Interviewer: Tom Girard (TG)

Interviewee: Lloyd LaFountain III (LL)

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Location: Girard home, Kennebunk, Maine

Transcriber: Nicole Morin-Scribner

TG: My name is Tom Girard. I am the interviewer and a volunteer with the Biddeford Cultural and Heritage Center. Today is Friday, February 10th, 2023. Today I have the privilege of interviewing Lloyd LaFountain III. We are conducting this interview at my home in Kennebunk. So, Lloyd, we are going to start at the very, very beginning of your life. When and where were you born?

LL: I was born on April 23rd, 1962, at Mercy Hospital in Portland. My family, at the time, was living in an apartment in Old Orchard. Subsequently, 2 months later, we moved to Biddeford.

TG: So, Mercy instead of Webber Hospital.

LL: Correct.

TG: What, if any story do you recall of how your family ended up in Biddeford?

LL: My father was born and raised in Biddeford. He then went off to college followed by the Marines and then law school. He had married. He and my mother were living in North Carolina when he was in the Marines but when he got out, he eventually came back to Sanford to practice law. He then moved back to and started practice in Biddeford. At that time, they briefly lived in Old Orchard in an apartment. He was born and raised in the area.

My mother was not. My mother is from Monongahela, Pennsylvania.

TG: So, she's an immigrant (laughter)

LL: She is (laughter). They actually met when my father was visiting his cousin, Dorothy Corriveau, who was a flight attendant for Eastern Airlines. He went to visit her in New York

City, on Long Island. She was stationed out of LaGuardia Airport. My mother was an airline flight attendant for Eastern and was a roommate of Dorothy. When my father went to visit Dorothy, that's where he met my mother.

TG: How did they decide to come to Biddeford vs. going to Pennsylvania?

LL: I think my father always wanted to come back to Biddeford which is where he was from. I think when you start a law practice, you obviously want to go where you know people because that's where your potential clients are from.

TG: Did your father have any siblings?

LL: My father has one sibling, Elizabeth Regan. She was born in 1928, maybe? My father was born in 1931. My father graduated from Biddeford High School in the class of 1949. Aunt Betty was probably in 1946.

TG: Did she live locally?

LL: She lived in Kennebunk. She had married Tom Regan, who was an attorney here in Kennebunk. They raised 5 children here.

TG: Now, your father was a storied athlete at Biddeford High School, wasn't he?

LL: Yes. He played football and basketball for Biddeford High School. He used to tell us stories about being coached by Warner Keeney. At that time, I think the Athletic Director was Steve White. He would share a lot of stories with us about his basketball and football career at Biddeford High.

TG: I think he graduated the same year as Bob Cote, the teacher and coach from St. Louis and Thornton Academy. They must have been somewhat athletic rivals in high school. Did he have any stories about St. Louis and Biddeford?

LL: Definitely with St. Louis. My father's best friend growing up and his lifelong friend was a gentleman named Guy Hevey. My father lived on Graham Street. Guy Hevey lived on Union Street. They grew up as childhood friends. Guy went on to St. Louis. He was a Class of '48

grad. He was one year ahead of my dad. They were best friends growing up, but they were rivals on the football field.

TG: I think Biddeford, maybe it was your father's junior year, that they won the football championship? Does that ring a bell with you at all?

LL: I don't recall that.

TG: When your father came back, he was an attorney. Was your mom a stay-at-home mom?

LL: My mom was a stay-at-home mom, and she only went to work after her children, there were 4 of us, were out of high school. Then she went to work.

TG: You have a grandmother that has an interesting story. Can you share that with us?

LL: Sure. My grandmother was Theresa Genevieve Doyle, who then became Theresa Doyle LaFountain. She was born in 1894 in Biddeford. She grew up living in the Summer Street block which is still there today. It's the yellow building right across the street from Alex Pizza. It's a big yellow tenement building. There are probably 4 or 5 front doors. She grew up there with what I believe might have been 8 Doyle children who lived there. My grandmother graduated from Biddeford High School in 1913. She wanted to be a doctor, but her family discouraged her from becoming a medical doctor. Instead, she decided to go to dental school. My grandmother graduated from dental school, Tufts University Dental, in 1917. When I tell that to people they say, "Wow. That is pretty interesting. She must have been the only female." She is actually not. I've seen her yearbook before and there were 4 or 5 women in her graduating class. After graduating, she came back to Maine. Her first job as a dentist was working in Patten, Maine. I don't know if that is Aroostook County, I think it's sort of the start of Aroostook County. She worked basically in a lumberjack camp. She was basically there to extract the teeth of lumberjacks, who apparently had poor dental hygiene. Later on, she came back to the Biddeford area and opened up her practice. She ran it for a number of years. In fact, she was my dentist until I hit junior high school, when she fully retired.

TG: Was she in solo practice?

LL: She was always in a solo practice. I think most, if not all dentists, had their own practices. There weren't any sort of practices with 2 or 3 dentists like you see now with several hygienists.

TG: Where was her practice located?

LL: At one time, it was in the building that is on the corner of Alfred and Main, which used to be the Puritan Restaurant and is now a Chinese Restaurant. The Happy Dragon. It was upstairs somewhere in that building. Later on, for the last several years of her practice, she actually ran it from her home. It was a house on Alfred Street just shy of Five Points.

TG: She lived on Alfred Street, just going towards downtown Biddeford?

LL: Yes. As you leave Five Points, she lived in what is probably the 3rd house from Five Points, on your left. It's now down to 2 houses because something has taken it over. Likewise, I grew up later on Alfred Street. I would always tell people I live 8 houses after Poli's Market. It's now 6 houses because parking lots and then Starbucks was built. She actually lived across the street from Raoul and Charlotte Paradis.

TG: Charlotte is my godmother. Raoul just died.

LL: I just saw that. They were my grandmother's neighbors across the street. Later on in life, when she went into a nursing home, she asked me to housesit for her and I did. After she passed away, I bought the house. That's where Trisha, my wife, and I raised our children for the first 3 years of our marriage. That was her Nana's home.

What is interesting is that there were 2 living rooms. One of the small living rooms had a large water stain on the floor and that was from the dental chair. Back then when you had to spit, you'd lean over to your left and there was that water thing and there might have been a water leak. Also, there was in the wall a large outlet that you could not plug anything into it that was normal because it actually was the socket for an Xray machine. It had a much larger piece to plug into. That's where her dental practice was and that's where my children were raised for the first 3 years of their lives.

TG: I'll circle back to you, your wife and your children a little later. Can you talk some about your childhood experiences and memories of growing up in Biddeford? What was it like for

you? You are probably one of the younger people we have interviewed for Voices of Biddeford, so it will be interesting to see what your memories are.

LL: I moved to 39 Union Street when I was 2 months old. We were there for a number of years until I was probably halfway through my 3rd grade. Back then, you had what was called the Wentworth Street School. This is a 2-story brick building on the lower half of Wentworth Street. There was a kindergarten downstairs and a 1st grade upstairs. That was my first school building. Kids who went to Wentworth Street School tended to be from either Union Street, lower Graham, Bradbury, State and maybe lower Elm Street. That's where we attended. Kindergarten was 2 sessions. There was a morning and an afternoon session. I remember I always walked to school. No one got bussed to Wentworth Street School. I would walk. I would imagine one of my parents probably walked with me when I was in kindergarten. In 1st grade, I was on my own. I actually walked to school. It was a 2-room schoolhouse so there was no cafeteria. You went home for lunch. They would release us somewhere around 11:30 and we would have an hour off. We all walked to our individual homes, had lunch and came back afterwards. That was sort of a unique experience. Later on, that school became kindergarten and special education. Eventually, it was just special education. Now I think it's apartments. It's still standing but that was my first school.

