

UFLC 11

Interviewee: Keith Austin

Interviewer: Sid Johnston

Date: September 14, 1984

J: Good morning sir. How are you?

A: Fine.

J: When were you born?

A: I was born July 2, 1928, in Miami, Florida.

J: And who were your parents?

A: My father was Richard James Austin and my mother was Harriet Isabel Austin. My father has been dead now for some twenty-four years and my mother is still alive and will be eighty November 5.

J: Well, the best to her.

A: Thank you.

J: You are a real Floridian then?

A: I consider myself a real Floridian, yes.

J: Where were your parents from?

A: My parents were both Canadians, and went to Miami on their honeymoon in 1923 and ended up staying there.

J: Never returned?

A: Never really returned.

J: And what did your father do?

A: My father was in the real estate business for the majority of his life and after World War II he got in the automobile business. That was a good business to be in right after the war.

J: Was he able to take advantage of the land boom in the Miami area?

A: That was what kept him there when they went there on their honeymoon. Yes,

he had a brother who was in the real estate business when they got there and very shortly there was a real estate firm known as Austin Brothers and Roy. I do not know who Mr. Roy was. I think he is deceased now but they were real estate entrepreneurs. As I understand it, they used to go around door to door and knock on doors like Fuller Brush salesmen selling real estate lots and things like that. And after the crash, if you want to call it that, my father actually worked for the city of Miami digging ditches. That is how bad it got. My mother tells me that that probably was one of the happiest times in her life when he was making fifteen or eighteen dollars a week digging ditches on Biscayne Boulevard, putting the sewer system in along Biscayne Bay. Very interesting.

J: What was your mother doing at that time?

A: My mother was a homemaker.

J: Was she running a boarding house or anything like that?

A: No. She never did anything like that. My recollection would be that she was a homemaker.

J: How many brothers and sisters do you have?

A: One brother who was a year ahead of me through law school and is now a practicing attorney in Miami.

J: Where did he go to law school?

A: The University of Florida.

J: And when did he graduate?

A: He graduated in 1951. He was a year ahead of me. He was married and was going to school year-round.

J: Did the University of Miami have a law college at that time?

A: Yes they did and it did not enjoy the best reputation. Fellows at the University of Florida law school with academic problems generally transferred down to the University of Miami. That was the general pattern.

J: Where did you attend junior and senior high school?

A: I went to junior and senior high school in Jacksonville, Florida, at Landon. It is no longer in existence. They phased Landon out in the late 1950s or early 1960s. At that time they had an athletic conference in the state of Florida known

as the "Big Ten". It consisted of schools in Miami, Tampa, and the Jacksonville area. Also, Orlando, Lakeland, and maybe Daytona. There were ten or more schools. That is comparable to what I understand now is the 5-A league and Landon was the smallest school in the "Big Ten".

J: When did you move from Miami?

A: Our family left Miami in the early 1930s. Both my mother and father were Canadians, and we went back North for a period of time. He got into a grocery store and meat market type of operation. However, they came back to Florida when I was in the seventh grade. We came to Jacksonville. I really consider, even though I was born in Miami, that I grew up in Jacksonville. Most all my recollections are of Jacksonville.

J: What did he do in Jacksonville?

A: We lived in Jacksonville but he was in the wholesale seafood business in Green Cove Springs. This was in addition to his real estate activities. Green Cove Springs was a small town about twenty-five or thirty miles south of Jacksonville. There were two industries there: one was the fishing industry and the other was a hosiery mill. My father was the seafood entrepreneur I guess you could say. All the commercial fishermen would bring their catches there and he would buy them. When the war came along, it was a good business to be in. All meats were rationed. Fish was not. We lived in Jacksonville and he would stay down in Green Cove Springs. I really would only go down there on weekends. We enjoyed it thoroughly because there were boats, and the St. Johns River is very interesting.

J: Did your father do well with that wholesale seafood business?

A: When the war was over, the U.S. Navy turned Green Cove Springs into a ship berthing spot. It ruined all the fishing in that area, and the state also passed a law against preventing seine fishing. A friend my father had acquired during the war period was a gentleman who had been a regional manager for the Ford Motor Company, and since my father was not going to be in the seafood business because of what the navy had done, he had an opportunity to acquire an automobile agency near Chicago, Illinois. That is how my father got into the automobile business. That would be 1947.

J: Was that the time you graduated from high school?

A: The war was over and I went into the army right out of high school in June 1946. I have not really been home since. I was in the army. The navy had ships they berthed at Green Cove Springs, and my father had gone into the automobile business when I got out of the service. I went to the university as a veteran. I

started in February of 1948.

J: Were you at the university with your brother?

A: My brother was here. He was a year and a half or so older than I, and had also been in the service. He was in when the conflict was on, and had gotten married. He was down here going to school.

J: So you had about a two-year stint in the service?

A: That is right, eighteen months.

J: So you came here with your brother. And he was already in law school at that time.

A: He was here at the university, and later went to law school. I only went to the university three semesters before going to law school. They had a veteran program. You could get into law school after just two years of university college. I took the USAFI tests, and eliminated one semester.

J: What is a USAFI test?

A: Tests in areas like mathematics, etc. I did not need to take a C-course in mathematics. Apparently, I had a level of proficiency there that said you do not have to take that course. I got credit for it just by passing these tests, so rather than taking two years of schooling, I only had to go three semesters.

J: There is a LSAT, and there is a SAT.

A: Yes, that type of thing. I think it is USAFI, which was a veteran's program available if you demonstrated a proficiency by passing these tests in certain areas. On campus at that time, everybody was on the GI Bill. There was a lot of construction going on, and everything was all torn up.

J: Was Tigert Hall under construction yet?

A: I believe it was. My first berthing station here was out at what they called the Old Air Base. These were army barracks that were out near where the Gainesville airport is, and the screens and everything had been removed. It was just like being in the army under the worst conditions. They had an old bus that rumbled you out there and back twice a day. I think that is how it worked.

J: Was that called a Flavet Village out there?

A: No, the Flavet Villages were all here on campus. My brother did not live in the Flavet Village at that time, but he was waiting for one of them.

J: Did you have to be married to live in one?

A: You had to be married to live in Flavet Village. However, after two nights of being practically carried away with mosquitoes.

J: Bet it was awful!

A: Right. I came in and stayed in my brother's room, which was in Temporary Dormitory A. He and two other fellows were in one relatively small room. I just moved in, and piled some blankets on the floor and slept on them.

J: No mosquitoes at least?

A: No mosquitoes. It was very interesting. I had to wait until someone dropped out and freed up a space. I would go by the housing office everyday. Finally, I got into another temporary dormitory.

J: Where were most of these temporary dorms located?

A: Temporary A was right over next to where the student center is now. It would be just east of the student center. It was a rather large complex. I think I ended up in Temporary R, which was almost right where the O'Connell Center is, right in that area, and the ROTC buildings were over there at that time.

J: Were those quonset huts?

A: They were not quonset huts, but that style. They were not superfine quarters, but they were adequate.

J: Not the Beaty Towers at all.

A: No. They were not. They had rooms on each side, a center hallway, and they were flat roofed.

J: Your first two nights were spent our near the airport, and there was a bus that was run by the university.

A: Right.

J: To haul people?

A: To haul people back and forth to the university twice a day. You would come in in the morning and go back at noon, or go back at night. If you missed the bus, you had to walk.

J: I cannot imagine people walking out there. What were some of the first classes you took when you arrived here?

