunit chief saying, "You need to be more humane about this and pay as many claims as possible regardless. How do you expect to become a subunit chief?" I was not there too long. I asked for a

transfer to the field. I was sent into the field. I worked in Gainesville for a while for the Federal Security Agency.

I then worked at the Jacksonville office as assistant manager. Then the manager job opened up in St. Petersburg, and I went there. You can see all the moves. Washington, Baltimore, and then Baltimore, Jacksonville. We were getting older and I was married.

H: How many years between the first job and all the others before UF?

G: Only about five or six years. I said, "We cannot keep this up." We wanted to have children. I learned that they were short on instructors, so I called Dean Matherly, my former dean, a wonderful man by the way.

H: He was your dean when you were an undergrad in business school?

G: Yes. When you went to his office, you had to have a coat and tie on. He was absolutely a wonderful man. Mr. Schoth was a wonderful man. He was my work boss. So I called Dean Matherly long distance. I said, "Dean, I hear you are short on instructors." The veterans were coming back.

H: So that meant a lot of students.

G: He says, "Yes we are." I said, "I am interested in teaching." He said, "Where will you be this time tomorrow at 6: 00?" In those days it was a bit informal in hiring. I said, "I will be right here at this phone at 6: 00." He called me up, and he said, "I got a job for you as instructor." I said, "Dean Matherly, I have two degrees and five years of

federal service. I think I ought to start as an assistant professor." He said, "Give me another day. Are you going to be here at 6: 00?" At 6: 00 the next day, he calls up and says, "Professor Gaitanis, I have got a job for you." So I started out as an assistant professor.

H: How did you hear about the jobs? Was it a rumor?

G: I read it in the newspapers.

H: Was there a specific, open call for instructors?

G: No, it was just saying there were a lot of veterans coming back and there was a shortage of instructors. So the Dean and I got along well. I had great respect for the man. So I said, "Well, I will just call the dean."

H: Do you remember what your starting salary was then?

G: My starting salary was in the low \$2,000 range. That is all. Maybe \$2500 a year. It was very good, compared to today.

[[End of side A]].

H: You said your wife...

G: My wife got a job, and worked for a little while.

H: What did she do--teaching?

G: No. She was teaching before we were married. After we were married, she had an office job. Of course, the minute she became pregnant, I suggested that I would do the livelihood. I wanted her to give her best to the child. I did not realize we were going to have two boys.

H: Oh, the twins.

G: Yes, the boys were twins.

H: So it was sort of a modest living as assistant professor.

G: Very modest living.

H: Is that about the time you bought the house here in Gainesville?

G: I could not afford a regular house here in Gainesville. I wanted to be out in the country, so I kept my eyes and ears open. Then we learned that there was a house available. It was a small, sort of a doll house.

H: A doll house?

G: Almost a doll house. At that time, you got your water from another house. So you had to pay a little every month to get your water. You did not have your own well. It was cheap. It was inexpensive. It was an acre lot, fronting the Millhopper Road for \$2,000 cash.

H: Wow. It was yours.

G: So I borrowed \$500 from a professional I knew in Jacksonville. I deposited that in the bank. Very frankly, I went to another bank and told them I had \$500 in this bank. They did not ask me where I got it or anything. They lent me the \$1,500, and I paid this fellow off in \$2,000 cash and got the house. I slowly paid the mortgage off at \$25 a month. That is how I got my first house. Then I talked the neighbor into selling me an acre in the back, which had a creek through it, a constantly running creek. I thought it was beautiful. I bought that acre for \$50, but he liked us. He particularly liked my wife Sarah. She got along real well with people. Being neighbors, keeping us happy, and being a young married couple and all that. He was really

going to give us the acre. It had far more than \$50 worth of timber on it, you know. He said, "Just give me \$50." By then, we had two acres. We had a flower garden and a place for vegetables. We were off to a good start.

H: Did you end up building on that property again or did you stay in the same house?

