

RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

NEW BRUNSWICK

AN INTERVIEW WITH JOHN T. CAHILL

FOR THE

RUTGERS ORAL HISTORY ARCHIVES

INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY

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JANUARY 7, 2014

TRANSCRIPT BY

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Shaun Illingworth: This begins an interview with Mr. John T. Cahill in Hampton, Alexandria Township, New Jersey, on January 7, 2014, with Shaun Illingworth. Thank you very much for having me here today. To begin, please tell me where and when you were born.

John T. Cahill: I was born on Staten Island, New York, ... on October 31, 1929.

SI: Can you tell me your parents' names, for the record?

JC: My father's name was Thomas Cahill. My mother's name was Gertrude Cahill. He was a stationary engineer, employed by the City of New York at a big water pumping station.

SI: Starting with your father's side of the family, what do you know about your family's background, where the family came from?

JC: Yes, there are, in the local cemetery there, four generations. My father's father came over as an infant in 1845, from Ireland, and he's interred on Staten Island. So, basically, the Cahill side of the family came in 1845 and resided on Staten Island.

SI: What about your mother's side of the family?

JC: My mother's family were English, that her maiden name was Willoe. They came to the United States in the 1870s. I don't know too much about that side of the family, but the Cahill side, I know a lot about.

SI: Do you happen to know, roughly, where in England they came from?

JC: No, I don't, but the Cahills came from Bantry Bay, Ireland, which I have been there and seen the area over there. I had one sister, who's still alive, and she's five years older than I am. ... Growing up on Staten Island, it was a very rural area, because ... there was no connection to New York City at all. The Verrazano Bridge didn't exist and, from Staten Island, to get to New Jersey, where I've resided in New Jersey for forty-eight years now, we had ferry boats, which don't exist anymore. There was a ferry boat from Bayonne to Staten Island, there was a ferry boat from Carteret, New Jersey, to Staten Island, there was a ferry boat from Perth Amboy to Tottenville, Staten Island. So, that was the way people went over to New Jersey. They had these very small [ferries]--and the Bayonne Ferry, of course--they had these very small ferries that commuted across and there was a lot of cross traffic at that time, because ... New Jersey was in close proximity to Staten Island, literally hundreds of yards, compared to the City of New York. ... Growing up as a teenager, I attended a local Catholic grammar school, then, went to public high school and graduated from high school.

SI: Before we discuss your schools, can you tell me a little bit about the neighborhood that you grew up in?

JC: Yes, it was a residential area. All of Staten Island was residential. It was pockets of built-up areas, and then, long areas, miles, of nothing, literally woods, and it was a big farming community. A lot of truck farms, they grew vegetables for New York City and Brooklyn.

SI: If you could describe, roughly, what area of Staten Island this was in, would you say it was in the north, south?

JC: It was West Brighton, they called it, which was basically the center area of the area, and it was a good place to grow up, very quiet. ... Of course, going back to when I was born, there weren't a lot of cars around. I mean, literally, if there was a street with twenty houses on it, if two people, two families, had automobiles, that was a lot. They all depended on buses and some parts of Staten Island had a train that ran across it. ...

SI: Going back to your parents, do you know how they met?

JC: How my parents met? That's a question I can't answer. I cannot answer, but my father was born in 1895. He served in the First World War in France. He was in the military. In fact, he had a very slight disability. He'd been gassed when the war was going on. So, my mother was born in 1905, so, she was--1902, I'm sorry--so, she was six years, seven years younger than my father, but a very stable upbringing, no problems that I could see as a child, growing up.

SI: Did your father ever talk about his time in the service?

JC: Yes, a little bit. ... He was in the field [artillery]. They called it the Coast Artillery, but it was the big guns. They were 105-millimeter guns and he just never talked too much about the war, not at all, just that he'd been over there and, of course, I have his whole discharge papers, with all the different campaigns that they fought in over there. ... That's about it, but, no, he never dwelled on it. He wasn't the type of person that talked a lot about it. ...

SI: Was his job at the pumping station on Staten Island?

JC: It was on Staten Island. It was a huge electrical pumping station, big, big complex, and it was absolutely spotless. They kept it so clean, but what ... it did is, the water that came down from Upstate New York went into a reservoir, then, they energized it and put pressure on it to pump it up and down the hills through Staten Island.

SI: Going back to your neighborhood, would you describe it as a mixed neighborhood or was it mostly Irish or some other ethnicity?

JC: It was basically Irish, I guess, and German. Staten Island, back in '29, in the early '30s, it had no minority neighborhoods. There were very few people of color on Staten Island. There were a group that lived out [at] what they called Sandy Ground and they were actually descendants of slaves that had settled out there in the 1870s [1820s and 1830s], and then, there would be a little section that was an Italian section, but ... that's just the way it was, I mean. ... I

credit that to the isolation of Staten Island, the difficulty of getting ... to it and there were not a lot of manufacturing jobs. So, it was a middle-class, low-density area.