A: Well, the first classes I actually took were what amounted to all C-courses. I do not remember or have any recollection of a written examination. All I did was take a machine-graded-type test with an electro-graphic pencil, or whatever they call it, and you had five choices. You picked the right one on that type of test, all the way through. That was the typical examination; and you had progress tests I think every six weeks, and then the final. The reason I am aware of that is I went from that type of examination (which I got pretty good at--I think I made almost a B average at what I was carrying) to the law school where your first semester there, they gave you a mid-term exam. It was totally expressing yourself in writing, and your whole grade depended on that. I started over there. They really did not care whether you went to the class or not. Dean Fenn [Henry A. Fenn, dean, University of Florida College of Law, 1948-50] came along about that time.

J: Now you started in February of 1948, so by the fall of 1950 you were taking law classes.

A: Well, I really started law school in September of 1949.

J: That is right. Only three semesters. I was thinking five.

A: I started in September, and Dean Fenn started there in 1949. He laid the ground rules down. In fact, as I am sitting here, I have been thinking about it. He said that we were the last class that was going to get any concessions. He really scared the fool out of us because he would say (I have heard this a few times since) look to the guy on your right, and look to the guy on your left because only one of you is going to be here down the road. He scared me, but he scared everybody else too.

J: Could you see the visible effects of what he was talking about?

A: We were the largest class up until that time to start, which in running figures I think was 150. On June 9, 1952, I think there were only thirty-two, and I was still standing there.

J: They really cut some.

A: So the attrition rate was pretty good. Now some of those fellows may have

accelerated or dropped back a semester or two for some reason or other.

J: Two-thirds of a cut.

A: Yes. That is what he said.

J: Tell me about first registering for the fall, for law school.

A: I was just beginning to get my confidence because I was making pretty good grades in these courses with the magic pencil. I thought I was getting on to it pretty good, and I did have my brother, who had been a school teacher, helping me. He was actually spending time, and he had been through the C-courses; he did very well. I think he made straight A's until he got to law school, so he was spending a lot of time tutoring me, and really building up my confidence so that I could do something in the academic sense. I was in the old gym where the registration was. It is what is now the gymnasium, I guess. The basketball teams are not playing there, but that gym was built about 1950 or thereabouts. It would be the new gym back then.

J: Was that called the womens gym then?

A: No, the womens gym was behind it. It is a red brick structure, rather small.

J: Was it called Florida Gym at that time? I think that is the name it is today.

A: Maybe it is Florida Gym. It became the music building or something like that for a while. That is my recollection. I guess the women started using that gym, and the new gym, which is now the old gym, was really something.

J: And that is where you would register for class?

A: It is my recollection that that is where I registered to go to law school, and that I had a conversation with my brother. He was already in law school, and was very practical; he said, "Okay, you want to get the best education out of your GI Bill that you can get. You should go over there and register for law school." To that point, I had never had a burning desire to be a lawyer. It was just if I was going to get an education, I ought to get the best one possible. I just walked over to the table, and there were a couple of professors sitting there. I said, "I want to register for law school." They just handed me the stuff, and I was in. Just like that, and there was no problem whatsoever.

J: Did they have to see that you had completed two years?

A: Well, I had documentation that I had been qualified under this veteran program.

- J: What was the extent of the veteran's program? How would it differ than someone who was not a vet who wanted to go to law college?
- A: If you were a veteran, as long as you had that two-year associate of arts degree, you could elect to go to law school at that time. If you were not a veteran, you had to have a degree.
- J: A bachelor's.
- A: Bachelor's degree. So they were saying that the veteran's were older, their experience or whatever was worth that two years. It was some kind of a concession made.
- J: That is generous.
- A: It was very, and after getting out of law school, I had gone back and gotten a B.S., B.A. in accounting and another degree, and LL.M. in law, taxation. I can look back on that and say, "Wow!" I tell you, it was good for me because my first grades in law school, I think we took six courses, and I made five D's and a C. They used to hand you your grades on a small piece of paper. Miss Jennings was the deans's secretary and she handled this ritual. You would go by there and get your grades when they were handing out the grades. They would be in a little note-type sheet of paper folded, and you would just open it up and look at it and either fainted or yelled. My brother was there when I got my first grades. In my heart I knew they could not be good. He looked at them and said, "Well, you did not flunk anything, but I think you are putting too much emphasis on one course." I spent the rest of my law school career trying to get my grade average up to C. I did not make an A grade-wise until I was in an LL.M. program. The highest grade I ever made in the J.D. program was a B, but I made quite a few of them as I got into the swing of things and learned better what they wanted from me.
- J: What was B grade in terms of arabic numerals?
- A: I would say it would be an 80 to a 90. That was for each professor I had couple of experiences, particularly when I was in my senior year or high junior year. I took damages from Dean Maloney [Frank Edward Maloney, dean, University of Florida College of Law, 1947-72]. It was a two-hour course and he worked me to death. I thought I knew it so well. I was going to get an A. I just knew that in my heart. He cut the curve and I made a B. He cut the curve on me. He gave no A's. There were like two or three B's and then a C. I was the high C in the class and I went and talked to him about it. He realized that I had worked very hard. I felt no animosity. You know, sometimes I can see how that would

really upset you, but I think I really felt in my heart that I had neglected this area of my education so poorly, that is the ability to write. I did not read the way I should read, like I read now; there was a deficiency there in expressing myself in writing. My brother was very good at it, and is to this day extremely good at it.

J: Did they use a system of pluses and minuses?

A: No. No pluses or minuses even though they might give you a plus or minus, it would have no impact on your numerical or what the grade point average was.

J: Today it does.

A: It does today, yes.

J: I do not think I remember you telling me your brother's name.

A: Richard James Bain Austin.

J: And he sounds to be very instrumental in you going to law school.

A: Yes, he was.

J: Was there anyone else who persuaded you to go to college and law school?

A: No, it just happened, bang, just like that, and I felt in my heart I could manage, you know, I could get through, and I knew it was going to be tough. I was also aware that what I was doing was a great self improvement. I may not have recognized that at that time. When I was in the undergraduate program, I had a roommate who had taken the psychological testing that they had. He said I just always said, "I do not know what I want to do. I have not made up my mind." He said, "Well, go over and do this." It took about twenty hours to go through this thing, and this was when I had been here about two or three months. I graded out. The guy said, "Well, you are already a junior in engineering in your academic capability." He had all of this on a big graph, and said, "There is only one thing you should not do." I said, "What is that?" He said, "Do not go to law school."

J: Why did he say that?

A: Well, all I can remember is those graphs, and I graded absolutely way below the line. And of course, I looked at it as a challenge in the way of self improvement. Here, this says I must have a deficiency here. I have got to do something about that, and I just jumped right into it, ran right into the face of the storm you might say.

J: Well, did you enjoy working with numbers and figures?

A: Yes. Accounting courses always seemed easy to me, and I guess this was part of my high school background where anybody who made a good grade in something was suspect by his peers. He was a sissy. That is hard to believe today, but I have seen fellows questioned when they were taking their books home in high school. That was just a sissy thing to do. Nobody ever did that. And it is just hard to relate to that, but that is the way it was. I can tell you, law school was a challenge to me to improve my skills in writing. It was good for me in that area.

J: How did the GI Bill work? Were you sent a check once a month?

A: Once a month. Right. Seventy-five dollars. Somehow administratively they handled all the registration. You did not write a check or anything to the university. It was just handled through the university, that part of it, and you just got a subsistence of seventy-five dollars a month. That was influential in why I went into a fraternity, because it helped me finance the spread of that seventy-five dollars over the month. I could eat at the fraternity house, socialize, and that type of thing. I enjoyed those things.

J: Did the frat house have its own kitchen and maids who would come in and cook?