G: No. I was a forester at heart. I wanted acreage. I spotted an eighty acre track with a much bigger house. It was not completely built, but sound. It was built by a saw mill owner for his daughter as a wedding present. It was heart pine. In fact, you could crawl under the house and see where they had cut off wood for the floors, the pieces. You could see where the termites had attacked them, but had give up on it.

H: It was very hard wood.

G: It was dense. So we finally got that, but the man wanted all cash. I think it was \$8,000, if I remember correctly, for eighty acres and a house. I forget what it was. I will be honest with you. I had to do something. I did not know what to do. I had prettied up my place. I painted it, and put a well down. We had our own water. I had taken out the fifty gallon drum, which was a septic tank, and made a regular deal out of that. I had brought in dogwoods, redbuds, and all that. It was the spring season and it really looked beautiful. I found a man who paid me what I needed. That was \$12,000 come to think of it. I sold this place for \$8,000. I had paid \$2,000 for it. I spent some

time and money on it. That gave me \$8,000 of the \$12,000. Then I went to a colleague at the University. I do not want to mention his name. He lent me \$4,000. I told him I would give him the maximum lawful interest. So I got \$4,000 from him, and I was able to go over and pay these people their \$12,000. Now we were in a lot better shape because we had a big house, a solid house, and eighty acres of land. So I started on my forestry.

One of the contributions that I feel most proud of is that I was able to observe a twenty acre field of this eighty had grown up in a good mixture of loblolly pine and slash pine. I observed that they were an even aged stand. They came in pretty much the same year. Then I noticed that the loblolly pines had about twice the timber that the slash pines had. At that time, we had a mono culture as far as the forestry department is concerned. All they grew in pineland was slash, essentially. I began to talk about they all needed to start growing loblolly because loblolly grows 50 percent faster than pine. I got nowhere for a long time. A local forester had set up a local forester by then. [He] told the Tallahassee people to send a team down, there was a guy out in the wilderness insisting. They came down with their Swedish boors that you use to boor into the tree to get a sampling. They boored into a few of the loblollies and slash. These trees are all mixed so you cannot say the soil is better. It was a good mixture. They said, "Hey, they

are the same age." They hurried over to the center of this place and boored some more. They discovered they were the same age. I said, "Are you fellows convinced? We need loblolly seedlings because loblolly on the right site will outperform slash a great deal." The next year they had loblollies in the nursery, and for many years they could not meet the demand. They could not expand their facilities enough. I feel proud of that accomplishment. I am not a professional forester, but one that has observed.

H: Someone using old logic.

G: As a matter of fact, one of the tree farms that I own in Georgia, I got the man to come down on the price. He bought the trees already planted. It was an estate. He bought most of the estate, and then sold me the biggest part of it. I think it was 364 acres. I showed him on the highlands that they had planted slash and it was the wrong tree to plant. They needed loblolly. There was a few loblollies left. You could see the difference in the growth. I got him to come down substantially on the price. I told him I would either have to destroy the forest, which was five years old, and replant. I could have let it go to pulp, clearcut it, and put the right trees in. I managed to get him down on the price substantially. It was another of these all cash deals. It seems to me that it is all cash when I am fooling around or investing in real estate.

H: You taught real estate law, did you not, at the College of Business?

G: Yes, I taught real estate law in the College of Business.

H: Could you tell me a little bit about the department structure when you were working there? What was the department where you worked?

G: At first, there was virtually all economics. We slowly began to get more departments. We would get management. I think we had accounting to begin with. As a matter of fact, when I was a student, the head of the accounting department thought I needed to become a CPA. I think I have either five or six courses in accounting. In those days, you did not have the machinery you have now. I remember in the _____ barracks where I used to live. I lived in the ___ barracks for a while.

H: Where were those located? Were they on campus?

G: It was about where Weil Engineering is, a little bit east.

H: NY stands for?

G: National Youth something. It was one of those programs designed to step up the economy.

H: We were talking about the department structure and economics.