Halfway through 3rd grade, my family moved to 384 Alfred Street, what was then called Alfred Road. Once you hit Five Points, heading towards the Biddeford Turnpike exit, it went from Alfred Street to Alfred Road. Now it's all called Alfred Street but it's still Route 111. Second, third, fourth, fifth grade was Kennedy School. Actually, through sixth grade. The seventh and eighth was what was called Biddeford Junior High School.

TG: Is that the one on Alfred Street?

LL: Yes. It's now the Richard J. Martin Community Center. That's where my grandmother, who graduated in 1913, went to high school. That's where my father, who graduated in the class of 1949, went to high school. I went there for what was called junior high school. It wasn't called middle school back then.

TG: Then to Biddeford High School?

LL: Then to Biddeford High School, entering in the fall of 1976 and graduating in 1980.

TG: Were you an active student in high school?

LL: I was pretty active. Sports wise, I ran on the cross-country team. I was not a very good runner (laughter) to say the least. My running days actually got a lot better after I graduated from high school, doing some more recreational running in college and beyond. In high school I also participated in Student Council. I was on the Speech and Debate team. I competed for 4 years. I was State Champion in Original Oratory my senior year. I was involved in a few other activities.

High school band was one of them. That was interesting because my freshman year, we played in the fall at a political rally. It was interesting that a high school band would be playing at a political rally. You probably wouldn't do that now. It was a political rally for Jimmy Carter, who was this gentleman from Georgia who was probably former or current governor running for President as a Democrat. He won. In January, after the election, Biddeford High School's band was invited to Washington to march in the Inaugural Parade. I got to march in Jimmy Carter's Inaugural Parade. That was a fascinating experience.

TG: I would think. Did your parents get a chance to go observe that with you?

LL: No. They did not go. My sister Kathryn was there. She was 2 years ahead of me and played clarinet. I played trumpet. We sent down as a band of about 110 people which included people who played instruments, majorettes and color guards.

TG: Any standout memories beside marching?

LL: At that event? We all sort of joke about what we may have sounded like when we passed the viewing stand that Jimmy Carter was seated in. Most of us pulled the instruments away from our mouths to look to our left to see him. We are wondering if row by row, the music sort of stopped because we were all looking at him. Apparently, we were only 1 of 2 bands he actually stood up and waved to. He probably remembered that we had played for him back in October the year prior for his political rally. That was a fascinating experience.

TG: When I was in high school in the late 60s, Thornton, Biddeford and St. Louis all had really spiffy marching band uniforms. Did you still have that in the late 70s?

LL: We probably had the same uniforms they had back in the 60s. We had a wonderful band director, Paul Phelan. He was originally from Calais. He was at Biddeford High School for a number of years. The guy was just so energetic. From what I understand, the night before we actually marched in Washington, he was out there on the road walking down Pennsylvania Avenue figuring out how people need to pivot, to step to turn the corners that we were going on. The guy really put in a lot of effort. The band was very well accomplished under him.

TG: Sounds like quite an experience. When you were growing up, what to do remember about TV programs you watched or radio you listened to, things of that nature. What activities outside of school did you participate in?

LL: Friday nights in the wintertime were always very special. It started out with my parents driving us to St. Louis field and dropping us off so we could go ice skating. Back then Biddeford had 2 outdoor skating facilities. One was St. Louis, which is on the corner of Hill and West Street. There is no natural water there. That was literally volunteers from the St. Louis Alumni group flooding the field and maintaining an ice rink. The 2nd one was Westbrook Skating Rink. That's still there. It wasn't operational last year. I don't know if it is now. It's driven by fundraising. We would be dropped off at St. Louis and be picked up by 7:30-7:45, just in time to get home for 8 o'clock to watch The Brady Bunch and 8:30 watch The Partridge Family. (laughter)

TG: Were you on speed skates or hockey skates?

LL: I was on hockey skates early on, but I was not very good. Later on, I was on speed skates, but I was not very good there either. I still own the same pair of speed skates that I had when I was young.

TG: Fully transitioned from speed to hockey.

LL: I guess a generation before me there were very active speed skater organizations in a lot of those social clubs.

TG: Yeah. There is a Dan Gagne in the 50s and 60s who led one of the speed skating clubs. He is one of the interviews (note: Voices of Biddeford interviews) that if you have a chance, you might want to listen to. You might find it interesting to hear what went on back then.

LL: I know Dan. Yes.

TG: He was very wrapped up in that. What about downtown Biddeford? What was downtown Biddeford like when you were growing up and through high school?

LL: It was active, though not as active as it had been years prior. I've seen photographs of people coming out of the mills and the streets were just mobbed with people at lunchtime and after work. It was a busy area. A lot of the businesses I remember are long gone. Murphy's Music Store located near City Hall, Langevin's Clothing Store was pretty much next door to that is gone. Youland's, a jewelry store, I think there might have been clothing as well is now gone. Woolworths' and Polakewich, a men's clothing store, which are no longer there. It was a pretty active area. There was no such thing as Five Points Shopping Center. That didn't come in until I think 1973. I know I'm right on that one because my parents bought their house in 1972. They were up in arms because they thought it was going to be a quiet area and then the shopping plaza came. It changed the traffic.

TG: I think back then a lot of people thought it was going to go up Elm Street vs going up Alfred. I think the hospital relocation changed some of that.

LL: The other plaza was there already, where Marden's is now. That used to be Giant, I think. First National might have been there or Hannaford was there at one time. Then they moved to where First National is.

TG: What about restaurants? Did you go out to eat much as a family?

LL: Going out to eat was sort of maybe once a month thing. Often times it would take place in the Portland area. That's because my father was the US Attorney for Maine. His office was in Portland. We would go up to meet him. We tended to go to the Sportsmen's Grill, which was a big spaghetti place. It is no longer there.

In coming to this interview, I was thinking about restaurants in Biddeford. I never really thought about it until just today that there was a heavy Greek influence when it came to food. The places that we would go to were Alex Pizza, which is the Mantis family; the Colonial Hut, which is the Antonakos family; the Wonderbar, which is the Droggitis family; the Palace Diner [correction: Puritan Restaurant] which is the Mouzas family. A lot of the most popular restaurants in Biddeford at that time were of Greek heritage.

TG: That's true. What about outside play? Did you hang around Mayfield, Rotary Park or any of those places?

LL: Yes. You did not play indoors unless it was inclement weather. When we lived up on Alfred Road, which is between Five Points and May Street, I used to spend all day at Mayfield. You would basically go in the morning, come home at lunch, go in the afternoon and then you might go in the evening. I did go away to summer camp during the month of July. That was pretty much June and August that I would be at Mayfield.

TG: Where did you go to summer camp?

LL: I did summer camp at the Maine State YMCA camp in Winthrop on Lake Cobbosseecontee. I had the unique experience of going after my 4th and 5th grade summer. It was an all-boys camp. The following 3 years, it had gone coed. So, I went to a boy's camp for 2 years and then the camp was coed for 3 of the years. Later on, I served on the Board of Directors. I'm still pretty active in volunteering at that camp. It's only about 4-5 miles from my home.