A: Right. The maids were really black males who were considered houseboys. They would be more a janitor-type person.

J: How much would they hire out for?

A: I do not know. One night, they were having new members, and I guess this happened all the time. The houseboy would be put up for membership and pass every time. He always had a nickname, and somebody would put him up for membership using his formal name, you know. Nobody really knew. That seemed to be what would happen. By the time I got to be in my senior year in law school, I had really kind of gotten away from the fraternity. My brother and a boy named Donald Gibson had a partnership going in Jacksonville, and my name was on it. It was in the Smith Building in Jacksonville. The name of the firm was Austin, Gibson, and Austin. See, we had the diploma privilege back then. When you graduated, when you got your degree, you were admitted to the Florida bar, so I graduated on the tenth day of June at 8:00. I was in an office practicing law in Jacksonville. It was at Suite 100, Smith Building, Forsyth Street, and that lasted eight, maybe nine months. A couple of things were coming into play there. The money I had saved in the army I had put into the financing of getting the law practice started. My wife graduated here at the

University the same time I did. She was teaching down in West Palm Beach. She was born in Miami, but raised in West Palm Beach. I really wanted to get married. I figured during the period of time I was working there, practicing law there, I made five dollars a week. I could get a job with about any firm there in town for twenty-five dollars a week and half of anything I could bring in. That was more or less a standard thing if you were working barrister. That was not enough to get married on. So, I had pressure on me, and what I had done when I had taken the undergraduate courses was take mostly accounting courses because they were easy for me. I just kept my mouth shut. I would go in and I would do real well at it. I would hear everybody hollering about all these accounting courses.

J: It was not a problem for you at all.

A: It was not a problem, and I liked it. After we had been practicing, I was talking to my father who at that time was the Lincoln-Mercury dealer in Highland Park, Illinois. I knew that I was not doing well financially. In fact I was getting very discouraged. I had sold my car, and disposed of anything that I could get just trying to hang in there. I knew it was going to be tough. But I wanted to get married and I had told my wife that when we graduated, I said, "Okay, as soon as I get my feet on the ground, we will get married." That was okay with her because she had graduated in education and was teaching, but it seemed to me that within a week she was saying, "Well, are your feet on the ground?"

J: Well, did you think it was going to be that tough while you were in law school?

A: No. In fact, there was an event that happened where we had gotten a good personal injury case, and we lost it because we did not have the finances to carry our client through. He had a family and kids, and we could not carry him the way he had to be. We could not put up the money to carry him, and yet, I forget what happened in that case, but I knew then how it was. It was like an omen to me. It was going to be a long haul. Anyhow, at that time, I talked to my father and he said, "I can use you up here if you would like to come up here and maybe be a business manager or something. I will pay you enough that you can get married on." So that is what I did and that is really sort of what got me into accounting. I went up there, got involved in the management of the firm from an accounting standpoint, and in the automobile agencies they have a very sophisticated accounting system. I literally got fascinated by it. It was like steering a ship. You could see what was going on.

My father sold that agency and retired, I believe, in 1956. I always knew we would come back to Florida. But we were up there three and a half to four years, and I came back through Gainesville. My wife had gone home to her parents and this was in April or May of 1956. I stopped off on my way to West

Palm Beach at the College of Business Administration just to see how long it would take me to get academically qualified to take the CPA exam. By that time, I had pretty well made up my mind that I would do well in that field. I seemed to excel at it. I had a long conversation with the dean in the college of business, and we worked it out where I could come up here and start that summer, which started June the 15th. I would take pure accounting courses around a year and he would give me enough credit for law courses that I could graduate in the following May, 1947. It was tough. And he said, "Now the only guy that has got to approve this is the Chairman of the Department of Accounting.

J: That would have been May of 1957?

A: That would have been May of 1956.

J: 1956?

A: So I went over there and I had the courses all laid out, and he looked at it. I was going to take three accounting courses in the first summer session, and he told me, "Listen, there is no way you can do this." I have to be honest with you, to fit it all in a year, that was the only way I could do it, because I was essentially going to take the last two years of school in one year.

J: Did you have any children at this time?

A: Yes, I had a family, everything. And limited resources.

J: Considerably older than the average student.

A: Older than the average student and highly motivated. It took me a long time to convince him. I told him about my finances, and I said, "What have you got to lose letting me try it?" He said okay. Well, now once a week he would stop me in the hall and ask if I was doing all right. He had told me that in the courses I had chosen I could not do all the homework because you went to school everyday in summer school. He thought I could not get the homework done from these three course in time to meet the classes on the next day. He was almost right. I survived and did very well academically. Well enough that when I go through he asked me if I would stay and do additional work, which I did and paid me to teach. I was an interim instructor working half-time. What happened was I saw our savings being depleted with some emergency always coming up, so I got a job here in town on Saturday mornings without looking around to see if I could do some accounting work for somebody. I was at the Sandwich Inn down there on Fourth Street, sitting there having a cup of coffee waiting to talk to the owner when the guy came out and was on the phone trying

to find somebody who could do his payroll. Apparently, the accountant doing it had not shown up. I told him, "I just overheard your conversation. I can do that for you." So I made an arrangement with him and I would spend Saturday morning there. He had about thirty employees. I made out his payroll and did some other things he needed done, and he would give me ten dollars.

Well, our Saturday afternoons were spent going around to the only supermarket in Gainesville at that time, the old A&P company store on Fourth Avenue there. Well, we put my son (who is a practicing lawyer in West Palm Beach, with the firm of Cone Wagner) in the cart and we would go around that store for two or three hours. We enjoyed it then. We would get exactly ten dollars worth. And next thing I knew, Mr. Clyde English, the guy who ran the Sandwich Inn, talked to another business man, and the guy says, "Mr. English has been telling me you are doing good things for him. Why do you not help me? If you can come in say, Thursday night, and do some posting." I began doing that for him, and one thing led to the other. By the time that year was up and the department chairman offered me the job, maybe staying and teaching half-time and working on an advanced degree in accounting, I was making more money than any of the firms were offering me to start. I mean, not just a little bit more, but substantially more.

J: Than being an attorney.

A: So at that time, a fellow who had the accounting and the legal background was very unusual. It is not so unusual today. I could have gone to work for any accounting firm. I wanted to stay around the school until I passed the CPA exam, a whole combination of things there. So he offered me a great opportunity. I had this little accounting practice kind of going which I could see was going to get better, and he offered me the teaching assistantship. I took courses in a M.A. for accounting, and took all that course work. I have a thesis in my drawer here that I wrote. My chairman told me that if I would come over there and spend six weeks rewriting the thing, he would approve it. Well, I just did not have six weeks and I really knew I did not care that much because I had passed the CPA exam. I realized that is what it was all about. I was not an academic person, if I can put it that way, although I enjoyed teaching, and would like to some day.

J: When did you take the CPA?

A: I believe it was in 1958.

J: So in one year you had enough accounting behind you and of course your prior experience to pass that exam. Did they administer it in several sections during that time?