G: I worked until 2: 30 a.m. I would be there until 11: 00 at night working on an accounting problem. Then I could not balance it out; I would be eighty cents over. So I would do it all over again, and I would be \$1.20 under. Finally I went to this accounting professor, and said, "I cannot stand this. I do not have time to do it. I am going to become a lawyer. I am going to law school."

H: That was the end of that.

G: That was the end of becoming a CPA.

H: Did you have department heads when you were working early on in the business school when you were teaching? It was Dean Matherly.

G: I started teaching in the Department of Economics. I taught economics for a spell. That was my undergraduate major.

H: Who was the chairman of the department? Do you remember some of your colleagues or other professors?

G: Yes. I think that there was one fellow that really impressed me. He taught economics. I should not have stayed up until 2:30 this morning. My memory is going.

H: We can always fill in later. If you remember something just let me know, or call me up after the fact.

G: We had one fellow teaching business law--I wish I could remember his name. He was retired, sort of, and had made a big success in business. He was a stickler for an actress. I remember one time we reviewed the business law book, and I think we found 248 outright mistakes or confused presentations. By the time we got through, they got it revised. The authors would give you \$100 or something like that to review a book. I did some reviewing of the books.

H: What building were you in at this point when you started? Matherly Hall was not built until the 1950s?

G: A lot of our teaching was done in _____. I taught there. Sometimes I would be teaching way over in one of the buildings where the current big commuter parking lot is. I would have to practically run to get back to the next class.

It was good exercise.

H: Did you have a car to get to work in those days, or did you take public transportation from home?

G: I had a car. I bought my first car through the credit union for \$25 a month for I forget how many years.

H: How old were you when you learned to drive?

G: When I learned to drive, my sisters were pushing me saying you need to learn to drive so we can go around ourselves without our parents. I was fairly young. I forget, but it was probably whatever the legal age was at that time. I remember being in my room with my sisters pushing me. Even though two of them were older, I guess they felt I needed to learn to drive. You know how it was back in those days.

H: Back to teaching, what were the working conditions like? How many hours a week did you teach? What kind of office hours?

G: You taught quite a bit. It was a lot of teaching. It was really heavy loads in those days, particularly when I first started. They were serious about counseling. You really had office hours. In fact, I was so in view with that when we moved to the current business building, some of my colleagues kidded me that my hours were posted first.

H: What do you mean?

G: My office hours were posted on my door before anybody else's office hours were posted on their door. Dean Matherly was serious about students having access to their professors. I certainly agreed with him.

H: Did you teach five days a week?

G: We also taught on Saturdays.

H: Oh really.

G: Yes. I taught many Saturday classes.

H: So what was the length of your work week? It was more than forty hours.

G: I really cannot remember the number of hours.

H: Plus grading papers.

G: Many a night I would be up late. I was serious about my teaching, very serious. I considered every class a unique situation no matter how many classes I taught. When I went in there to a classroom, it was a unique situation. You would never know what question would come up. I call it degenerating. I refused to degenerate my teaching to the point where I would just lecture. I have had professors that would not allow you to answer asked questions. They would just lecture. I even had a professor one time who was lecturing by reading the book. So I had the book open, and when he raised his voice, I would underline in red. When he did not raise his voice, I would underline in black. He prohibited us after a while from having textbooks open. I was determined that they could interrupt me. They could bring guests. They could bring boyfriends or their girlfriends. They could bring their parents if they wanted to, as far as I was concerned.

H: How large were the classes that you taught? How many students did you have at one time?

G: We had fairly large classes, but not real large. We were kind

of limited by facilities. The biggest classes I had were about 160 students, but that is a lot of students you know.

H: Yes it is. Were the times that you started the classes affected by the climate? I imagine there was no air conditioning in the early days.

G: There was no air conditioning in the facilities. Yes.

H: Did you teach in the summer too?

G: I taught in the summer. Sometimes the facilities were rather poor. For instance, I remember teaching at the P.K. Yonge auditorium. These were the 160 classes. The ceiling was falling. Every now and then I would hear it hit my right shoulder or my left shoulder, and I would flick it out. After about two or three weeks of that, I began to wonder if that was asbestos even in those days. I was quite worried, and I frankly refused to teach in that facility again. I taught that one time.