SI: You were born just after the Crash.

JC: I was born the day of the Crash.

SI: Okay.

JC: October 31, 1929, was the day of the Stock Market Crash--just I always remember that, reading that. [Editor's Note: The Stock Market Crash of 1929 refers to a period of extreme market volatility at the end of that October, peaking on "Black Tuesday," October 29th.]

SI: Do you have any recollections about how the Depression may have affected your family? You would have been pretty young, but did you hear any stories within your family? Was your father's employment affected?

JC: No, no. He was always gainfully employed, I mean, ... well, basically, probably, because he was employed by the City of New York. I mean, he was a city employee ... and they had to keep drinking the water, so, he was all right. No, we did not suffer through the Depression at all, I mean. My family seemed to be immune from it, and all my relatives, the uncles, the aunts and everybody else, nobody really had a bad time.

SI: Growing up in that area, there were a lot of other family members around you.

JC: I had uncles, aunts, cousins, a lot of cousins. It was quite an expansive family. There were a lot of them and they were, ... one was a carpenter, the other fellow was an engineer for the railroad, the B&O [Baltimore & Ohio] Railroad, and they were all gainfully employed. ... On my mother's side, I had a couple of uncles that actually worked in Panama, in the marine field down in Panama. ... I only saw them very rarely.

SI: When you were growing up, before you became a teenager, what sort of things did you do for fun?

JC: Oh, typically, there was a little park there and the big thing we did was, we'd play baseball in the summertime. A bunch of us would just get together and play baseball. There were some ponds and lakes nearby, loved to go fishing in there, and that's about it, typical teenager. There wasn't a lot to do. I mean, nobody entertained you and, if you could scrape together eleven cents, you could go to the movies on a Saturday. That was about it. I don't think there was the impetus that families put on what their children are doing today, compared to then. Back then, I equate it to, "Open the door and out you went," and that was it, "Come back for lunch and be home before the supper time." [laughter] Nobody worried where you were or what you were doing or tried to entertain you. You entertained yourself, somehow.

SI: You went to parochial school.

JC: Yes.

SI: Tell me a little bit about your grammar school and what that was like for you.

JC: Oh, it was a good school. I mean, they taught you well. It was the Sisters of Charity. ... There was no nonsense. You went to school and you learned and there was no cutting up in the school. I mean, you just ... went every day and you were dressed every day, with your white shirt and your little knickers, or whatever you were wearing. I mean, you had to dress properly. You figure that was in the early '30s, I mean, it was just, "That's it." They were very strict. ... After that, I went to Curtis High School, which was the big public high school on Staten Island.

SI: Was the Catholic Church a big part of your life growing up?

JC: I would say not a big part of my life. ... Typical, [if] you went to a Catholic grammar school, you became an altar boy. [laughter] Everybody, every boy, in a certain grade, they took turns being altar boys and I did that for a couple of years, but ... I wouldn't say [so], no, I don't think it was a super, super part of my life. My parents were not overly religious. They went to church, but, that was it.

SI: Did your mother ever work outside of the home?

JC: No, never worked, never worked. She had, prior to marrying my father, ... been a telephone operator, because ... a lot of women, that's [what they did]. They had the manual telephones back then. ...

SI: Was your family involved in any community activities?

JC: No.

SI: No Irish-American clubs?

JC: No, nothing like that, whatsoever.

SI: In your household, were any traditions kept up from the "old country," either Ireland or England?

JC: No, none whatsoever, no, none. I wish I could fill you in with some tales, but there are none. [laughter]

SI: When did you enter Curtis High School?

JC: ... It would've been 1943, 1943, yes, 1943, and, of course, the war was going on ... and I was always a big kid. I was always six-foot tall, I guess, from the time I was fourteen. So, I was always employed. I mean, that was the one thing in my personality--I mean, I had many jobs. I

worked in the A&P, I worked for the local newspaper, I worked in a clothing store. When I was fifteen, I went out in the harbor and worked a summer on a big dredge out there, doing a man's work, because there was nobody. Everybody was in the service. So, if you physically could handle the work, you could work. So, as a young teenager, I held numerous jobs.

SI: What was the first job that you had?

JC: Paperboy, and then, I graduated into the mailroom of the *Staten Island Advance*, rolling newspapers up to be mailed, and that was my first job. ...

SI: When you say you were a paperboy, was it home delivery?

JC: Yes, home delivery, on a bicycle, throwing them on people's front porches, just like you'd see in a movie. [laughter]

SI: Going back to the beginning of the war, do you remember where you were when you heard about Pearl Harbor?