- A: There were four sections and it was a physical ordeal. You started on Wednesday at noon, and went through Friday; it was a race against time. Anybody who has taken accounting courses knows that there is always a time factor that enters into it and there is a lot of pressure. I do not know why that is the way that it is, but it is.
- J: Let me get back to the law college a little bit. We have got a lot of good information on what you have done since right there. You lived in a fraternity house, the Sigma Nu?
- A: No, the Sigma Chi. I told you about living in temporary dormitories when I started. I then got into a permanent dormitory which was in Murphree Hall on University Avenue. Murphree G or H, or something like that, which is right there by the handball courts. You know where I am talking about. Most people remember that. When I got there I had three roommates who were handball fanatics, and I did not even know what handball was. They said if I was going to room with them, I had to learn to play handball, so I did, and played it for a long time. I went from Murphree and moved into the Sigma Chi house when I was in law school.
- J: When did you join that fraternity?
- A: I joined that fraternity in 1948. I was initiated, I believe, in July of 1948 sometime. I was pledged in the spring of 1948 and was initiated. I made my grades and everything.
- J: What were the pledges and the initiations like?
- A: Oh, boy. Well, you are opening up a different path that is very interesting because some company came through and made a survey of our fraternity house. This was after I was initiated, and we found the average age in the fraternity was twenty-six. Now that would be like in the fall of 1947. And while I was a pledge they did not beat us with paddles or anything like that. Everybody had a military background. And our pledge class consisted of officers and enlisted men from the army. And the fellows who were already members were all ex-GI's and so without beating us, they exercised a lot of will power over us. Physically, where the president's home stands right now, I duck waddled, if you can call it that, from down about where the varsity tennis courts are all the way up to the Sigma Chi house or where the Gold coast is there where those stores are along there.
- J: The Gold Coast?

A: What I call the Gold Coast, which would be right across from the dormitories.

J: Stag and Drag?

A: Yes.

J: Next block down.

A: Maybe the next block, but the old Sigma Chi house would be about 18th Street I guess or 17th Street.

J: But the duck waddle was long enough.

A: You do not think that is not something, you go try it. As I go down every once in a while, I will think about that. But that was just one of the incidents.

J: How many parties a year would you all have? Did you have a fall frolic?

A: We had a fall frolic and a spring frolic. There was a military ball weekend. I was a member of an organization called L'apache, which has since been tossed off campus because I think some fellow got killed in an automobile wreck. This was about six or seven of our major fraternities, like the Pikes, the SAEs, the Phi Deltas, Sigma Chis, Sigma Nus, and the ATOs. I think we could have five or six guys in the fraternity in this organization. It was a way of getting out of wearing a tux to these frolic weekends, and they gave you a bottle of booze each time. To get in it, you had to chug-a-lug twelve ounces of whiskey, and be paddled by everybody. It was ridiculous, but it was a good group of guys and that was it. The initiation was always held out at the Devil's Millhopper.

J: Down in it?

A: No, just around it there. And it was always before the fall frolics weekend when you were initiated. And it was something, I will tell you. When I was initiated was when I met my wife. I had a date with her that weekend. I did not have a drink of whiskey, I will bet you, for twelve years after that. It really did me in, and I went around with a pillow which I sat on for a whole weekend.

J: Now you also belonged to the Scabbard and Blade.

A: Right. I went into the ROTC my last two years, and that was an honorary military thing. This was before the Korean War started. At that time I was looking, they paid twenty-seven dollars a month. That was a time when seventy-five dollars a month would put you in high cotton financially. And I had liked the military life, and I took to it reasonably well. It was one of my

considerations. They said I could go through ROTC out there and I said, "Well, I am in law school." They said, "We will give you a commission in the JAG [Judge Advocates General Corps]." I think I said, "Fine, that will be okay. That might be even where I would be willing to start." After that, the Korean War came along.

I signed up and was involved in it. The Korean War came along and I continued on, thinking all the time that I was going to get this commission in the Judge Advocate General's Corp. Just before I was graduating, the colonel called me in one day. You have to understand that I was a distinguished military student, and was company commander of A company in the ROTC and Scabbard and Blade. He said, "I have got to tell you something." I said, "What is that?" He said, "I cannot get you a commission in the JAG. You are going to have to go in the infantry as a second lieutenant." I said, "Oh no I am not." And he said, "There is a war on." I said, "Listen, colonel. I just spent a bunch of time, about a year and a half, over there in Korea, and I ain't going back over there if I do not have to. You have made a commitment to me, and you waited right to the end to tell me." He said, "We have been paying you." I said, "That is a loan you have been making me as far as I am concerned, but if you are not going to hold up your part of the deal, I do not feel obligated to go in." See, I had been in the reserves and really what happened was I went out and got a commission in the navy, believe it or not, as a lieutenant junior grade.

J: So you had a major break in your law school training from the time you went in in 1942 to the time you graduated in 1952.

A: No.

J: I thought you were in Korea.

A: Well, I had been in Korea in 1946.

J: Before, yes.

A: No, I technically went in June of 1946. The war was not officially over. It was over the end of that June, and I enlisted and they shipped me to Korea. I had joined the 24th Corps, all of whom were counting what they had points in. They had come off Okinawa, and all of our officers were commissioned and had received field commissions. Here I was, seventeen years old, a young kid coming along, and they were thinking about going home. They were all hardened veterans; it was interesting. But back to ROTC, I guess I really joined it as a supplement to my income. And then when they shifted gears on me, I opted out and did not accept my commission.

J: You were in the infantry association as well, according to the year book.

A: Well, I was in the infantry ROTC. See, that is what they said. "Go in the infantry ROTC and we will commission you." We do not have a JAG, and apparently I do not think I was the only one like that. I was not the only one in those circumstances. When they did that with me, there were at least three other fellows they had made the same commitment to. They came over to see me and ask me what had happened. I am looking at pictures here to see if I can point one out. One I know is down in Naples now practicing law.

J: I do not see how they could have taken you away from your education.

A: Yes, that is right.

J: That is no deal.

A: That is no deal, see.

J: Well, besides fraternity life, did you have a chance to do any fishing or hunting in the area, or did you watch movies? Were you a movie goer?

A: Yes, a group of us would maybe go down to what we called the Armpit, which was a movie house down near the old post office on Main Street.

J: How did it come by this name?

A: I do not know.

J: Did you dub it that?

A: Well, no. It was just called the Armpit. I guess there was an odor to it, but they always ran cowboy pictures and it was ongoing. There would be like three basic scenes. There was Rip Wilson, I do not know if you remember him. One of my roommates worked down there as an usher. I guess that is another reason why we tended to go down there. Well, what we would do was ride down there or walk down, but we always went back out to campus on one of the city buses (you are making me remember this). We would get on the bus and there would be maybe several people on the bus. One guy would get up near the driver and another guy would stand in the back. We would always go through this scenario after coming out of two cowboy pictures.

J: Wound up?

A: And cigarette lighters. You would put a cigarette lighter in your hand. You

could pound on the thing and it would flash. Probably everybody had done that, like we were going to have a shootout. We never really intimidated anybody but the bus driver. Sometimes it would be funny and once in a while he would say, "Now both you guys gotta get off."

I actually never got out of the army before Thanksgiving. It was maybe in the latter part of October. My brother was over here, and I had really never been to Gainesville. I came over here and spent some time with him looking around the school. I saw some football games, and what I recollect is the first game Florida won was in the fall of 1947, when they beat North Carolina State 7 to 6. The game was played up there in North Carolina, and it just came over the radio. Nobody paid a whole lot of attention. They would listen to the game some, but what I recollect was being over at what was known as the College Inn at that time, where everybody went for coffee. Girls never went in there. There was a stigma that no female would enter the place. And somebody running across campus saying they won, they were coming out of the dormitories saying, "Did I hear right?" And at 13th Street and University Avenue, there they had a big bonfire and burned the traffic light right to the ground. The benches and everything like that. And in the fall of 1948, they had another event like that. I believe it was after the Miami game. I can remember being upstairs over what I call the Gold Coast, or the pool hall, but having enough experience to get out of the area because there were three police cars there. The student disabled all three of them, and the police were running out and grabbing guys. They were carrying on because we had won a game.