H: What building was the P.K. Yonge auditorium in?

G: That building is right off of Thirteenth Street there.

H: I will find the name of it.

G: I think it is called the P.K. Yonge Building, not the P.K. Yonge Lab School. I asked the students, "Should we move out to do this teaching on the grounds?" There are a lot of grounds surrounding that building. The majority decided to stick it out. The ceiling kept falling all during the lecture. It would plop over there, and then over there. Sometimes it would hit me. We had adverse conditions.

Sometimes it would be extremely hot teaching.

H: Did that change anything? Did you start earlier in the morning in the summer or did people just tough it out?

G: Frankly, at one time, if I am not mistaken, we had 7: 30 a.m. classes. I would go for those classes. I did not mind early classes or Saturday classes. It did not bother me.

H: Were the students dressed up in class in those days?

G: Yes.

H: Even in the hot weather?

G: Yes, particularly with Dean Matherly. Later on in my teaching, it got to be real casual. I would handle the situation by simply going in there, and looking around the first day saying, "Please do not misunderstand me." Of course, if you say that today, you would probably be fired. I would say, "Some of you are wearing clothes are even attractive to a married, old man like me. Imagine what it is doing to the rest of the students. They are here to pay attention to me." I never had problems. The few that were scantily dressed would come back and be more appropriately dressed.

H: What years were these?

G: I forget now, frankly, but I know I said that in class a couple of times very respectfully. You cannot do that today of course.

H: How did the business school rank then nationwide or statewide?

G: We ranked well, particularly the accounting department and

business law. I am biased because I taught it. The records show that we had tremendous luck on our CPA's passing the business law exam. If you took the course, it was serious.

You passed that part on the first try. As a matter of fact, when I learned that Georgia had adopted the Uniform Commercial Code the first time it was presented to the Georgia legislature, I said, "Boy if Georgia has adopted this on the first try, Florida is not going to be far behind." So I immediately adopted the Uniform Commercial Code for my sections of business law when Florida did not have it. I was sort of criticized by it. I remember getting the long distance phone calls and letters from those part of my students that were accounting majors saying, "We thank you professor for having had that. We could answer questions on the new commercial code." Florida adopted it rather quickly.

H: When was this? When did they adopt it? At least give me a decade.

G: We are referring to over twenty years ago. The minute I heard that Georgia had adopted it, the next semester I said, "There will be a supplemental volume here on the new commercial code. I am telling you today so that if you want to transfer, you can. You are going to learn the code in this course."

H: In the 1940s and early 1950s at the University, what were the major funding sources? Did we have state funding? Did we have federal funding?

G: We did not have the reliance in the early part on grants that we do today. We also did not have the private funding we have today. Although we did have supplemental funding.

H: Do you know when that changed and we got more into private funding?

G: It was gradual. I really cannot say.

H: How adequate was the library in the early days, for you students?

G: I was on the library committee for a long time. In fact, one time, I was asked to be the chairman of the library committee. I did a lot of administrative work at time. I was head of the Placement Department for my college.

H: You recruited professors?

G: No, placing graduates. We did alumni surveys. We placed alumni. As a matter of fact, the job got to be so big, that I was doing placement for other colleges. I suggested that we needed a central placement office to work with the various college offices. The first man, Mr. Mayberry (I believe) was one of our alumni looking for a change. He was working for the FBI. So I told him about the possibilities. He came and sent in his application. He did well on his interview, so they hired him. They set up a central [office]. That took a lot of the weight off my shoulders because I was teaching too.

H: So they set up a Career Office.

G: I was happy. One of our alumni was the first director.

H: When was this? Do you know?

G: A long time ago. I cannot tell you.

H: Do you know what Mr. Mayberry's [Maurice E. Mayberry, Director, University Placement Office] first name was?

G: The record will show. He was recently retired a few years ago. He stayed on the job a long time and did a beautiful job.

H: We started to talk about the library. Did you have a business school library?