TG: Was that a positive experience for you as a kid?

LL: It was a wonderful experience. My sisters grew up going to Camp Laughing Loon, which is on Little Ossipee in East Waterboro. At that time, it was an overnight camp. Now it's a day camp run by the YWCA.

TC: Before we went online, we were talking about the City Theater downtown. Was that still a movie theater when you were growing up? Was it still operating as Central Theater?

LL: I remember going once with my father, not to see a movie but probably to talk to Mr. Murphy who was the manager of the theater. I don't recall ever watching a movie at that time.

For years, it was closed. It wasn't until later on that they did some renovations of it, and it became more active as a theater.

TC: What about the Central Theater? Do you recall that at all?

LL: Yes. What is now the police station? We used to go to the Central Theater or the Mutual Theater over in Saco. These are one screen theaters. If a movie was around for 3 weeks, you didn't get a choice. You had to see the same movie twice (laughter). You couldn't go to a different screen and see something else. Yes, I remember going there and seeing Dr. Doolittle. I remember in 1st grade I had a broken leg. I had to sit on the aisle so I could stick my foot out because I was in a huge cast (laughter).

TG: It doesn't sound like you had big family activities with aunts, uncles on either side of the family or anything of that nature?

LL: On my father's side it was strictly his mother and my aunt Betty. We would get together occasionally for family events. My grandmother liked to go to Kennebunk Beach and my aunt who lived in Kennebunk would go to Kennebunk Beach for the day also. We would tend to go to Kennebunk Beach to spend the day.

On my mother's side, she is from Pennsylvania. Her closest sibling is in North Dartmouth Massachusetts. The other ones were in Connecticut and Pennsylvania, so we didn't see them as often. So, we didn't have big family get togethers. Later on, we did when people started to get married. We'd be invited to weddings.

TG: Do you know at all about the LaFountain heritage? Is that from Canada or abroad, where your ancestors came from?

LL: My last name is LaFountain, which is a French name. But through Ancestry.com and my own research, I have very little French heritage. My great grandfather LaFountain married a woman named Lillian McCarn. She was born on Prince Edward Island. I think she is of Scottish descent. I don't really know much about the LaFountain name and where they came from. I know at one point they were in Bakersfield, Vermont, probably coming from Canada. But I don't know other than that. I do know from Ancestry.com that I'm 45% Irish, 30% English and northwestern European which would be Belgium and France. Then I have about 18% Scottish. I

really consider myself to be ¾ Irish, I'm a descendant of a LaFountain Doyle, which is Irish; a Hughes, which is Irish; and a Fyan which is Irish.

TG: Your family belonged to St. Mary's parish?

LL: Yes.

TG: Were your parents active in the parish?

LL: They were active. I think my mother belonged to the Sodality Club which was a group of women who did charitable fundraising for the church and for outside causes. My father may have served on the Parish Council at one time or another.

TG: Were you active at all?

LL: I was active as an altar boy. I served as an altar boy when I was younger. The large group of altar boys came from St. Mary's School. The rest of us came from public school. The one thing I resented during school vacation week; it was always the public-school kids who had to serve the daily mass because the St. Mary's School kids did it throughout the rest of the year. They'd go to mass and then go to school. During our vacation week, we'd have to go and do it.

That was a wonderful experience. My earliest memory is of Father Enright, Father Maurice Goen and Father James Martel. I used to love serving under Father Goen because he would always, before or after mass, he would tell the 2 altar boys stories. Usually, they were of a biblical nature, but they were always very interesting. He was an older man. He was just fascinating to serve under.

TG: He was a very bright man and had been a star athlete at Cheverus High School.

LL: I always remember, though I can't recall the name of the prayer after the "Holy, holy, holy" and you kneel, he'd always go "Prayer #1". That's the one that mentions Ignatius, Linus and the list of all these saints that are very obscure to people.

TG: I don't either and I was an altar boy. When I was an altar boy, everything was in Latin. You still would pronounce those names, but I can't remember the name of the prayer.

LL: I served mostly with Harry Center. Harry is now a local attorney in Biddeford. We were paired up a lot for serving at masses. I think your own brother, Patrick, may have been an altar boy.

TG: I don't know if he was or not. I was. My older brother wasn't but he grew up and became a priest. That's ironic. (laughter). I can't remember if Patrick was an altar boy or not.

LL: It was sad to see St. Mary's close.

TG: Very much so. I was going to ask you about that. As they closed and formed one school, what were your thoughts about that?

LL: It was sad to see. All of the schools were hemorrhaging when it came to 7th and 8th grade, in particular, St. Mary's. I think they did away with their 8th grade. Then they did away with their 7th grade. Finally, they made the decision along with the other 2 schools, St. Joseph's and St. Andre's, to merge and create St. James. The public schools had better facilities and offered more programming. It was a sad outcome but probably for the best that the 3 merge together.

TG: When you were in grammar school, did you have to go to religious classes once a week at St. Mary's?

LL: Yes. It used to be Saturday morning. Then it changed and you could either choose the Saturday session or the Monday afternoon. I think we went to the Monday afternoon session. We probably did that through Confirmation. When I was growing up, you didn't make your Confirmation until the 6th grade.

TG: We did it much earlier. Did you resent that, having to go to those classes?

LL: No, I didn't. I always had good instructors. It was a good experience.

TG: I know you were too young to remember the closing of St. Louis, but did your dad or people you know talk about that?

LL: I remember the closing of St. Louis. I remember living on Union Street and on Friday nights, the St. Louis band would march by Graham and Union on their way up to the athletic field for a football game. We used to be out on the corner watching St. Louis. My sister would

have been impacted by the closure of St. Louis. She entered her freshman year the year the St. Louis kids came over, so she was part of the double sessions. Being a freshman, she went to school in the afternoon. I remember that. For 2 years she went to school in the afternoon and by her junior year, she could go full day because the addition had been built on to Biddeford High School.

TG: What were your general impressions of Biddeford as a community as you were growing up? And I'll lead up to a follow-up question and what are they now? How did you see Biddeford then through the eyes of a youngster, a young man compared to what you see going on now?

LL: Growing up you think your world, you don't really see what goes on beyond the borders. I think it was a very good place to grow up. Biddeford has a lot of attributes that make it a great place to live. One thing that Biddeford has historically done is maintained its public park system. You had Mayfield. Later on, you had the city dump. I don't know what we called it then, but it became Rotary Park later on. Then the stretch of land between South Street and Main Street, which is now Doran Field. That was just a big mud pit and I think they put trash there also. They developed that land to use for recreational purposes. Clifford Park is a wonderful place. When I was in the 7th and 8th grade, I ran cross country for Biddeford Junior High School. Those were our training grounds. Then you have the beaches at Biddeford Pool: Middle Beach and Fortunes Rocks. When I was growing up, and I thought about this last night because my wife asked me, "Did you go to the beach in Biddeford often?" I said, "No. We tended to go to Kennebunk, or we would go to Old Orchard. This is with my mother and/or father. We never went to the bath house. She said, "Why?" I said, "The bath house didn't exist. It was a private beach club, so we did not go down there at all." I just remember this long, white building that was sort of individual bath house units. You just didn't go down there. The city probably, one of their wisest moves, is they exercised their right of eminent domain and took that for public purposes. They created a public beach.

TG: That was under Mayor Boucher, wasn't it?