JC: Yes. ... My father had a car and it was a Sunday and I went to the movies and the name of the theater was the Empire Theater. It was, really, where you got a bag of popcorn, a free comic book and you got into the movies for a dime, and I had gone over--I guess they had driven myself and some other boy over there--and I remember coming out and my father picked us up at the movies. ... He had the radio on and I started to talk and I can remember them telling me to be quiet and that was the day. December 7th, that was the Sunday Pearl Harbor happened, and I remember exactly where I was, yes.

SI: Do you remember any reaction you had at the time, if it sunk in at all?

JC: No, none whatsoever, no, none whatsoever. ... The only thing of memory is, of the war, because I was, what was I, fourteen fifteen, sixteen years old? besides the available jobs being so easy to get, for people that wanted to work, was there were a few people, the sons of people that ... went away to the war and came back very damaged. I do remember that.

SI: Do you remember them coming back after the war or during the war?

JC: That would be, like, in 1945, towards the end of the war. One fellow lost a leg, another fellow, the leg and an arm, and things like that. ...

SI: There were Civil Defense drills and blackouts, particularly in coastal areas. Do you remember any of that?

JC: Well, no, no, I don't remember. I mean, no, I don't remember that, as far as blackouts. I mean, I can remember, during the war, the ration books, where ... the families were allowed so much sugar and so much butter and things like that, and that's about my only recollection. It had no direct effect upon me, growing up.

SI: Tell me a little bit more about some of these jobs that you had during the war.

JC: Oh, well, okay, the first one, I guess, was even prior to the war, the paper route. Then, the next thing was, there was a department store, Kennedy's Department Store, and, ... next thing I knew, I had a job working there after school, helping out, and then, where? then, the A&P. The man who ran the A&P, Mr. Horan, and he lived on the same street, ... every day, he walked past the house to get a bus to go to ... the local A&P and he asked me if I wanted to work there and I did and, an aside to that, that was an Irish family of eight children, the Horans. They lived a couple of doors down and I always remember, the one son, the oldest boy, was Jack Horan, who graduated, I always remember, he graduated from Fordham Law School at the age of nineteen with a law degree. ... Years later, I didn't meet him again, but he became the CEO of Merck, out here in New Jersey. He was ... the President of Merck. So, that was one person that grew up in the area, that I knew the family, that, later on, I did read that he was the CEO of Merck out here, years ago.

SI: Tell me a little bit about Curtis High School. What were your favorite subjects? What interested you the most?

JC: Well, my favorite subject was probably history, and I played athletics. I played football for them. So, I enjoyed that and I think, typical of most young men at that time, you just wanted to graduate and get the hell out and get on with your life. That's what was the purpose. It was a big school. It was the biggest one on Staten Island, had about two thousand students in it, and it's still there and that was about it. It was a nice school. I never had a problem. It was just, "Put your time in and get passing marks and graduate," that was it. [laughter]

SI: What did you see for yourself in the future at that point in your life?

JC: Well, this is where it starts to get a little complex. My mother's sister, my Aunt (Catherine?), had married a man named (Cornelius Gallagher?), who was a Sandy Hook pilot. The Sandy Hook Pilots were a group of independent contractors licensed by the State of New Jersey and the State of New York to handle all the ocean-going shipping that came in and out of the Port of New York. They worked for no one. They were independent contractors, joined together just for the sharing of their expenses and the operation of their equipment. Every pilot was allowed to sponsor one apprentice--when you were fourteen years old. [laughter] So, I was sponsored to be a pilot when I was fourteen years old. You wait until your name came up to the point where they needed you, and then, you had to pass the physical end of it and have the proper education, which, back then, was a high school diploma, and you entered. So, I always knew where I was going.

SI: Growing up, had you been interested in the sea or maritime activities?

JC: No, I really didn't have an interest in it, but, as I told you, with the war going on, ... one summer's day, ... late May or early June, on a Saturday, a car pulled up in front of the house and there were two old men sitting in the car and my father called me out of the house and brought

me down. ... I stood there and he introduced me to them and the one fellow said to the other, "He's big enough," and then, I was told to go back in the house. When my father came in, he said, "You've just been hired by Great Lakes Dredge and Dock Company. You're going to be working on their tugs and their dredges in New York Harbor," and that was my initiation into the water. ... I really had no interest prior to that. I mean, I was a typical fifteen-year-old, and so, I did work, for three-and-a-half months, ... in the harbor on those dredges and tugboats.

SI: What do you do on a dredge?

JC: A man's work. [laughter] You were a deckhand and what they were doing, they were digging out the channels and you had to handle the lines on the barges and get on the tug, just typical Marine work. That was my initiation into it.

SI: You must have enjoyed it. Did you enjoy that?