G: They would have a section on business in the library. The library was not very adequate to start with. You have got these allotments. You could spend so much money. As I said, I was on a library committee for many years. I took that seriously. As I said, I was offered the chairmanship, but I did not think I should take it with all my other duties. It was kind of desperate. For instance, I went to HEPA one time, and got them to put up a little bit of money to get them to put some materials in the library. We slowly began to build up the library. I signed literally thousands of orders. I would try to personalize it. I would order the books. I would contact the faculty and say, "We have limited funds. Give me an idea of what you want. What is your first and second priority?" I will never forget the time when it looked like we ought to do something on an international basis. I forget who the professor was. He convinced me. I was not very hard to convince because I was thinking international having a Greek heritage and all. I really went after the international holdings whenever there

was a little extra money and was given the authority to decide. I got along fine with the librarians. We would get together, and they would come up with their suggestions. I would go back to the trough and we would spend the money. I did not want dead volumes--stuff you buy and nobody uses. There were constant fights. We were not getting enough money for the library. For a long time, the library was inadequately financed.

H: Do you remember who else was on the committee when you were on?

G: As a rule, they would try to get the various departments represented. It was fascinating. I enjoyed doing the library. I love books. I have loved books every since I was a little boy. Right now, I have a vast collection of books. **[[end of tape]]**

G: ...Half time plan. I taught four of those years. I did not teach the year in which my wife was dying. She was sick for twenty-three years. In other words, I did four half years. So I would say that I have taught forty years at the University of Florida, thirty-eight full time and four half years.

H: What kind of development or changes have you seen from the time you started to the time you retired?

G: There was constant construction. Constantly hearing the hammers, etc. The University was constantly growing. I have seen presidents come and go. I have seen the curricula changed, although it seems to go in a circle. I have seen

the trimester, semester, and the quarter system. At one time, I managed to get what I called the Forgiveness Policy through the senate and was adopted. The students thought it was terrific. I thought we should have it. In other words, if a student makes an E or a D, he should be allowed once or twice in the first two years or second two years (I forget) a chance to take the course over again. I was thinking of personality conflicts and other reasons which I hesitate to put on tape, but it was valid from a student's standpoint. We got it passed. I did not appear before the senate. I had students doing it for me. They did an effective job, but the registrar would not cooperate. He would not change the grades. He was against it all along. Eventually, it was repealed. I thought it was good. If you took it again, and made a higher grade, the old grade would be removed. It was just once or twice in the first two years, and once in the last two years as I recall.

H: So that policy was not passed?

G: It was passed. It went into effect. The registrar kept refusing to remove the old grade from the record because he was opposed to the plan. It caused confusion, so they finally repealed it. I tried to look ahead. For instance, when I heard there a thing like computers, I said that anybody finishing the College of Business should have at least one course in computers. So I presented it to the faculty, and I won by only one vote. I won. We put in the requirement that anybody wanting to graduate from the

College of Business had to have at least three hours of computers.

H: What department taught those courses? Were they taught in the business school?

G: No. I do not think they were taught in the business school at the time. From what I heard about this thing called a computer, it was very definitely a coming thing just like when Georgia adopted the Uniform Commercial Code. I only won by one vote.

H: Do you know if the courses were taught in the engineering school?

G: I believe it was over in the engineering school.

H: You had mentioned some committees that you were on.

G: I was on many committees.

H: Would you name a couple.

G: I was chairman of the University Committee On Off Campus Housing. It was our job to worry about students, contracts that students had to sign, and the living conditions, etc on off campus housing. I was on a committee for a long time. I was chairman for a while. I found it very interesting. I was also head of the Placement Service in the College of Business. Did I mention this?

H: Yes, we did talk about that.

G: I also was appointed to the welfare board as a nonpolitical appointment for the North Florida Welfare Board. I was elected chairman both years of my appointment. I declined to be re-appointed frankly because I differed from many of

the members. I felt that everybody is entitled to a mistake. Maybe I better not proceed with this line of thought. They are recognizing now that maybe we have so much welfare that it is unfair to the welfare people to have so much welfare. They are recognizing it themselves. Maybe I should not go into that.