LL: That was Mayor Boucher.

TG: Many people didn't think they would be successful with that, but they were.

LL: A municipality is, for the most part, always successful with eminent domain. It just becomes a question of the purchase price. If the city wants to take the property by eminent domain, they are taking it. They then may get sued because the price they offer for the land is substantially less than what it's worth. That probably did go to a lawsuit, I would imagine. But they got it which is great. It's a great opportunity for people from Biddeford to be able to use that section of the beach because parking is at a premium at Middle Beach and Fortunes Rocks.

TG: What about the incinerator, when that came in? What were your thoughts about that?

LL: I don't remember thinking much about it when it came in. I was probably away. I may have been in college. I don't think it was around when I was in high school. Certainly, it was a deterrent to downtown. We had our law practice on Main Street. There were days that you'd come out of work, and you could actually smell it. It wasn't a very attractive thing to have located in your downtown. I know it was probably a cost-effective way to get rid of your trash but having it where it's located really impacted the way Biddeford could develop as a city going forward. Obviously, you've seen MERC is gone. The smokestack is still there but it's used only for the purpose of electronic communication, like a cell tower. We've seen what has happened with the mill development and the businesses thriving on Main Street. That really was a roadblock to the city moving forward.

TG: I know you don't live locally anymore but about Biddeford now? What are your impressions, especially with the downtown?

LL: It has certainly improved. You have very few vacant store fronts. It's getting to be known as a food city. I have a son who lives here who is actually on the Biddeford City Council now. We'll come down on occasion for dinner. We tend not to go to the same place twice because you don't have to. You can always experience something new in downtown Biddeford.

What concerns me about Biddeford right now is the cost of affordable housing. To buy a home is really expensive. If you didn't get in before COVID, it's hard to buy something now, especially with the prices and now the interest rates. Likewise, I see the apartment rentals are going up in price too.

TG: When you left Biddeford High School, you chose to go to Holy Cross. How did you go about making that decision, where you would do your post high school education?

LL: I had an uncle who went to Holy Cross. Whenever traveling south, if we were going to visit relatives or go on a family trip, you go right by Holy Cross on highway 290 which goes through the city of Worcester. You look to your left and the school is up on the hill. The football stadium is on your left, right there near the highway. I was always sort of amazed by it. I fell in love with it when I went for a tour during the fall of my senior year of high school.

TG: That was a positive experience?

LL: Yes. Very. I enjoyed myself very much.

TG: When you left school, did you come right back to Biddeford?

LL: No. I ended up going to Boston and Suffolk University Law School in downtown Boston. At the time, it was behind the State House. Now, it's moved across Tremont Street on the other side of the State House. I didn't come back to Maine until 1987, when I left law school.

TG: Did you go into practice with your dad right away?

LL: I went into practice with my dad in 1988. I practiced with him through 2005, when I left the practice of law to take a position in State government.

TG: Was that a hard decision?

LL: Not really. My father was semi-retired at that time. I was looking for a different challenge. I ended up going to lead an agency, it's known as the Maine Bureau of Financial Institutions. I regulate state banks and state-chartered credit unions. When I was in the legislature, I was the chairperson of a committee that oversaw the Bureau of Financial Institutions. So, I had some working knowledge of what they did, what their mission was and how they operated. It was sort of a natural fit after I left State government as a legislator to take on that role as Superintendent.

TG: How was the experience working with your dad for that long?

LL: I think it's like being in any family business. What they say has its moments. It had its moments. Overall, it was a very good experience. My father was a well-respected attorney. He

had a good client base. He had a wide range of types of cases. It was a good experience working with him. We sort of each did our own thing. Overall, it went pretty well.

TG: Was your practice on Main Street?

LL: When I started with my dad, it was across the street from the MacArthur Library. Here I'm dating myself, it was up above Jonesy's Restaurant, which is no longer there. Then we moved across the street and down a little bit to an office on the second floor, and I'm dating myself, from Youland's, which is no longer there. Then we moved later on to Elm Street on the second floor of a building where Dr. Mark Malon had his chiropractor's office. This is just beyond where Dairy Joy is now.

TG: What was your most challenging experience as a lawyer in a family practice with your dad?

LL: Types of cases you mean?

TG: Just an experience that you found challenging?

LL: Practicing criminal law, I really resented the fact that I would worry about my client more than they would worry about themselves. That was extremely frustrating. For instance, if I was given an offer by a DA (district attorney) that included some sort of jail time, I would hem and haw. I wouldn't really want to convey this to the client. This is the best that is being offered to us unless we go to trial. I would lose sleep over it. Then you'd express the offer to your client and their reaction would be, "Oh, OK. That's fine. I thought I'd have to do more time. I'm thinking, "Why was I so worried about it when you weren't worried about it at all?" That, I really resented.

TG: One thing I haven't asked yet but wanted to ask you is about summer jobs. I know you had a really interesting one, but I'll let you identify that.

LL: I don't know what the interesting one was but the first summer job I had was after my freshman year in high school, I worked at Bill's Pizza in Old Orchard. I worked the day shift, which meant I'd show up at 10:30 to fire up the pizza ovens. We'd take the boards off at 11 and open up. My day probably wrapped up around 4 or 5 o'clock. I would ride the shuttle bus from

the Five Points area down to Old Orchard every day. The shuttle bus operated during the daytime hours.

The next summer, I continued to work at Bill's Pizza but worked evenings from 5 until close. Close is usually 15 minutes after 1am. You stayed open until after 1 as the bars let out at 1 o'clock. People would flock to get their slice of pizza before they drove home. That was a totally different experience than working the day shift.

I grew up going to Old Orchard Beach with my family. We'd go to the beach. We'd go downtown twice a summer for the evening to go on the rides, get a slice of Bill's Pizza or Kay's fried dough. We'd walk on the Pier and get Pier French fries. Then, we'd be home by 9 o'clock at night.

I found that Old Orchard, after 9 o'clock, the families disappear, and it becomes a totally different element. Sometimes, it could get very rowdy, especially at 1 in the morning when the bars let out. It was a unique experience. That second summer, I worked with Ann Cosgrove, whose uncle actually owned Bill's Pizza. It was fun working with her. As I said, it was a totally different experience than my first year.

The next year, between junior and senior year in high school, I didn't want to work late at night, so I got a job working at Burger King in Saco. That actually was a great experience too. I didn't get a lot of hours, but it was a great experience because everyone who worked there, for the most part, was either a Biddeford High School, Thornton Academy or Old Orchard Beach High School student. I got to know a lot of kids who lived in the area. Some of them I still see to this day, and we have a conversation about our time working at BK back in 1979.

After I graduated from high school, I graduated on a Sunday. The following day I had to report at 6am at the Maine Turnpike, where I worked for 7 summers as a toll collector. I started out for Wells for a summer, I did 2 summers in Saco, 3 summers in York and my final summer in Biddeford.

TG: That's the one I thought was an interesting job. You must have some incidents that stick out in your mind.

LL: Oh yeah. It was a very interesting experience. I really enjoyed it. One of the best things about working for the turnpike is on holidays (you have 2 holidays during the course of the summer: July 4th and Labor Day) it pays triple time. When I was in college, I would leave for college in late August, but I would come home to work Labor Day weekend. Just working that one day, Labor Day, it would pay for my books for the entire semester.