JC: No, I enjoyed the money is what I enjoyed. [laughter] It was interesting work and, of course, when you're fifteen, or just going on sixteen, and, suddenly, you're thrown in working with forty and fifty-year-olds and thirty years, you quickly grow up and it becomes a very maturing process.

SI: Do you remember where you were when the war ended?

JC: No, that, I don't. That, I absolutely don't.

SI: Did you graduate high school in 1946?

JC: '46, yes.

SI: How long was it before you became a pilot's apprentice?

JC: I went out there ... in September, ... one month before I was nineteen. So, I was eighteen and eleven months when I went out there, in September.

SI: What did you do in-between?

JC: I worked in the United States Gypsum. I got a job for a year, basically, after I got out of high school. I worked in a laboratory in the United States Gypsum Company, and it was shift work. You worked one week days, one week nights, one week late, late nights, ... but I was eighteen at that time.

SI: Were you still living at home?

JC: Oh, yes, always--lived at home until the day I got married. You couldn't beat the rent. [laughter]

SI: Tell me a little bit about becoming apprentice.

JC: Okay, the way it is set up there, in the Pilots Association is, the New York pilots and the New Jersey pilots and they're joined together and what happened, ... can I just go off a little?

SI: Please do.

JC: Yes. What happened, in the Winter of 1888, up until that time, pilots, three or four pilots, would own a schooner and they'd go out and they went as far as the Virginia Capes and up off the tip of Rhode Island, anyplace to get the ship first, because the first pilot that spoke to the ship, he got the job and he got the revenue that was produced. Well, in the Winter of '88, they went out there and they lost, like, nine boats and about twenty-two pilots never came back, and then, they said, "Well, this is crazy. We're cutting each other's throats." So, they joined together and formed the two associations, all the independent pilots, and they built the first big steam pilot boat, the pilot boat *New York*, which I was on, which was 158 feet long, coal-fired, and that became the first steam-powered pilot boat in the world, in fact, and that's how the Association came together. What they did is, they called you when your turn came and they needed an apprentice. They called you in and you started at the very bottom. ... You did every dirty job they had. The pay was great--six hundred dollars a year. They paid you fifty dollars a month and, whether you worked twenty hours a day or ten hours a day, whatever it was, you still only got fifty dollars a month for it. So, I got called into the Pilots Association. That was it.

SI: What do you remember about your first few days or weeks there?

JC: Being seasick. I lost twenty pounds, because I had never been out on anything rolling around like those things rolled around, and I was just continually sick for, literally, two to three weeks. It was a horrible initiation. [laughter]

SI: How did the apprenticeship work? Did you just go around with the person who sponsored you?

JC: No, not at all. Back then, they had three big pilot boats. The pilot boat *New York* was 152 feet long, coal-fired, built in 1895, still operating up until 1952. The other was a Gloucester schooner with only one mast was left in her and she was diesel-powered. She was 137 feet long, *The Wanderer*, and the other was the pilot boat *New Jersey*. That was 145 feet long, was Charles Kettering's yacht, the President of General Motors, had built it for his own personal use and it was named after his wife, *The Olive K*. It was purchased by the Pilots and turned into the pilot boat *New Jersey*. Each one of those boats was manned by apprentices--not the engineers, not the cooks or the stewards, but the deck crew and the officers on watch were all apprentices. So, when you came in, you started out at the lowest level on the pilot boat, on deck. After you were there four years, you were given a month off and you had to study continually and sit ... with the Coast Guard to get the licenses that were required to run pilotage for the area. After that, after you got that licensing, you came back, and then, they had the boarding launches, which were big, diesel-powered, fifty-foot launches that put the pilots on the ships from the mother ship. You ran those things, and then, gradually, you went up into the wheelhouse, you became the third mate,

the second mate, ultimately, the captain of the pilot boat, and then, after that, you were done. That was your apprenticeship. My apprenticeship was eight years and, at the end of the eight years, you then ride ships with the pilot. Every day, you ride with a pilot and they let you do some of the work. So, you've got a total of eight years' training before you become a pilot, and then, you become what they call a limited branch. You're limited to smaller ships, and you gradually work up, that before you'd become a pilot on a bigger ship, you'd been there fourteen years. That was your total training program.

SI: Let me pause.

[TAPE PAUSED]

SI: In that first phase, you said you were part of the crew ...

JC: ... Of the main pilot boat.

SI: What was that like? What was daily life like?