H: Do you remember what years you were on that committee?

G: It was quite a while back.

H: Twenty years?

G: Twenty-five or thirty. I was also consultant to the Land Sales Board of Florida. That was fascinating work. I would draw up examinations for them. I was asked to be a member of the board. It would require leaving the city of Gainesville too often to hear disciplinary cases pending before the board. I felt that I did not want to take the time away from the classroom, so I had to decline that. I have been scout leader of the Boy Scouts. I have worked a lot with the Girl Scouts. I was on the Site Development Committee of northeast Florida, where we would recommend the acquisition, trading, and development of camps. That was fascinating.

H: For how many years?

G: I was on that about five years. It was fascinating work. [I did] a lot of things like that.

H: What was your involvement with the Greeks Studies Program on campus?

G: There were several people interested in doing something about

that. The people that I would consider the founders of it were Karelisa Hartigan [Professor of Classics], Leo [Leonidas] Polopolus [Professor of Food and Resource Economics], Panagratios Papacosta from Cyprus, and myself. Karelisa was unable to go at that time. We went to the vice president of the University and presented the recommendation. We wanted to be the first Greek Studies Program in the state of Florida. Right from the beginning, Karelisa and Leo were co-directors and still are. I found that to be very interesting work.

H: Was Panagratios a professor?

G: Yes he was. By the way, last year at Chicago University, he was teacher of the year.

H: What was his field?

G: His field was science. He is a marvelous teacher. I am sorry that the University lost him. I sat in his classes a number of times to give him suggestions. I ended up by learning. The opportunity for advancement was not here so we lost him to other universities. He has written books. He has done just about everything. As I say, last year he was teacher of the year. We toured the state for donations. I remember working, talking on the radio in Tarpon Springs, making presentations to potential donors, showing films and slides, making talks and all sorts of things.

H: Did you not get your first bit of money from a group of Greeks in Tarpon Springs?

G: Yes, we got particularly one individual. I would rather not

mention his name. To be honest with you, I do not know who was the first donor. Very early in the effort, we were helped.

H: Do you remember how much money was raised early on?

G: It was hard-going. We were not getting much money. The first \$100,000 took a long time to get. Recently, we have had one individual donate \$100,000. Maybe things will really begin to pick up. I remember making speeches. For instance, it would be the anniversary of the Greeks, Minorkans, and others at St. Augustine, so we would go down to New Smyrna where there is a monument, and we would make a speech. Panagratios sometimes would make the speech, I would make the speech, or Leo would make the speech. I remember one time I emphasized the early Diaspora of the Greek people. There was one fellow that is credited by some people to have been the discoverer of Iceland. He left Marseilles, France. At that time, it was a Greek colony called Marsella. [He] went out through the Gates of Hercules, which is of course Gibraltar now, and went north. We actually have a map of England on a very early Hindu plate--his map of England. Except for the size, he thought it was bigger than it was. It is about the same map as you see today, about 95 percent the same. His name was Patheos. He is increasingly recognized. The American Navigator, in the first few pages, mention Patheos five or six times.

H: When you went out to give these speeches and raise money, did the University match funds for these early grants?

G: No. At the beginning, we had very little matching. Leo you know has his own band. Leo has been putting on a dance every year which has been fairly successful financially, and over the years it has added up. That is something that we all try to support.

H: Is it a Greek band?

G: It is his own band. They play Greek and American music each fall. It is called the **Ambrose** Band. We had a contest for the name. Maybe I should not say this, but it was my suggestion that they be called the **Ambrose**. My daughter was the guitar player in the original orchestra. I remember they would play, and I would dance. I would say, "This is a little too fast for this dance or a little too slow." They developed into a really mighty fine band.

H: Did you not teach in the Greek Studies Program too?