You meet a lot of interesting people traveling on the highway: people who forget their wallets; people who are half naked; people who lose their tickets. Now I'm dating myself again. The Maine Turnpike was a ticket system. When you got on, you picked up a ticket from a person. It didn't dispense out like a parking garage will where you press a button, and it comes out. It was a live being handed you a ticket and you were expected to maintain that ticket until you went to get off. In the course of traveling 20 miles, they lose the ticket. Then you have to charge them the full fare, which was York to Augusta, due to a lost ticket.

TG: What did you do with somebody that didn't have any money?

LL: You'd have to tell them to pull to the side. They would have to come back to you with their license. They'd have to fill out a form. I think we gave them an envelope and said, "Please submit 60 cents or whatever it might be in this envelope." Now, whether or not the Turnpike ever collected it, I have no idea.

TG: That must have been a very busy job at the York Plaza. You are dealing with every car that comes through vs the way it is today.

LL: The lines could get backed up on a Sunday afternoon, when the people are leaving the coastline or mountain regions of Maine heading south to New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Jersey, New York. The traffic would get backed up on a Sunday for several miles. What would be a real glitch, when traffic was backed up, was when we had a certain individual who would be traveling south from the Wells exit to go through the toll booth and you had to hold your traffic because George Bush, who was the Vice President, his motorcade was coming through. You'd have a couple miles of traffic backed up and then you'd have to hold for 5 minutes before he came and 5 minutes after he left so that cars aren't chasing his motorcade. One time I held a guy at the toll plaza. I said, "Sir, you'll have to wait a couple of minutes. I

can't let you through." Then, the motorcade sped through to the driver's right. He looked at me and said, "What was that?" I said, "That was the Vice President." He said, "Of what?" OK (Laughter). That was sort of a unique comment.

Then people would think it was really funny to give you 60 pennies for their 60-cent fare. Or they would give you hot money that was sitting on their dashboard in a little dish so that when they would hand it to you it would be really hot. There was a way to get back at them because you would say, "Sir, I have to count out every penny." and they would have to wait. (laughter) It didn't happen often but on occasion.

TG: Let's go to your family now. How did you meet your wife?

LL: My wife is Trisha Hitz, now Trisha Hitz LaFountain. She is from Lincoln, Nebraska. I met her because. Well, I'll tell you how I met her in a minute, but I'll tell you what brought her initially to Maine. She had a roommate in Lincoln, when she was in college, who had a cousin who ran a restaurant business in Ogunquit, the Perkins Cove area. The roommate was supposed to come to Maine to waitress. Her roommate decided, "I don't really want to go." My wife Trisha said, "I'll go." So, she came to Maine for a summer and worked for this family. She came out the following year to work for them. She eventually stayed and started to go to USM. She transferred from the University of Nebraska. She was here in Maine. She then went to work for the District Attorney's office. She was a Victim Witness Advocate. I met her in court. I was representing a man who was accused of assaulting his ex-wife. She was assisting the ex-wife.

TG: This sounds like a TV show.

LL: Yeah. I like to say, it's kind of crude, but domestic violence brought us together. It was someone else's domestic violence. It wasn't ours. That's how we met. I was representing the defendant and she was assisting the alleged victim of the crime. That case dragged on for weeks. There were several appearances in court, but it got delayed for some reason or another. We'd have numerous conversations with each other.

TG: How long before you started dating?

LL: She left. We never dated when she was in Maine. She left to go to England to get her Caster's in criminology. That would have been in the fall of 1992. She went to get her master's.

I had never done the backpacking thing through Europe. I had a lot of college or law school classmates who when they graduated, went off to Europe for 3 weeks and backpacked. I didn't do that. I always graduated and went to work. As I told you, in high school, the day after I graduated, I was on the Turnpike, working. I decided when I was 31 years old that now was the time for me to do it. I'm going to go to England and backpack. It was 21 days. I knew she was there. I started to write to her and said, "I'm planning on being in England. Do you want to travel with me for a couple of days?" Well, a couple of days turned into, of the 21 days, I think we traveled for 18 of them. We started in England. We took the train from London to Portsmouth. We took a ferry from Portsmouth to Cherbourg, France. We spent time around Normandy. We took a train to London. We took a train to Berlin. We took a train back to Luxembourg City. We took a train to Brussels and Amsterdam. We drove the entire country of the Netherlands, of Holland. Then she flew back to England to continue her masters and I flew back to Maine. When she moved back to Maine, a couple of months later, we were engaged by Thanksgiving.

TG: You are still in practice with your father at this time?

LL: Yes. I had cleared my schedule so I had no court cases so I could go off. My wife and I talk about how we never actually had a date (laughter). We just sort of started traveling together and that was it. We got engaged on Thanksgiving 1993. So, it would have been 1992 when I went to Europe. We got married in 1994.

TG: At St. Brendan's of Biddeford Pool?

LL: Yes.

TG: Why there vs Lincoln, Nebraska?

LL: Because she really liked the area here. She wanted to show Maine off to her family. St. Brendan's because it was the summer chapel to St. Mary's which is the parish I belong to. She was perfectly fine with having the ceremony here in Maine. Her family did come out for it.

TG: Do you guys go back to Lincoln much?

LL: Yes. When our children were young, we would go out a couple of times, probably twice a year: summertime and then either Thanksgiving or Christmas. What's interesting about Nebraska is their weather. If it's hot here, it's hotter there. If it's cold here, it's colder there. Later on, we stopped going over the holidays during Thanksgiving and Christmas. It was just too cold. The children were getting a little older and so it would be summertime when we would go. I'll go once a year and my wife will go out maybe 3 times a year now. Her father has passed away. She goes out to visit with her mother. Yes, we've spent a lot of time out there. I joke with people and say, "Most people from Maine go to Florida on vacation. We go to Lincoln, Nebraska." (laughter)

TG: I'm going to come back to your family, but I don't think I ever asked you if your parents got married in Pennsylvania or in Biddeford.

LL: My parents got married in Monongahela, Pennsylvania. Their wedding reception was at the William Penn, which was at the time and still is the swanky hotel in downtown Pittsburg. I went to a conference several years ago at the William Penn. My conference was actually held in the ballroom where my parents had their wedding reception. It was very neat.

TG: Is your wife working now?

LL: Yes. My wife works as a tutor for a student who is medically fragile, with special needs. She is also presently working as a substitute teacher in 2 school systems in our area.

TG: Tell me about your children.

LL: We have 3 children. They are all close in age. They are all at this point in time, one year apart. Their ages are 26, 25 and 24. For 6 months out of the year, they are one year apart and then the birthdays start happening, so it's a little different there. The 26-year-old is a transitional kindergarten teacher in Los Angeles. That is our daughter, Margaret Kathyrn. Our son, Liam, is 25. He is a financial analyst for the Healthcare Purchaser Alliance of Maine, which is a non-profit. He lives in Biddeford. He is married to Eisha Khan. Our youngest daughter is 24. That is Eleanor. She is an Executive Recruiter in Philadelphia.

TG: How did your oldest daughter end up in Los Angeles?

LL: She did her undergraduate at Santa Clara University which is a Jesuit school just south of San Francisco in the town of Santa Clara. After that, she did a 2-year stint with Teach for America. She was assigned to teach at a charter school in Los Angeles. Now, she has done her commitment with Teach for America, and she is teaching at a public school in Los Angeles. She was out there for 4 years of college and decided to stay.