JC: Well, okay, let's take daily life, let's take the pilot boat *New York*. That's an interesting, old boat. That was the first one. It was coal-fired, was big, quite a boat. That boat would be starting out in the morning. Suddenly, they needed twenty more pilots out at sea. The office'd call the twenty pilots, they'd come down, they'd get on the big pilot boat, on the *New York*. We'd go all the way out to the pilot station, take about two hours, and we'd transfer the twenty pilots over to the other pilot boat that was out there all the time. There was always one out there, 365 days, twenty-four hours a day. That was the station boat. So, we were the inside boat. Then, you'd come back, tie up to the pier and, that night, maybe too many ship sailed ... and there were too many pilots out there. So, then, you'd have to go out and pick up ten or fifteen extra and bring them back to shore. Every week, we had to go up to Burns Brothers coal dock, which was in the Morris Canal in New Jersey, right at the entrance of Jersey City, and we took sixty tons of coal every week. That's what it took to run that thing and we were the apprentices on deck and, as they shot the coal into the bunkers, through the manholes, it built in up to a pyramid. So, the pilots, in all their benevolence, gave us an extra five dollars a week--to split between four of us, which was a dollar and a quarter each--and, when the coal built up to the top, the old chief engineer'd point down and you'd go in ... with a coal shovel and lay on your stomach and pull the coal to the sides of the bunkers, to level it out. ... That went on every week, sixty tons of coal, and then, you'd leave. ... That's Jersey City, where Burns Brothers was, and then, you'd go back in and that was it. Basically, the boat was back and forth, back and forth. ... In the summertime, if the big boat that was at sea, the *New Jersey*, had to go to the shipyard for repairs, then, the *New York* would go out and stay out there. So, it was a three-boat operation, three boats manned by apprentices, about thirty-four, thirty-two apprentices total on it.

SI: How well did you get along with the other apprentices?

JC: Some of them, you got along with fine, some, you couldn't stand. [laughter] I mean, it was personalities, ... but, on the whole, you had to get along. I mean, ... we slept in what they called

the forecastle, was chain-link bunks, four high, three high, and six guys in there, with their wet clothes and everything, trying to dry them over [a stove?]. It was a very rough, hard life at the time.

SI: How often would you get a day off or a day ashore?

JC: You worked six days on and you got three days off. On the six days on, you worked twelve hours a day. The watches were split six on, six off, six on, six off. That's the full day. So, what are we talking? was seventy-two hours you worked, in a week. That was your typical work week, but, when you were off, you weren't going anywhere. You were stuck. You were there. [laughter] You were stuck on the boat.

SI: What would you be able to do?

JC: Sit around and read the newspaper or play rummy--that's about all you could do. [laughter]

SI: It seems like, as in most professions, the apprentices, or the people on the lowest rung, were getting the worst jobs. What were some of the other jobs you were given?

JC: Oh, typically, typically. It was whatever dirty job there was. ... It was definitely a ladder-type job. I mean, when you were on the bottom rung, you did every crummy job there was and, as you worked your way up, it got a little bit easier and there were many things. I mean, back then, they didn't have the radio communications. You had to learn Morse code and, today, I could still pick an Aldis lamp up, which is a signal lamp, and send messages and, I mean, that's the way you communicated. There just was nothing else.

SI: Back in the late 1940s, early 1950s, you obviously did not have the same type of technology that we have today, such as GPS.

JC: No.

SI: Were there a lot more accidents back then?

JC: I think there probably was. I mean, the thing is, the ships moved, I mean. ... None of them had radar, there was no GPS, and, in fact, I mean, ... even when I first started out as a pilot, I mean, I got on ships, ... forget radar, they didn't even have gyrocompasses. They had old magnetic compasses and you had to figure the deviation and the variation out, and then, adjust them and you had to go very slow with them and, no, it was a much more rudimentary type of navigation. You really had to know what you were doing.

SI: Were the pilots only servicing commercial vessels or did they also service private vessels?

JC: No, all the Navy ships, too.

SI: Okay, military ships as well.

JC: I mean, ... the law is, every ship, every American ship, has to take a pilot, every oceangoing [ship], except if it's in the coastwise trade--it's running between two American ports--and the captain has the pilotage, the federal pilotage, for the waters. Then, he doesn't have to take a state pilot, but, in reality, there were very few ships that met those parameters. So, basically, they all took pilots. A Navy ship, it's the prerogative of the captain, if he wants to take a pilot, and, in my experience, it was the bigger the ship, the more likely they were going to take a pilot.

SI: After that four-year period, please remind me, what was the next phase?

JC: Well, after you had [four years in], you had to have three years' marine experience to sit to the Coast Guard and you went up to Lafayette Street in New York City and it was a lengthy test. I mean, it was three weeks, five days a week for three weeks, just eight hours a day writing. God, you were like a robot with what you had to learn and, after you got that three years in, the fourth year, you could go sit for that license, and then, the state would register you as an apprentice, and then, you were going to be made a pilot after that--you were registered. So, it was a total of eight years, was the total apprenticeship. It's not easy to explain.

SI: After the initial period, where you were getting all the worst jobs and you completed your test, what was the next phase?