G: Yes. I taught for many years in the Greek Studies Program. I was in the one where it was an all subject type course. Somebody would speak on the modern Greek economy or mythology. I would be at the end with my slides. I would try to show through my slides of stamps of Greece (later I added postcards of Greece) some of the things they talked about visually. For mythology, I would have stamps that showed mythological subjects. It was large classes, and very responsive classes. Sometimes I would get them to participate. Sometimes we would have visitors who were not even students. I would give them a book that mentioned Patheos and have them read a couple of paragraphs.

H: We are talking about the Greek culture, but I know you are very involved with the Greek Orthodox Church in Gainesville.

I am curious as to how that came about.

G: As in all instances where you get a few people together, they do begin to worry about their religion. At first, we were a mission from Jacksonville. I very well remember upstairs over where Mr. Mike had his hat shop at the existing location (not the one downtown), there would be services. I remember going to a baptism up there. So we were a mission out of Jacksonville for a long time. Eventually, we got a little bit of organization. They wanted to elect a chairman, so the people in general just got together and said, "We need a chairman." They elected me chairman. Later on, because president sounds better than chairman when you are trying to get something done, they called me president.

H: Of the church council?

G: Of the Greek community. Later on, we were established as a church. I think it was 1988. We became our own parish, so we were no longer a mission out of Jacksonville. We had regular council, elected presidents, and vice presidents. I have been president quite a few of the years, not all of them by any means. I was instrumental in them getting the ground that the church is on. My wife and I did it for the students. We had to make the decision. It was either send the money to the archdiocese to set up a foundation. The money amounted to about \$125,000 that we had for this

purpose. It was either send the money up to the archdiocese as a foundation for the interest of which would be used for scholarships for young people who wanted to become priests, or set up a church here to help serve the students at the University of Florida. We had a difficult time deciding, but we finally decided that it was better to set up a church here for the local community and the students, but essentially for the students. This has been a student oriented church since. We had a drive to pay off the mortgage the last couple of years or so. Everybody has helped us succeed in doing that. Essentially, it was to try to have something available for the students. We have a number of Greek students from Greece here, and of course we have a number of Greek Americans. Of course we have Russian Orthodox, Syrian Orthodox, and Romanian Orthodox. We have something in our church that I like very much. The Lord's Prayer is said in whatever languages are present, if they are willing. One day we had the Lord's Prayer said in seven different languages. We are a Pan-Orthodox Church essentially. Although this is the Saint Elizabeth Greek Orthodox Church, our members are essentially Pan-Orthodox. The current council has at least three that are not Greek Orthodox. They are other Orthodox.

H: Was Elizabeth not your wife's middle name?

G: It was frankly the suggestion of the people. My wife was greatly loved. One day, somebody said we ought to name this church after Sarah. It was named Saint Elizabeth. It is

the only church that I know of, and I have asked a number of people, that is named Saint Elizabeth. In fact, there was some dispute as to whether there ever was a Saint Elizabeth.

Research disclosed that we have two Saint Elizabeth's in the Greek Orthodox Church.

H: Were you and Sarah married in an Orthodox Church?

G: No, we were not married in an Orthodox Church to begin with.

Later on, we were married in the Greek Orthodox Church. She became Greek Orthodox.

H: We have just a few minutes left. I want to ask you a couple of questions about our society. What do you think the future holds for your grandchildren's generation? Are there worries about the future?

G: I am an optimist. We are in a far more competitive situation in the world today. I see a considerable amount of hope. I stress education. The grandchildren are doing quite well. Two of them went through the Eastside High School. Both skipped their freshman years. I remember when Jason, after he had been at Tallahassee a few weeks, told me that he was informed that he was now a sophomore because they had accepted thirty-five hours of credits for the examinations that he took from that special program they have at Eastside High School. I immediately had to write him a letter and tell him what the word sophomore meant. I told him that the word sophomore comes from the Greek sophos, meaning wise, and moros, meaning infant. [I told] him not to get a swelled head. That is what it means--a wise infant.

H: I did not know that. It is very interesting. So you are hopeful for the future generations.