Likewise, our youngest was at Ursinus College, just outside of Philadelphia. She decided to stay in the Philadelphia area. Our son graduated from Gonzaga, which is in Spokane Washington. But he decided to come back to Maine.

All 3 children went to high school at Cheverus High School, which is a Jesuit school. Two of them went on to Jesuit universities for their college education.

TG: I had a related question that has gone out of my mind. [55:00]. Why don't we move on to your political career. You've been on the Biddeford School Board. You've been a State Senator and State Representative. If you can frame it in terms of how Biddeford influenced you in that capacity and maybe how decisions you had to make influenced Biddeford.

LL: Sure. I started my political career running for the Biddeford School Board. It was probably 1991-1992 or 1992-1993. I did one term. I started out as a member of the school board. Then, due to a resignation by a vice chairperson, I became the vice chairperson of the school board. That was a good experience. We weren't having major funding problems, which was good. We had a very solid team of administrators. We had a pretty core group of school board members. At that time, there were no building concerns. The new middle school hadn't been built yet. The current elementary school was the new middle school. We weren't looking to build anything at that time. Overall, I don't remember any issues being very controversial. The only one was this thing called Whittle Communications that wanted to provide the school system with a bunch of technology such as TVs, cameras and so forth to put in the classrooms. The only catch was that every day you had to show the Whittle Communications news program. It was probably a 10- or 15-minute news program, but it was full of advertising. We thought, "Is that really a good trade off to have to subject kids to watching commercials just to get all of this free equipment." We didn't see it as a benefit for the students. We sort of shot the administration on that which was pushing for us to bring all of this equipment in. We just thought it was a cost we didn't want to

pay. It really wasn't worth it. We didn't think the news program was that beneficial to students and certainly the commercials weren't. So that was probably the most controversial thing.

Then I ran for the House of Representatives. At that time, it was District 19 which was the western part of Biddeford. Everything pretty much westerly of Elm Street going out to Main Street and South Street. Up at Five Points it would then also deviate and go down part of West Street. It was a big chunk of the city that I represented. I had a five way Democratic primary. I was the highest vote getter. I fortunately had no Republican opposition. When I won the primary, I essentially was going to be the next State Rep from Biddeford. The only controversial thing that took place during my tenure in the House, which I was one term in the House, was the bill that was introduced to allow Biddeford Pool to secede from the city of Biddeford. I was pretty active in the fight against that bill. I was seeking to defeat the bill. The bill was defeated there. Again, we saw it 2 years later. It was defeated again. I didn't think it was right that this part of the city would be separated out, creating its own town.

TG: I don't remember that. It was probably when I was away. Why did they want to secede?

LL: You'd have to ask people who lived there at the time, but I think their biggest concern was that they didn't feel this city was devoting enough attention to what their needs were as far as maintaining roads and other public services. That was sort of the big reason, I think.

I was in the House for one term and then I got to the Senate, and I can't remember the order of it but the US Senator at the time, Senator Mitchell, resigned. He resigned or wasn't seeking reelection. I can't remember which one. It created the domino effect of people seeking to move up to higher office. That opened up the House seat. So, I ran for it. Two years later, it was either Senator Cohen or Senator Mitchell, I can't remember which one. They left. It caused a domino effect. Our State Senator at the time, John Hathaway, decided to run for the US Senate. This opened up the Senate seat. In the Senate I represented Biddeford, Arundel, Kennebunk and Kennebunkport. I was fortunate to get elected 4 times. It was only 4 times because we have term limits in Maine. I was not able to run for a 5th term. In my opinion, that was a good thing. I had other concerns. I had a family and the legislature doesn't pay a lot of money. It does impact your law practice as far as your ability to manage it. It was probably a good thing that I termed out and couldn't run for reelection.

TG: Were you involved in legislation that directly influenced Biddeford or that conflicted with other parts that you were representing?

LL: There was never anything that pitted Biddeford like against Kennebunk or anything of that nature. You had, obviously, the secession bills. Fortunes Rocks folks introduced a bill that was called annexation. They wanted to be annexed to Kennebunkport. They didn't want to secede and be their own community, they just wanted to be annexed and become part of Kennebunkport. That was another one. Most of the bills I tended to involve myself with were ones that actually appeared before the committee I was on. At that time, it was called Banking and Insurance. There were a lot of healthcare related bills that came before my committee.

One unique bill that I remember sponsoring for a particular person was a woman from Biddeford who came to see me. I did not know this history, whatsoever. She said, "I want to have a special license plate of POW." We all know POW license plates went to POWs from the world wars, Korea or Vietnam. She said, "I don't qualify for one under current law." She told me her story. Her story was basically this. She as a young child was living in the Philippines with her family. She was born and raised in Biddeford, for the early part of her life. Her father was from Biddeford. The father was employed by West Point Pepperell or West Point Stevens or one of those mill manufacturers. He was stationed in the Philippines. He was probably a buyer for a raw product that was used to make what they would make in the Biddeford mills. She is living there during the early stages of World War II when Japan invaded the Philippines. Her entire family was put into an internment camp. Sort of the same thing the US government did to people of Japanese descent on the west coast during World War II. Her family was put in an internment camp. At that time and later on in life, she suffered a lot of health consequences as a result. She had scurvy-type things, lack of vitamins for not getting the proper nutrition. She said, "I essentially was a prisoner of war. I was a civilian, I wasn't a member of the armed forces. But the current way the law is drafted, I don't qualify." So, I introduced a bill to change the definition of who could qualify for a POW license plate. She came and testified at the hearing as did another guy. They had documentation to verify that they were interned in the Philippines during World War II. The legislature passed the bill. So, she did qualify for her POW license plate, which was really important to her. She felt that she had lived that experience

and should be able to get this recognition. It was a very moving story. I had never heard of it before.

TG: Was your father ever politically active?

LL: Yes. My father was Judge of Probate for York County. He was also US Attorney for the State of Maine. It was called the District of Maine. That's not an elected position. That's an appointment by the President. At that time, President Johnson appointed him to serve as the US Attorney for the District of Maine. Once Johnson didn't run for reelection and Nixon was elected, the expression is "To the victor go the spoils." President Nixon replaced my father with a Republican, who actually served before my father did, under the Eisenhower administration.

TG: When you were on the school board, had the high school population started to decline yet? You were in a big class, if I remember correctly.

LL: I was in a class of just over 300. I think the population of the high school was 1200. I don't remember it either increasing or decreasing at that time. It was a fairly steady 1200.

TG: Today it's around 60 percent of it.

LL: It's probably somewhere in the 800s now.

It's interesting, when you look at Biddeford, the mills are being developed into apartments, but I don't know if it's actually bringing in a lot of kids. A lot of housing developments were built when I was growing up. The street behind the Mayfield, Evanthia Drive and Cathedral Oaks were big subdivisions that all had 20-30 homes which brought in families with 2 or 3 kids. You haven't seen those large-scale developments since.

TG: Families aren't as big when we grew up either. That would be another factor, I would think.

LL: I was thinking about that the other day. At St. Mary's alone, you had some families that had 7, 8, 9 kids growing up. I was thinking of Dr. Houle and his children. I'm thinking of Dr. Robert and his children. There was one other that I thought about.

TG: The Minutti family.

LL: The Minutti family was quite large, yes. You don't see those large families anymore. Those were just St. Mary's folks. I'm sure you could say the same of St. Joseph's and St. Andre's families.