JC: The next step was, you went into the wheelhouse of the pilot boat, and then, you were up there and, I mean, you didn't get your hands dirty anymore and you didn't have to stand out in the weather. You were inside an enclosed wheelhouse and you navigated the boat. You tied it up to the pier, you let it go, you brought it out through the channels, in all weather. I mean, it's a 365-day year. So, that was part of your training, too, running that big pilot boat back and forth all the time, in and around New York Harbor.

SI: How quickly do you learn the waters in the harbor? Doing this many times a day, how quickly do you pick it up?

JC: Oh, that's sort of a loaded question. I mean, the thing is, if you don't pick it up, you're not going to be there. I mean, it's one of those things. [laughter] ... You have to learn it and how quick you pick it up, it's like everything else, experience. The more you do it, the better you get at it and, I mean, you're talking about the early training. You're not talking about later, when you're in your fifties and forties. ... I mean, there's just so many nuances to the profession that you just can't imagine what you learn and it's all through experience. You'll do something and it didn't work out exactly the way you wanted and you'll say, "Boy, I'll never do that again." That's the way you learn. ...

SI: Your apprenticeship was from 1948 to 1956.

JC: Yes.

SI: Do you have any vivid memories or stories from that period?

JC: Not really, I mean, not really. I enjoyed it, I mean, and I think a lot of it was my personality. I was the type of person that liked to grab the bull by the horns. ... Of course, I always had a mechanical bent and I had an inquisitive mind. So, I learned a lot. I mean, we were in shipyards, I learned things from shipyards. We were around docks, I learned things about docks. In later years, that stood me in great stead, because, as you'll see, if we continue to talk, in later years, I did an awful lot. I built a lot of pilot boats, I built their offices, the piers, I went to Europe--I did a lot of things and that was because, I think, of my nature. I was always interested and I think, another thing was, as I got older, I realized I was a good listener.

SI: What were the backgrounds of some of the other men that were in the apprenticeship with you? Were they from the same area?

JC: ... I would say the majority of them were first cousins and sons of pilots.

SI: Okay.

JC: I mean, the names went back from--they were the same names. [laughter] I mean, my name wasn't, ... but their names went back from the 1800s and right through to my times and what it was is, they had made the agreement among themselves that they would join together. So, who did they save it for? and, I mean, back then, there was no equal employment. ... Today, I know the Association has four women pilots, which would've been absolutely unheard of in my time, and I don't say that in the wrong way, but, the equipment we had was so rough. I mean, I don't see how you could have men and women back then. Like, the old pilot boat, we only had one toilet. It was up on deck, up under the turtle, what they called the turtleback [an arched structure that shielded the deck during rough weather], and you had to go out on deck and push through the snow to get up to use the one toilet for twenty-two guys, I mean. ... Basically, there were a lot of sons and a lot of nephews and some fellows just ... got sponsored by other people that knew somebody. So, that was it, but that has all changed. ... God, we're going back, what are we going back? I'm going back sixty-five years. [laughter]

SI: By 1956, you were a pilot. Tell me about what that was like.

JC: Well, I had served an eight-year apprenticeship and, the last six months, you rode strictly with pilots. Every day, you went on a ship with a pilot and, if it wasn't too difficult a job, the pilots would let you do the piloting and they would stand and watch you and offer comments and that's where you learned. Well, the first year you were made a pilot, our office was at 17 State Street and it was very, very interesting. ... Suddenly, it was the culmination of all your ambitions, you finally were there, you were finally making a living wage. I was married a year before I was made a pilot, and so, suddenly, you could start to live again. I mean, we had worked for six hundred dollars a year. That was our total salary for eight years. [laughter] They paid you absolutely nothing and the old saying was, "Don't complain. We'll send a penny postcard and get another one just like you." So, that was the way it was.

SI: Did your job with the Pilots Association exempt you from the Korean War or did you have to worry about the draft?

JC: No, ... some of the apprentices were drafted. The ones that had federal licenses were exempted. I had a federal license at that time.

SI: Okay.

JC: ... And, plus, I was married and had a daughter at that time, my first daughter. So, that was that.

SI: How did you meet your first wife?

JC: I met my first wife in high school. Somebody, a friend of mine, asked me if I wanted to go take this girl out to a prom. She was looking for somebody to go to the prom. I didn't know her and ... we went to the movies and that's how we met. She was fifteen and I was sixteen and that was it. ... Then, we didn't get married until I had two years left as an apprentice. Then, we could see the end, but, prior to that, you just couldn't afford it. So, that's the way it went.

SI: Where did you live at first?

JC: In an apartment on a street called Wardwell Avenue on Staten Island and lived there and ... my two oldest daughters were born there. ... Then, when I was made a pilot, a year after I was made a pilot, I built a house in a place called Annadale, Staten Island, and lived in that house for ten years and had five children in there, in that house, [laughter] then, moved out here, and that was in 1967.