G: Yes. I think we are going to have a lot of problems, particularly with the great surge of the Pacific rim. The Asiatic countries are going to give us a lot of competition. That is good in a way. We have taken a lot of things for granted. I am hoping for a resurgence. I see it to some extent. American automobiles now are much better quality now than they were before the Japanese competition. I think the big mix of cultures that we have here is positive. We get ideas from one another. I think we are going to be able to meet the competition. I worry that for a lot of the population that the standard of living may actually decline.

H: Why do you think so?

G: We have so many people in the country today that simply have no future, no education. They have been in broken families, and one parent families. Other than the minimum wage service type of industry future, it will be hard for them. I am concerned that it will lead to a lot of crime. I am concerned that unless something is done to make broader economic opportunities for everybody, we are going to have real problems with crime. For people that apply themselves and work hard **[[please finish thought]]**. I am proud to say that I know there have been some studies made that say that people of Greek extraction are number one in education. They consider education to be of the very primary and utmost importance. I am glad that is true. I am a great believer

in education.

H: Do you have a particular philosophy of life or what makes a good life?

G: Yes. I am definitely service oriented. I see too many people, this includes younger people interested in money and what money will bring, that is not in my opinion happiness. I am about ready to tell young couple, the first opportunity I get, that there is something besides making money. Besides you can get in a rut no matter how much money you make. You want to make more. The years go by. People should spend time with their children and grandchildren. It used to be give us a child until he is seventy. It is give us a child until he is four today. He is ours forever.

H: What do you mean by that?

G: Whatever the child is exposed to in the first three to four years of life essentially sets the character. That does not mean that is all of it, but it is a great bulk of it. I did not spend a whole lot of time with my kids. I feel that I did not spend enough time.

H: A sign of the times perhaps.

G: I taught them how to swim and shoot. As I said earlier, we taught them to love the outdoors.

H: Are you a religious person?

G: Yes, I am definitely religious. I sometimes say I wish I had the strength of religion that either my mother or my wife had. I still have got a ways to go to match that. I am a

great believer in sick people praying, and other people praying for them. I think that it actually helps them get better. I am a great believer that every day is a mini lifetime. Each day to me is a mini lifetime.

H: You seem to live to the fullest just from what I have known of you.

G: I am interested in everything. I am interested in everything.

H: What are your plans for the future? What more do you want to accomplish? You have been involved in so much.

G: Once I get away from having to do so much administrative work **[[please finish thought]]**. The presidency of a small church where you have no secretary or staff is quite time consuming. I tend to write. Right now I am doing a great deal of reading. I have not written an article in two years because I have been so busy. I have got them stuck all around the house, the title and outline. I have not had time to get busy writing.

H: You have written some poetry.

G: I have written some poetry. I have not had much time to write poetry lately. My one poem that I like very much, Come Join the Circling Dancers, came to me at night after the Turkish invasion of Cyprus.

H: 1974?

G: Back whenever it was. I understand it has been published in South Africa, Canada, and Mexico. I get delighted when somebody sends me a copy of it from somewhere and says, "This was read at so and so, unknown poet." I will send

them a copy. Some child will rewrite it in very fancy script and say this was authored by me. Underneath it will say the scriboner was _____.

H: Did you and your wife publish a book together or do some writing together?

G: My daughter and I published one book of poems together. The first article I ever got interested in picture postcards was one my wife and I co-authored. It was appropriate, romantic article. Back in the early days of postcards, they did not have telephones much. If you will read the backs of the postcards from about 1900 to 1915, you will find everything from proposals. For instance, I bought 115 cards at one time, and wrote an article on that. There were several women, in this case, after the same man. The question was which one will marry him. You line the cards up chronologically. First came the advice to the newly married cards. The baby cards had storks.

H: Announcements?

G: A lot of old postcards showed storks bringing the baby. I bought about 1700 cards. There were twenty fellas after the same woman. It was absolutely unbelievable what you could see in the cards. One fellow was a poet. He got mixed up about where the Acropolis was. He had it in Rome. I do not know whether that was poetic license or what. I was able to point that out in my article. I think I wrote five articles out of that 1700. **[[end of tape]]**