J: Too many students.

A: There were too many students. And then the so-called panty raids did not start until I came back in 1956 or 1957. I can remember going home one night from the library and hearing the chanting. I thought there was something going on, and I just drove over near the P.K. Yonge School. There was a panty raid going on over there. I was older then, and I just sort of looked at what was happening. I could not believe it but it was just typical student fun. All the freshmen used to wear the rat cap and get in their pajamas and parade down the square downtown to start off the football season and that type of thing.

J: Did you attend many of the games?

A: I pretty well went to all of them. I have always been interested in it, but you went more expecting to lose back then.

J: Well, did you play in any intramural sports or varsity sports?

A: Oh, yes. I participated in just about all intramural sports I guess. I was the

all-campus second baseman in intramurals in softball in about 1949 or 1950. Not that I was that good. They had more leagues--the dorm league, the independent league, the fraternity league, and I was participating in all of them.

J: Did the law school have a league?

A: The law school had a league of their own. There were three fraternities over there. One of them required only a C average to get into, which I had. I managed to get into it.

J: Those are legal fraternities.

A: Legal fraternities.

J: Phi Alpha Delta.

A: Phi Alpha Delta. That was a relatively small one. PAD, yeah. PAD and Phi Delta Phi.

J: Phi Delta Phi and then Phi Delta.

A: Delta Theta Phi?

J: Delta Theta Phi.

A: Okay, Delta Theta Phi dominated the intramurals in law school and was the big fraternity. When Dean Fenn came along, and a boy I pointed out to you, Brooks Hoyt [Brooks Hoyt, class of 1954], a fraternity brother of mine, a good athlete, and scholar, made straight A's. I left in his freshman year, but I know he went on to become a strong academician.

J: So you all had softball games?

A: Played football and softball.

J: Debating?

A: No. All that came later. See, Dean Fenn's influence was great. He did what really had to be done to make it a strong institution. We had a number of fellows going to school there who were just beneficiaries of educational trusts. As long as they were in school, why they were living a pretty good life on a good income. So they did not really want to get out. What he did kind of hurt those guys pretty bad because we were accumulating them there, seems to me. Now that is just my feeling. There was a group of guys like that attending law school, and

they would not even take the exam or anything. They just did not have to attend classes or anything. You would go and take the exam and if you passed it, you got credit for the course. If you did not, well that was okay too. There was no maintaining a grade level average. With the coming of Dean Fenn, we were going to attend classes, roll would be taken, you got a grade and you had to maintain a certain grade point average or you were on probation, and all that kind of stuff.

J: Well, did you have Dean Fenn for any of your courses?

A: Dean Fenn taught legal bibliography.

J: Sounds tough.

A: Yes. And I do not think you got a grade for it because I have no recollection of other than just being scared to death all the time. Just student-scared if I can put it that way. He had that effect on me.

J: Now when you first attended, there was the original law college and then a short extension to the north was the library.

A: That extension was opened, I believe, in 1951. It was not there.

J: Now that is the extension that runs to the east.

A: Now remember we are talking about the law school at the corner of 13th and University Avenue. Okay.

J: That is right.

A: The only thing there when I went there in September of 1949 was the main building. They built the additions on the library and the old courtroom and all that later. The courtroom was on the third floor on the south end of the building. And all the professors' offices were down the hall there and the library was there. The floors on the library were shorter than normal. There were five stories of law stacks and you would go back in the library and associate with some guy. Your law firm would put your name on a card and put it by your table. You could leave everything there and nobody would ever bother it. But that was your office, so to speak. What they now have is carrels, I believe, out there.

J: Was Ila Pridgen [Ila Roundtree Pridgen, Librarian, University of Florida College of Law, 1930-54] a librarian when you were there?

A: Miss Pridgen was a librarian and Mrs. Taylor was there too.

J: What was Mrs. Taylor's capacity at that time?

A: She was the assistant librarian I believe.

J: Were there law students who were assistants also?

A: Oh, yes. A lot of them would work in the library who had the grades and it was a pretty good deal.

J: Well, did you work during law school?

A: I did not work for money. I worked very hard. It was an effort. It was tough for me, but it got easier as I got over the hump. It really got my attention.

J: So for the GI Bill there was no work study program. You were working in class, staying alive, staying at work.

A: That is right. Staying alive. And it was a group of guys kind of all fighting the same battle. Everybody was helpful. We would sometimes go to some guys' room or fraternity house and study a course. Actually one semester there was a place called Long's Cafeteria that was right on the corner of 13th and University Avenue. The law school was right there. I became aware that the professors would all walk over there and have a cup of coffee after class and there would be a few guys who would follow them over there, all talking about what was going on. You only had the first year where you took a core. After that, you were pretty much on your own. I believe in my first semester of my junior year, I had figured this thing out. I would have my class schedule so that I would have an hour in between which would give me an opportunity to follow the professor over there and get the inside scoop on what was happening and go on from there. Well, coffee was a nickel back then, you could drink all you wanted for a nickel. So, I did that for about a month, and I thought I was getting something out of it, but boy was I drinking a lot of coffee. One day I just started shaking and I guess it was whatever happens to you when you drink too much coffee like that.

J: That happens to me.

A: So I do not drink a whole lot of coffee. In fact, I am really drinking tea. But anyway, I did not do that but one time because of that. There was a guy who had been a court reporter. Crosby was his name [Harold B. Crosby, class of 1948]. He has been president of the University of West Florida.

J: West Florida?

A: West Florida. And I never knew him. I believe he graduated in 1948, but he had been a court reporter. For every course that he took, he would take the lectures down verbatim, and his wife would type it. Publish it and you had a "Crosby" which was worth ten bucks or fifteen bucks which was a lot of money.

J: As much as your books or more.

A: But everybody would have a "Crosby" and we did not have the duplicating machine that we do now. I can remember Dr. Day [James Westbary Day, Professor, University of Florida College of Law, 1930-61]. He was a brilliant man and very knowledgeable. He would make a statement and somebody would raise his hand and say, "Dr. Day, Crosby says this, which is exactly opposite to what you are saying." He says, "Oh, Crosby's right." And then he laughed.

J: I have a list here of faculty of the college of law for 1952 and 1953. Will you briefly speak about each professor listed there? I know there are a few and you may not have had some of those.

A: Well, I have already talked about Dean Fenn, who was a great motivator. Kenneth Black was a great guy [Kenneth Leroy Black, professor, University of Florida College of Law, 1950-71].

J: What was he like in class?

A: He was a very dapper dresser and had a lot of practical experience, I guess you could say, and I found him interesting. I like the knowledge he imparted. Later, he got involved in developing the typewriter run on a computer believe it or not. This would be back in the early 1960s that he was doing this. In fact, I was practicing accounting and became his accountant.

J: Was he teaching at the time?

A: He was teaching at the time, but he was doing this on the side. He always drove a big old Lincoln and was a very dapper dresser, but he was a man ahead of his time with what he was doing in the legal document area, with these machines that were really typewriters that were like computer-run, which we think nothing of now. He was doing that back then.

J: Where did he live?

A: He lived on about 14th Street, which is just west of 13th Street and past 39th Avenue.

J: He was way out there.

A: He was way out there. It is a little creek that runs back there and he had a big old house out there. It was just a big old house and he was doing all this computer stuff in his house and things like that. He was quite a guy really. I do not mean this derogatorily. He was an egghead-type who was teaching here, but I believe his mind was out there. He would think in terms of wills and cranking out these mechanics of paperwork that were repetitious, and that type of thing on typewriters.

J: Did he leave Florida to go on and teach somewhere else?