SI: Does anything stand out from your early years as a pilot, any vivid memories of bringing ships in?

JC: ... I could go on forever, but I can remember, I was only a pilot, the second year I was a pilot, ... I was in the office and they handed me the little slip of paper with the name of the ship I was going to take out. ... Then, I looked and it was a yacht called the *Christina* and it was anchored up in the Hudson River, off 76th Street, and I went up to the *Christina* and it was Aristotle Onassis' yacht. ... We were anchored, he wasn't onboard and the Captain said, "Well, we've got to wait." So, it was a nice summer's day, so, I took my jacket off and was in my short sleeved shirt and out came Mr. Onassis in his tender, from the yacht basin. ... As I turned around, I looked and there was a woman walking by on the deck and I found out that was Maria Callas and there was an elderly gentleman in a wheelchair, being pushed by an attendant with a white coat, and that was Winston Churchill. So, on that, the yacht, the *Christina*, which was Aristotle Onassis' yacht, was Onassis, Maria Callas, the opera singer, and Winston Churchill, and he was in his dotage at that time. This was, like, '58. He was a very sick man and I always remember because the yacht was very, very sizable for a yacht. It was a former Canadian corvette [frigate], a warship, that he had bought and converted into his personal yacht and it had--why it stuck in my mind--it had up-and-down reciprocating steam engines, which were never in

yachts, you know what I mean? [laughter] They always had diesel. These were steam reciprocating engines. So, that was one of the occurrences that I remember very vividly, standing up on the wing of this bridge, looking down twenty feet and seeing these people, that I recognized their names.

SI: Before we started recording, we were talking about how there were many changes in the area and the ports. Do any of the changes stand out from that early period?

JC: Yes, yes. ... The biggest standout thing to me is, and it just boggles my mind, I have occasion to go into New York and I just look at it and I can't believe it. You must realize, up until the early '60s, every country had a fleet of passenger ships that came to New York, Italian Line, French Line, German Line, Norwegian-American, Holland-American, United States, Cunard Line. So, you would look up that North River [the southern part of the Hudson River] and it would be just one large passenger ship after the other, all lined up, and what it was was, that's the way people got to Europe. There were no jets at that time. Nobody was flying there. The only good thing about it was, when the 707s came out, when the jets came out, it wasn't a slow death. It was almost instantaneous. They just disappeared, all the passenger ships. I mean, even Hoboken, today, which is a residential [waterfront area], that was the homeport for the Holland-American Line and you would see all the big Dutch passenger ships there and the other one, American Export Line, was over in Hoboken, too. So, the big change is that it's no longer the city it was. ... New York was a maritime city and an interesting thing was, the Pilots, it was two-thirds New York pilots, one-third New Jersey pilots, and the reason was, all the traffic was in New York. It was not on the Jersey [side]. Port Newark didn't exist, Port Elizabeth didn't exist. You had Hoboken, you had Jersey City, you had a couple of piers and that was it. So, there was always--it was a ratio of New York licensed against New Jersey. Now, that's been done away with because of the change. So, that's the big change. I mean, all those piers are gone. They've all been replaced by apartment buildings and office buildings. The same way, the East River, that used to be all ships right up there. It's all gone, but I think a key indication of it is, in its heyday, there were twenty-five thousand longshoremen in the Port of New York, twenty-five thousand. There's seven hundred now, ... because it's all containerized. You just need a guy to sit in the crane and run the thing, but that'll give you an indication of how the labor factors have changed and I think the numbers of ships went down. ... We used to do twenty-four thousand a year; they're down now to about forty-five hundred, but the cargo is ...

SI: Way up.

JC: ... Way up, but numbers, sheer numbers, I'm talking.

SI: What kind of pinch was that like when the passenger ship trade died off? Did the commercial shipping increase in kind?

JC: No, the numbers dropped dramatically. ... Probably the greatest advance in this country, one of the greatest, is containerization and a lot of people don't know that containerization was started by an American, Malcom McLean, his name was, and I witnessed this. I saw this happen. [laughter] He was a trucker and he had his [company]. He was based out of Texas and he came

up the East Coast and he got the idea, somehow, these tankers, they were chemical tankers, which were T-2 tankers, built during the war. They were nice, good, American tankers. He got the idea of putting twelve trailer trucks on the deck of these tankers and, when they came up from Texas City to Carteret, New Jersey, they'd stop at Perth Amboy, at this little dock, and the crane'd lift the twelve trailer trucks off. First one was the *Ideal X*. That was the name of the chemical tanker, American flag tanker. He put twelve trucks on that thing and ran it up to New York and that was the start of containerization, and he ultimately saw the future and he bought out Sea-Land--no, he bought out Waterman Steamship Company, which he turned into Sea-Land, which still exists. So, while you see this great containerization all over the world, it started with an American and it started in New York. ...