TG: It's different times. Normally we ask folks if they remember certain world or national events. But some of the events we ask about, you weren't even born or would not remember. Would you in the Biddeford area during 9/11?

LL: Yes. Small world. I'll give you the name afterwards. I dropped off (2001, so that would have been Eleanor), at pre-school in Old Orchard. I remember driving home. That would have been around 9 in the morning. I remember looking up at the sky and saying "Wow, what a beautiful day." There wasn't a cloud in the sky. I went to my office and my first client came in around 10 o'clock. I'll tell you who it is afterwards, after the recording. She said, "Did you hear what happened?" I said, "No." She told me what had happened, the events at the World Trade Center. I was in my law practice, and it was a client that informed me about what had just occurred. As soon as she left, I turned the TV on at the office to get coverage on it. So, I was in Biddeford at the time.

The other event I remember is when I was in law school, probably in my second year. It was the month of January, and we took our semester exams in January and May. I came out of my exam and the first thing I heard was the space shuttle blowing up. I remember that.

TG: 1986?

LL: Yeah.

Now, the Kennedy death I don't remember. I would have been under the age of 2.

TG: Did your parents talk about that, the Kennedy assassination?

LL: I do know that my father had played a pickup football game with Kennedy, prior to his becoming President, at one time when they were down in the Washington area. My father went to Georgetown undergrad and Georgetown Law School. Somewhere along the way he was involved in some sort of pickup football game with Kennedy. I don't have many more details from that.

TG: That's interesting.

What has being from Biddeford meant to you?

LL: It's a place where I grew up, have roots and I think it was a fine place to live. The only reason I don't live here now is because of my work. For years I traveled 75 miles each way to and from work in the Augusta area. Finally, we got to a point where our children had grown. They were out of the house and the house was too big. We decided to move north, and we live just outside of Augusta.

I think it was a great place to live. It was a very safe place. You played outside. You rode your bike everywhere. I went to school with a great group of people. What's interesting is I look at my core group of friends and it's my high school friends. It's not my college friends. One of those reasons why is for me, at Holy Cross, a lot of my classmates left to go to Boston, Washington, New York City, Chicago. No one came back to Maine. I was the only one. I didn't have that group of friends that were close to me. But a lot of my high school friends at one point left after college but a lot of them filtered back in their mid to late 40s, back to the Biddeford area. Most of them are now back here.

It's a great place to live. We have the beach. We are 90 minutes from Boston. We are an hour and a half from the ski slopes of North Conway and the White Mountains. The proximity to everything you want to do is great. I think people who are here in the Biddeford area and the group that I grew up with, all have really good core values and they made it a wonderful place to live.

TG: Are there any stories that we haven't talked about that stick with you from growing up in Biddeford?

LL: You might need to be more specific on that one.

TG: High school stories? Junior high stories? Things that happened at the Mayfield or skating?

LL: Well, I actually met your sister at Mayfield when I was in 3rd grade. Your sister went to school at St. Mary's. I went to school at that time, at Kennedy School. In the evening, I'd go to the Mayfield. I met your sister with one of her friends. I don't recall having any meetings again

until we hit high school. It was like we knew each other from our childhood and so we just kind of hit it off. She's been a lifelong friend.

TG: The Mayfield was like that. (laughter) You met kids from all over.

LL: Yeah. That was a good experience. What was the question again? (laughter)

TG: Are there any interesting stories like you had a couple of good Turnpike ones, things that stick out with you.

LL: I'm sure I'll think of things

TG: Maybe from downtown Biddeford or high school days, which is usually when most of these things kind of happen. Did they still have dances?

LL: Yeah, they had dances in high school. You probably had 7 or 8 a year. I do remember the junior high dances. We'd have a couple of those per year. After the dance, the parents didn't pick you up at the dance. The parents picked you up at Alex Pizza. Everyone would migrate from the dance down to Alex Pizza to get a pizza. How much do you think a pizza cost in 1975 & 1976?

TG: Uhhh, $1.50?

LL: 90 cents. If you wanted something on it, it was $1.10. That's outrageous. (laughter). It cost 90 cents for a pizza. We all know that Alex Pizza is not your traditional pizza. It's a lot smaller. But 90 cents. And I think a drink cost 25 cents. Later on, when I worked at Bill's Pizza, my first year, a slice would cost you 60 cents. The second year it went up and I thought it was outrageous. It went up to 65 cents. They raised it 5 cents! That was one of my memories, is we would all walk down, have your pizza and then your parents would start picking you.

TG: You said Saturday night dances, they didn't have them at St. John's Hall anymore? By then, they had stopped? You know where St. John's Hall is? Over above where Doiron's Drug Store was [Note: Corner of Elm and Main Street]?

LL: No.

TG: Did you know the Bergeron family? He managed the Central Theater. He and his wife ran dances there and down in Old Orchard during the summer.

LL: This is above Doiron's Pharmacy? I've never been upstairs in that building but I've told my son. He'll point out some of the buildings in Biddeford. From what I understand, a lot of these buildings upstairs have these large rooms with either stages or they were social halls. I do remember as a child on Union Street, our babysitters were 2 of the Dumont sisters. You might have gone to school with one of the Dumonts.

TG: It's not ringing a bell with me.

LL: They lived on Graham Street. Did the girls go to St. Louis or was it called St. Joseph's School?

TG: It was St. Joseph's until I think 1967 and it was then formally St. Louis Regional High School.

LL: They went to school at one or the other one. I remember we would go down to the Parish Hall for St. Joseph's which is just called the Parish Hall?

TG: Now it belongs to St. James School.

LL: We would go there in the springtime. We would watch all the students get driven up and get out of their cars to go into prom. It was like going to a red-carpet event. You would all stand outside and there was applause for people. I was watching our babysitters go in to their prom.

TG: They recruited juniors to park the cars by the high school and they would bring the keys back.

LL: One of the babysitters was Germaine Dumont. I can't remember her sister's first name. We went to watch them go in for their senior prom.

Did you have yours there?

TG: Yeah.

LL: Was your family out there applauding?

TG: The class of 1968, It (the school) closed 2 years afterwards.

LL: Were your mom and dad there to applaud as you arrived?

TG: I don't think so. We did pictures at the house. There were always a lot of people who lived around there that would be there when it was happening.

LL: It was a Hollywood event. I have that memory of my childhood.

TG: That hall, when St. Louis was open, the Student Council sponsored Saturday night dances. The Bergerons put one on at St. John's. So, there were 2 dance halls for Biddeford High School kids in the 1950s and 1960s.

LL: St. John's was not an active place when I was in high school.

TG: Who in Biddeford influenced you? Who were some positive influences on you, growing up in Biddeford?

LL: I would say my grandmother, number 1, as I told you about her past. She was sort of a pioneer when it came to getting her post high school education, her dental practice. Then, for some unknown reason, when she was in her late 50s or early 60s, she decided while maintaining her dental practice that she would build a motel in Scarborough, at Pine Point. She built this 7- or 8-unit long building. There were motel rooms and 4 or 5 small cottages. She would run a motel while maintaining her dental practice, which was kind of unique. The family sort of resented it because, like today, it's really hard to get help. On any Saturday when a housekeeper would call in sick, my grandmother would pick up the phone and call my mother and her own daughter, my aunt Betty, to come down and "Can you help clean?" So, I think no one in the family was interested in buying it when my grandmother decided to sell it. They knew how labor intensive it can be and it's the type of business where you need to be there. You just don't lock the door on Friday night and you're off for the weekend.