A: No, he passed away here. He stayed right here and died. I forget what year he died, but it would be near 1970 or thereabouts. Mr. Clark [Vernon Wilmont Clark, professor, University of Florida College of Law, 1946], was called Danny Boy. Now I do not know why. I liked him. I took criminal law from him and some other courses, which he explained to me. I liked that. I did not make great grades from him or anything like that. In fact, not any of them ever gave me any great grades you could say, but I liked him. I took all the property courses from him.

J: Did he have a nickname?

A: No. To my knowledge, no. He was a very dignified gentleman, and he would take the time to respond to you, but he liked early morning classes to get it over with for the day.

J: Did you have any evening courses or Saturday classes?

A: No. Well, we had Saturday classes in undergraduate school, but I do not remember any in law school. Now always, you learn very quickly to arrange your courses, your schedule that you do not get involved in that.

J: Now were all your classes held in Bryan Hall?

A: Yes.

J: And was it called Bryan Hall when you first arrived?

A: I believe it was.

J: And how about the condition of the classrooms--were they ever overloaded or crowded?

- A: They split our class into two sections. See, we had 150. That meant seventy-five to each section. And we were all taking the same thing, but it was different for some reason. If you could not attend one, you would make that other section, but everybody pretty well stayed in the section they were in.
- J: So you did not have to meet outside.
- A: No. It was not bad like that. Dexter Deloney [Dexter Deloney, professor, University of Florida College of law, 1949-82] was called the mix-master.
- J: The mix master?
- A: Have you heard that before?
- J: No. I like that. Why was he called that?
- A: Well, he was called that because he used his arms expressing himself. Very good. And one day, the windows were open; I remember that.
- J: Did you have screens on the windows?
- A: No. And he was standing on the podium and I forget what course it was. He was making a point and he had on an expando band on his wristwatch. He was throwing his arms around, and the watch came right off his hand; it went right out the window. He stopped and looked around. We all jumped up and ran out there, and of course ran down to get the watch. That is the recollection. I know him personally. He has retired now, and he is a client of mine. He is somebody I have gotten to know. His wife and family I also know. He is just a super guy.
- J: Were you personal friends with any of these fellows?
- A: Not back during law school.
- J: Would they have parties or social gatherings at their homes after the semester or during?
- A: Nothing that I ever attended. Now our fraternity would have parties and they would show up and attend them. The only one who let his hair down at all was Bill McDonald [William Dickison McDonald, professor, University of Florida College of Law 1948-84]. I can remember him getting on the table leading choruses of Allouette. He is a super guy. I took equity from him. I do not even remember what I made but I passed it. He is a client of mine. We go down to Mosquito Lagoon and go down there about 5:00 in the morning. We have both

condominiums on the ocean at Daytona Beach Shores just over Port Orange ridge there. So we will get up at 5:00 and drive down to Oak Hill, and we get a guide and spend a half a day or so up there in Mosquito Lagoon. It is very quiet, and talk about guys who were in school and that type of thing. He is an avid fisherman and very brilliant man. My middle name is Campbell, of Scottish heritage, and he is a McDonald. Well, if you know anything about Scottish history, the McDonald's and the Campbell's are like the Hatfields and the McCoys in Tennessee. The first time I told him what the C stood for, he said, "My God." But I can talk to him for hours and Frank Maloney, who was a client of mine and a good friend. He really got something out of me in the way of effort.

J: Were any one of those fellows more popular or less popular amongst you all?

A: Looking down the list here now, I even remember William Armstrong Hunter. He was on military leave-of-absence, but he came back. I think he was a general if I remember. General Hunter. But then he died. I was playing golf here several years ago, and I ended up playing golf with his son. He asked me if I remembered him, and I said yes but during that time he went in the service and came back. I never took a course from him, but he was around the law school, and I can remember talking to him and liking him. George John Miller [professor, University of Florida College of Law, 1948-55] was a real character. Obviously a scholar, he taught constitutional law and did a good job of it, I would say.

J: Would he smoke his pipe in class?

A: Yes, he frequently drank with the students who learned after spending a lot of time drinking beer with him that it did not make any difference in your grades.

J: He was all business.

A: Yes, when it came to that he was all business.

J: Where would you meet with him or where would students meet?

A: I do not know where. I ran into him as I told you. I cannot even remember the name of the place. One night I had a beer, at a spot off of Hawthorne Road. The Two Spot or the Red Spot, I forget what the name of it was. I just went in there and he was there. I ended up talking to him or listening, I should say, for three hours, and I was very tired and thought for sure that since I agreed with him on everything that maybe I would make some brownie points, but it did not turn out that way, although, he was very fair with me. I actually stayed up all night studying for that test and remember just laying down for a minute. I came to the exam an hour and a half late and he gave me extra time. He was very

understanding and I was always grateful.

J: Sounds to me like a lot of people on campus owned automobiles, going up to Newnan's Lake and going out to the Devil's Millhopper.

A: I had an automobile so I would say yes.

J: Would you say 50 percent of the students on campus had an automobile? I read that statistic in some of these alumnus magazines.

A: I would say maybe yes, and probably more in law school.

J: Did Ila Pridgen run a boardinghouse for the law students at that time? And a rooming house too?

A: Rooming house. If she did, I was not aware of that. I remember her and Miss Jennings, who was the dean's secretary. I remember Mrs. Taylor. And there were students and people working in the library.

J: Did you study in the library much?

A: Most of the time. You had an office up there. I was one who did my studying there.

J: And did you borrow most of the books that were housed in the library?

A: Yes.

J: Check them out?

A: Yes, you could do that.

J: Did you have any big fines to pay on getting books back late?

A: No, I did not run into that problem. I had Eugene Scoles [Eugene Scoles, professor, University of Florida College of Law, 1949-56], who is now the dean of some school out in Denver or somewhere out West out there. Done very well. I took Conflicts of Law from him and he was very good, but he left I believe at the end of that year. I enjoyed his courses very much. Dean Slagle [Dean Slagle, professor, University of Florida College of Law] was near the end of his career when I was here and I remember I took corporations from him. What I remember about that was the World Series was on, and he always spoke with a rather low voice, but in the back of the room they had the World Series on. They were all gathering around it listening more to that. My brother had always encouraged me to sit right on the front row, right under his nose and take good

notes. I heard Dean Slagle say, "If you do not straighten up and turn that radio off, I am going to flunk everybody in the class," and I looked, and I got up and walked back there and told them what he had said. We all straightened up real quick. I learned a lot from him about corporations. I found it very informative. Clarence TeSelle [Clarence John TeSelle, professor, University of Florida College of Law, 1928-30, 1932-58] taught evidence, a four hour course and he had an ear exam he called it. I cannot find anybody who remembers it like I do but again, my brother had said, "He is going to give you this ear exam. You sit right up there under his nose." And he had a cane and he came to class in a cab and wheelchair. He would bang on the table with this cane when he would make a point. I was sitting up right under his nose, which actually by that time, I must have been a junior because it was in the new courtroom that was over there. During this ear exam, he would read the question out twice, ten questions. He would read the question out. He said a trial lawyer, where evidence is involved, could split his mind in half and one half of his mind was working, thinking, and writing, and the other half was listening to what was going on. You had to be able to do this to be successful in the area where evidence was important, so he would give this ear exam. Well, try it sometime. It was maddening because you were writing the answer to the first question when he was reading the second question.

J: And at the end of the tenth question you had to hand in your paper?

A: You had to hand in the paper. He would just read the question twice. You either had it or you did not. I would hear guys scream, throw paper, pencil up, faint, all this kind of stuff went on.

J: Would you say in general your training was more practical or more theoretical, or to what degree?

A: I felt it was practical.

J: Were there ever suggestions to go down to the courthouse and watch proceedings.?

A: Yes. We would do that, particularly if it was a good trial going on.

J: What about moot court or practice court?

A: Yes. Practice court, everybody had to take that and you got a partner and Lester Bales [Lester Bales, Jr. class of 1952] was my law partner. I know he keeps up with me and I keep up with him over the years. That has been a long time. It is now thirty-two years or more. He does not call me everyday or that type of thing, but I will see him around on campus. He is a circuit judge down

near Tampa.

J: Before we close, will you tell me a little bit about some of the people that you graduated with, pictures of those folks.

A: Well, Frank Akerman [Frank Bruce Akerman, class of 1952] was from Clearwater as I remember it. He was a veteran and he had lost part of his arm. He worked in the library. Very studious fellow and I believe he is deceased now. Elwyn Akins [Elwyn Akins, class of 1952] from Trenton is now a judge over there. I see him occasionally when he is in Gainesville. He has been, I would say, reasonably successful at what he is doing. He seems to be doing just fine. Lester Bales is a circuit judge. I can almost think of the town he is from. Well, it is down near Tampa. When I am going down there, I can see the sign and I think, "You know, if I was not in a hurry, I would go over there and see Les." He was a veteran, married, and he had a family.

J: Were most people married in law school?

A: I would say a good number of them were. Marie Cook [Marie C. Matis (Cook), Class of 1952] was a brain, and she was from Orlando. I would always go to her after to explain something for some reason. She was always understanding.

J: How many other ladies were in law school?

A: There was one other in our class and both of them were very smart. Jane Simmons [Jane Davis Simmons, Class of 1952], who married, I believe, a man whose name was Elwin Fisher. His father was a lawyer in Miami, and she was very smart. Hayward Davis [Hayward H. Davis, Class of 1952] was in either the state or the house of representatives. Anyway, he was from near Lake Placid. I saw him several years ago, and he seemed to be doing just fine. We had a homecoming. Jack Demetri [Jack C. Demetri, Class of 1952] did not practice law to my knowledge. I talked to him here a few years ago when he was bidding on a contract over here. That was something that I was involved in and his family was in the construction business and he just went on in to it. Harris Dittmar [C. Harris Dittmar, Class of 1952] is a lawyer in Jacksonville doing very well in the practice of law and with a well-recognized respected firm over there. James English [James J. English, Class of 1952] was a spastic but smart boy who typed all of his exams and did all his work in the library. He is practicing law, believe it or not, and does research down in West Palm Beach. I do not know what firm he is with.

J: You say he was a spastic? You said you had an experience with him in one of your classes, right?

A: Yes. Judge Smythe's first contract class. I arrived late and it was in the old courtroom upstairs and Judge Smythe's back was to me, and he was up on a podium. He always wore a robe like a judge would, so I was scared to death. I got down on my hands and knees and crawled around behind the desk around the old courtroom until I got all the way around the corner there. Everybody in the class was watching me do this, you know, casually while they were listening to the judge. Well, as I was easing myself up into this chair, he called on James English who reacted with a spastic reaction. He swatted me on the side of the head, and I fell on the floor and yelled out, "I promise I will never be late again!" Judge Smythe never did figure out what had happened there. He just sort of overlooked it all, but it was funny.

J: Were any of these people involved in student government?

A: Maybe William Henry [William O. E. Henry, Class of 1952], who is with Holland and Knight in Lakeland, and one of their senior partners. He was a Blue Key-type guy and very high class fellow. To this day, he has done very, very, well.

J: Did you all have the opportunity while in school to clerk for local lawyers?

A: Yes. In fact I did that. I worked for a lawyer here in town who is no longer practicing and I had forgotten about that. He did not pay me. I was doing it for experience my senior year, and he never really gave me any guidance. He said, "Here, check abstracts out." I was reading abstracts and then was sort of a gopher and he would never take me to the courtroom. I did not impress him. I do not think he thought I knew anything so I would run and get coffee and check out abstracts for him, which I found most boring. I would never get involved in that type of thing.

J: Did you have the opportunity to do any interviewing in your senior year for working with firms or anything?

A: No, I did not because, as I indicated to you before, I knew my brother had preceded me and we had an office in Jacksonville. I knew exactly where I was going and what I was going to do.

J: And when did you begin here in this office?

A: I have been here since 1968.

J: You have been established in one place for a long time.

A: Well, I was over on 1st Street. I started out where Donigan's clothing store is on University Avenue.

J: Yes.

A: Mr. Donigan started about the time I did and he rented me part of his area there since he did not need it all. He now has three or four stalls, I guess you would call them. And that is where I had started and then I moved down to First Street where Montague Insurance has built that building. I stayed there for about three or four years and then came here. I have really been practicing accounting as a CPA here since 1959. I forget when they issued me my certificate.

J: What did you specialize in?

A: Well, taxation is my thing, even though I am a practicing certified public accountant. People hire us for our tax expertise really.

J: Could you see that coming while you were in law school?

A: No. No. Not while I was in law school, but after I worked for my daddy I could see there was an opportunity to get right in there in the guts of the business. We had CPA's up there and I would call them for answers and I was very frustrated with this hedging. I call it hedging and no answer. Just, "Well, let me study that and this type of thing and we will tell you," and I never would get an answer out of them. It was very frustrating. I conduct my practice now, and I relate to that. I know how it is to be on the other side and it helps me a lot in understanding.

J: Are you now hiring people exclusively from the University of Florida Law College?

A: No. There is one other lawyer here who came, believe it or not, from Holland and Knight, their Washington office, and he wanted to get a L.L.M. in taxation, which he is in the process of doing now. I got mine in 1979. I was in the very first class and got my degree in 1979. It is a one year program. It took me three, which is the way I planned it. He is in that process now and is halfway through. I believe he will stay. He recognizes and sees that what he is doing is essentially a very highly specialized area. We have got to hold ourselves out as CPA's because we render an opinion for our clients, the certification, and it is very interesting. We really have a law library, as fine a law library as there is in the area of taxation and from my previous experience, what am I doing? I am in a highly specialized area of the practice of law and it is sort of two professions crossing or overlaying.

J: How different is law school now when you did your LL.M.'s than when you were in the 1950s?

- A: Well, you are touching a nerve there. I honestly believe that they ought not to have this high academic requirement. As I go through and look at the class here, I do not really think we really had any outstanding scholars, but if you take the class of 1952, I see guys on the supreme court, I see all kinds of circuit court judges. They got their veterans just like I did and they have been very successful, in my opinion. What I am saying is they did not have this high academic requirement or admission thing that they have going on now. It is hard to get in. I know my son did not apply out here to go to law school, but I am not sure they would have admitted him. He wanted to get out of Gainesville. He is a good student who got an English degree, and then went to law school. I guess maybe I influenced him a little bit there because that was a deficiency I had--writing skills, which is what law school is all about. He got through, he went to Nova. It is a good school. He is doing very well. He is in fact going to be a very good lawyer.
- J: Well, I congratulate you on that. Now Ben Overton [Hon. Benjamin F. Overton, Class of 1952] is in that.
- A: Yes. Ben Overton was in our class. He has been very distinguished, and led a very distinguished career on the supreme court of the state of Florida.
- J: What was he like?
- A: Well, I did not know him really that well. He was a veteran. I know he was. He probably was about like me, not an outstanding academic. In fact, Mr TeSelle once said that there were not any good students in our class. No real brains.
- J: He called them as he saw them.
- A: Called them as he saw them. I am looking to see if there would be any.
- J: Where were the graduation ceremonies held?
- A: In the gym and then we all came back to the courtroom, the now-old courtroom and got our license. The license was given to you with the diploma privilege. See, there it is up there. That was it.
- J: There were two ceremonies in law school.
- A: Two ceremonies, yes.
- J: Did they distinguish you in the gym ceremony from the rest of the class.