TG: Is that building still on that property?

LL: No. It was torn down probably 10 years ago. Now I think there are 5 homes on the property. It was on East Grand Avenue, not the ocean side. Probably about halfway between where Pine

Point starts when you get to where the Clambake is. It was along that stretch, but not on the ocean side.

I'd say my grandmother was a big influence. She told me the value of getting a proper education. She also gave a word of advice, and I never really followed it. My grandmother was from an Irish family. The only way she learned French was to play with kids who were French speaking. There were a lot of kids that were French speaking when she was growing up. She would encourage me. I had a few friends who spoke both French and English when I was really young. She said, "You need to learn French from them because that's where you get to learn it." But I didn't really pick it up through my friends, which is unfortunate.

TG: You said on the form you filled out for us that you understand French a little bit?

LL: I can understand French for the most part if you are talking about something in the present tense and it's going on around us. But if you start talking about your great aunt and what happened in 1924, I'm not going to understand you. If it's in the surroundings, I can sort of get the buzz words. I do remember on my trip to Europe with my now wife, Trisha, I developed a head cold as I left England on the ferry. When I got to Cherbourg, France I went into a pharmacy, and I couldn't think of the word. I said, "Qu'est-ce que c'est le mot pour" (what is the word for) and then pointed to my nose. She said, "Le nez". I thought, "Oh yeah. Alouette." Remember the song, "Alouette. A le nez?" She pointed me to something that would help clean up my sinuses. (laughter)

TG: Any others? teacher? Or anyone from Biddeford who was a major influence on you?

LL: I was thinking of this question before I came here. I had 3 really great teachers. I had several really good teachers, but 3 that really stand out. At the elementary level, in the 5th grade, it would have been Elizabeth Long. Miss Long, I had her for homeroom. She was an English teacher. She also introduced us to the Spanish language. She was a very good teacher.

In junior high, I'd say Nancy Guignard. She was my 7th grade homeroom, English and for one quarter, reading teacher.

In high school, it would be Monsieur Carrier, Joseph Carrier. He was a French teacher who I think probably was at St. Louis and came to Biddeford when the schools merged, but maybe not.

Maybe he was at Biddeford beforehand. He ran a very strict class that really prepared you for college and how you might be treated in college. There was an expectation when an assignment was due, it's due. There is none of this extra time. You didn't have extra credit. It was fairly strict. He also hosted a trip to France for students who were interested. So, I went to France with about 15 of my classmates, who had all taken a couple years of French. What was interesting is, we didn't just get on a plane and go to France and see everything. It was Paris. We had to take extra classes after school to learn about French art, French culture, French food, French music and so forth. He didn't want us to just walk into a museum and say, "Oh. Great painting." He wanted us to be able to look at something and say, "Oh. I know the style that was used by this artist. Who the artist is. What were his influences." It wasn't just a sightseeing tour through the museums of Paris. We actually went in knowing what we were going to be looking at. We could look at it in a critical manner. One thing that he did was good was he taught us the metro system of France, of Paris, before we went. Several of us got lost. When people turned right, we went left and had to find our way back. We were able to read the metro map. This was unique for us because we aren't riding on metros here in York County. (laughter)

TG: Who was the 3rd person?

LL: He was. There was Elizabeth Long, Nancy Guignard and Mr. Carrier.

TG: Yes.

What's it like to be at this phase of your life?

LL: I'm currently the Superintendent of the Bureau of Financial Institutions. I'm going on 18 years now. I got appointed in 2005. They are 5-year terms. I was appointed by Governor Baldacci. In 2010, I was reappointed by him. In 2015, I was reappointed by Governor Lepage. Most recently, I was reappointed by Governor Mills. Retirement might be a few years down the road. My wife and I have talks about that and what our plans might be. But we don't have any definite answers as of yet.

TG: Can you concisely summarize what your job is?

LL: I regulate state-chartered banks and credit unions. It used to be really easy to tell which were state-chartered banks and credit unions because of the name. Most national banks or

federal credit unions have the word national or federal in it. Now they don't. For instance, in the Biddeford Saco area, banks that I would regulate are Biddeford Savings, Saco-Biddeford Savings Institution, Norway Savings and Bangor Savings. Credit unions such as Peoples' Choice and Saco Valley. Those are all state-chartered organizations. I have a staff of about 18 individuals. Ten of them are examiners. They'll go into these institutions once every 18 months or once every 3 years, depending upon the type of institution to examine it for safety and soundness purposes. They will also examine it for compliance with federal and state law. We also assist consumers with problems that might have developed with their institution. We assist them and work with the banks to try to remedy the situation if there truly is one. Oftentimes it may just be the consumer misunderstanding the terms of their product that they are involved in, whether it be a mortgage, a savings account or a CD. We provide assistance and regulate the safety and soundness.

TG: Do you travel much for your job?

LL: I travel primarily for board meetings. We have banks that are headquartered as far south as Kennebunk and Sanford; as far north as Houlton; as far east as Calais and Machias; as far west as Norway and Farmington. So, I do travel throughout the state to attend board meetings. I also attend national conferences for both regulators of credit unions and regulators of banks.

TG: Has your life turned out to be what you thought it would be, back when you were a younger person?

LL: (laughter). Yeah. I always thought I'd be a lawyer. I was probably always asked 2 questions when I was young. Will you have a Lloyd the 4th? The answer is, "No. We did not have a Lloyd the 4th." The other one was, "Are you going to be a lawyer?" I did become a lawyer. I did sort of anticipate that. I never really saw the jump to what I'm doing now. That pretty much came out of the blue as a result of a call from Governor Baldacci's office to say, "Are you interested in seeking this position?" It was a competitive process, but I did express an interest and got it.

TG: Now that you have been away from Biddeford for a while, what is the perception of Biddeford, at least in the circle that you travel in?

LL: I think everyone sees that it really is an up-and-coming place, whether you are still here now. I've only been gone since December of 2019. That's when we sold our house. From people who still live here or who live elsewhere all say it's pretty much up-and-coming. Things are really traveling in the right direction.

TG: Is there something you want to make sure take away from hearing your story?

LL: I think it really doesn't matter where you live. It's what you can give to it and what you can get out of it. The benefit is really active engagement in your community. I think I did that. My wife did it. She was on the board of the MacArthur Library. I think our children did it through some of their volunteer work that they did. That really sort of makes the community. It's interesting with our children, they all went off to Cheverus High School, but their core group of friends, are friends that they went either to St. James or the Biddeford public school system and the middle school. That is the group that they still have the most contact with.

TG: I didn't ask you this but was that a hard decision, to put them in private school vs having them stay in Biddeford and go to public school?

LL: No. I attended Holy Cross, which is a Jesuit institution. The motto of the Jesuits is service for others. Cheverus offered a great experience for the children with various volunteering activities. They do this program during the last 2 months of their senior year where the students actually go out and intern in a non-profit organization. Classes are over pretty much in mid-April. They're then off working in the field in a non-profit, providing service. I thought it was a good decision at the time.

TG: Is there anything that you'd like to share that I didn't ask you?

LL: I'll think of that later when I'm driving home or tonight at 2 o'clock in the morning so I'll make sure to give you a call at that time. (laughter)

TG: We'll add it to the script.

I can't thank you enough for participating in the Voices of Biddeford program.

LL: You're welcome. Stop at 1:29:16