- A: By class only. We stood up by class and there was by that time a large number. It was too much trouble to walk across and so we stood up by class.
- J: No were you awarded the J.D. or the LL.B?
- A: The LL.B., which was later changed to the J.D.
- J: How did you feel about that?
- A: My feeling was that what had happened was that they had changed the degree, the name of the degree, and to be current you ought to just go ahead and go along with the tide. They must have had a reason for allowing us to change it. The LL.B is a degree that is given now. I do not think it is even given anymore. It is now called a J.D., so I felt that if somebody were to ask me in time this would happen. This is why I once said go ahead and do it, and I think everybody did it. But they would forget what an LL.B. was and you would say well, you have got a J.D., okay. they understand what it is. I think that is what happened. An LL.M. is much different. People, particularly sophisticated business people, understand that type of background.
- J: That is specifically for tax.
- A: That is right.
- J: That is a masters of law in tax.
- A: In law and tax. And there are LL.M.'s in other specialties. There is always a specialty then in brackets, but what they give out here is in taxation.
- J: Are there other people there who are familiar to you in your class?
- A: Well, Doyle Rogers [Doyle Rogers, Class of 1952], down in West Palm Beach, has been very successful. Big booster of the university. Hudson R. Olliff [Hudson R. Olliff, Class of 1952] was a circuit judge in Jacksonville and he died here about two or three years ago. He was a fellow that I used to study with and knew well.
- J: Did you feel you studied better alone or with people?
- A: No, with people. I listened better than anything. Nick Stamathis [Nick E. Stamathis, Class of 1952] from Tarpon Springs, a Greek down there, is someone I hear about every once in a while. David Thomson [David M. Thomson, Class of 1952] I saw up at Chicago one time. He was in the service. He had gone into the JAG , and Phil Webb [Philip A. Webb III, Class of 1952] is a practicing

lawyer in Jacksonville. I have seen him on occasion every several years, but some of these guys I really do not even remember. There were forty-two of us. Out of 150 who started, I would say that this picture is typical of how they looked and dressed.

J: So the dress was normal.

A: Well, I would say that would be typical, but there were a group of guys who wore ties and coats in law school, but I would say that for the majority, that was typical dress. It was more coat and tie for classes ahead of ours than it was during our period. They were getting away from this.

J: How much would you spend on books and tuition a semester? How much would it cost you to go to school?

A: Well, the government was paying for it you see. I really did not know, but I would say if I had any recollection of that was when I went off the GI Bill during my last year, and had to buy my books. I remembered it was seventy-five bucks or something like that.

J: So your entire law school costs would have been \$350 or \$400?

A: Yes, I would say that.

J: Well, I want to thank you for sharing your memories with me today.

A: Well, I have enjoyed it thoroughly. I do not get to ever bring it all together.

J: I think we have done a pretty good job with that today.

A: If I have helped at all, why, I am glad to do it.

J: Well thank you. Are there any professors that we have not talked about?

A: Well, there is one here. Richard Stephans [Richard Badenoch Stephans, University of Florida College of Law, 1949-77], who I consider a friend. He is not doing well health-wise, but he taught me my first income tax. My roommate, Frank Hall [Frank D. Hall, Class of 1951], is a practicing lawyer in Miami. He was a year ahead of me. He chides me to this day because we walked out of his tax class and I was saying, "Frank, what the hell is this guy talking about," you know and he says, "Here you are the big heavy tax man." Bob Mautz [Robert Barbeau Mautz, professor and assistant dean, University of Florida College of Law, 1950-67] came here and I forget what course it was I took from him, but he was from Yale. He ended up being the chancellor, but I can remember him

coming. He started I believe here either in 1949 or 1950, and I took a course from him. I can remember of all these fellows here.

J: P.K. Yonge? [Philip Keyes Yonge, Professor, University of Florida College of Law, 1949-61]

A: P.K. Yonge, I took, when I was in my senior year, when I was graduating. I took procedures from him, Florida procedure, and there was a fellow who I had grown up with in my class. His name was Henry Kittleson [Henry M. Kittleson, Class of 1953], and he is with Holland and Knight in Lakeland. He had an absolutely brilliant photographic memory.

J: You had talked about the moot court earlier, about recruiting people from the Florida Players?

A: Yes. That is how, when you got your case and everything, you had to get the actors or the people in it. Now the freshman acted as the jury. There was no problem about the jury. But the characters in the case had to get the flavor and the feel of it. We would go get Florida Players and you would actually think, "By God, they have done it."

J: They were real good. They were convincing.

A: They were good. That is right. And it just added to it. They did that at night, in the courtroom. See, we got that new courtroom over there, and I was out there yesterday and saw the improvement right now. They have three cameras and tape it. The guy gets to look at how it all went and review it. He can sit up there and it is absolutely fantastic. I cannot believe how we have advanced educationally and I know those students are getting an awful lot out of that. All of that has come from lawyers throughout the state of Florida. They have essentially funded that whole deal. It is unbelievable.

J: It truly is.

A: Every lawyer who went through the University of Florida should come up and go through that Bruton-Geer Hall.

J: What did you think of about the ceremony yesterday?

A: Well, I did not stay for the actual ceremonies because I had a prior appointment made, so I did not really get to see it all. I got the tour of the facility and that is really why I went out there. It was absolutely fabulous.

J: Now were there guest lecturers who would come in and present their information

in a specialty course?

A: None that I remember. If they did, I did not take it. I believe they had some people who would do that like in ethics and stuff. But that was something that they were starting or talking about starting. I know they do that now, but I do not believe it was a requirement or that I participated in any of those back at that time. After your first year you can almost take anything you want.

J: Now the moot court. In one instance Chief Justice Sebring [Harold Leon (Tom) Sebring, Justice, Florida Supreme Court 1943-55] was part of the proceedings. Was that the case when you were there? Was a chief justice or someone observing?

A: I believe we did have a guy who was either a circuit court judge or somebody who would count and did participate on that basis. I do not remember who it was. You are right. I had forgotten about that. I did not even remember the case.

J: Was it a murder?

A: I think it was, yes.

J: They were murdering black people back in 1919 and 1920 in these moot courts.

A: And Lester Bales might remember. I forget. We got some good Florida Players, some women particularly did outstanding jobs. Everybody was more impressed with their acting ability. They really got with it, you know. It was very interesting to watch.

J: How much a part of the campus did you and your fellow law students feel?

A: Very much.

J: You were right on campus.

A: Right on campus, but had a common thing that we were going through, and I know that I tell the accounting students or the people over there that they have somehow or another got to get those guys together to get the "esprit de corps" that came from the law school. They should pattern themselves after that, and because of sheer size and other factors they have got going over there, they may be losing that over there. To get in there, you have got to be a brain now. An academic brain, and what I see when I audit the courses out there now is that there is something missing. I may not be able to define it, but as I look back and look at these guys who know and follow their careers, there are probably very few of them who could have gotten into that school at this day, including myself.

J: Well, do you think most of the students there today are Floridians or from this state?

A: Not in the LL.M. program. The ones I get exposed to are limited to the ones who might sit right around me and once in a while because of my grey hair, might come up and ask me something. I find the ones I end up talking to are from out of state most of the time. They are here for that specific program.

[End of the interview]