SI: Tell me about your later years as a pilot, after you got your license, in the 1960s.

JC: Well, I was always, as far as piloting--oh, boy, where do I start? I think some of the comical anecdotes I can tell is that, one day, one of my ...

[TAPE PAUSED]

JC: Fire away.

SI: You were going to tell me some comical stories.

JC: Oh, yes. I'll tell you a funny story. It was in the fall of--what year, I forget--and ... one of my daughters was going away to college, or going away to boarding school or something. ... I call the office and they said, "Oh, you have the *Queen Elizabeth II* sailing tonight." I said, "Okay." So, I go up and I get on the *Queen Elizabeth* and we're backing out. We back out of the pier and I'm coming down the Hudson River and get in the Upper Bay [Upper New York Bay] and, all of a sudden, we had radios at that time, they called me from the pilot boat and they said, "There's a tanker in trouble out here. We have to go off station. There's going to be a delay." So, I said, "All right." Now, it's nighttime and I turned around and I said to the officer on watch, I said, "Put all the engines on slow ahead." I was killing time and, with that, the Captain, the Commodore, Commodore (Mortimer Hair?), his name was, he came out and he says, "What are you doing with my ship?" and I said, "I'm slowing it down, because there's going to be a delay out at the pilots' station. They're standing by a tanker." He said, "I have to make the Paris boat train in Cherbourg at Thursday at five o'clock." Now, this is Saturday night and I said, "Captain, I don't know anything about a boat train, but," I said, "I'm only asking for, like, a half-hour delay, probably." He said, "I can't give you five seconds, let alone a half-hour." He said, "I have to make the Paris boat train in Cherbourg." So, I said, "What are you telling me?" He says, "You've got to come with me," and I said, "All right." So, we got below the Narrows and we're going full speed. He said, "Can I let her go?" I said, "Yes, you can let her go. There's nothing around," and, with that, the old *Queen Elizabeth*, she started to really vibrate and I turned to him and I said, "How fast you got this thing going?" He says, "Thirty-one knots." I said, "How fast will it go?" He says, "Thirty-one knots," that she was wide open, and we got to Cherbourg, France, an hour before five o'clock, we got there. So, we were five days crossing the Atlantic Ocean and we made it by one hour. So, I understood why he [was concerned], and what it is is,

the passengers for Paris got off in Cherbourg. They got on the train. The ship immediately backed out and went over to Southampton, England, and to take off the English, the passengers on the English [side], and I remember calling my wife, about eleven o'clock at night. I said, "Well, you'd better make other arrangements." I said, "I'm on my way to Europe," and so, they always laughed about it. ... The sequel, a little history of things that happened, the tanker that was in trouble out there, God, I can remember, *Aeolus* was the name of it, was a Greek tanker, big supertanker, and the fellow, the pilot's name, was Corsen, Clem Corsen. ... Now, he's telling me this later on, and the ship was so deep, it was forty-two feet at draft and Ambrose [Channel] is only forty-five feet draft. So, you've got to have--the ship squats as it moves through the water--so, you've got to have a little water. So, he couldn't go in. He had to wait for high tide, which is a four-and-a-half-foot high rise. So, he went over to an area we call "North of the Line," which is out of the line of the Channel, out of the traffic, and he anchored. Every ship, we'd anchored hundreds of ships up there. Well, unbeknownst to him, in 1945, an American destroyer, the USS *Turner*, anchored over there and she was going into Leonardo, New Jersey, to offload ammunition into the ammunition depot [Naval Weapons Station Earle] and she blew up and sank and killed 158 men. I mean, it was quite a [catastrophe]. That was in 1945. After the war, the Corps of Engineers came in and they swept it and they took the wreck out. They cut the wreck up and took it out, but they had missed the main condenser, apparently, and here it is, like, thirty-five years later and he anchors the ship and the ship sits right on the main condenser and goes right through the floor plate of the engineer room and floods the tanker. That was the emergency. "Well," he said to me, "I didn't get too upset. We were only going to go down two-and-a-half feet. She was just going to sit on the bottom," but that was the way I got my trip to Europe on the *Queen Elizabeth*, was because this tanker had anchored and sat on an old part of a wreck from an American destroyer that blew up in 1945 and, lost history, nobody knows that. I mean, nobody knows that an American destroyer blew up out there and killed 158 men, but that's it. [Editor's Note: The USS *Turner* (DD-648) blew up and sank on January 3, 1944, while anchored near Ambrose Light.]

SI: I have heard that accidents at Earle would not really be publicized very much.

JC: That was during the war, yes. ... I've been into Earle on nuclear submarines, attack submarines and everything else, and I don't want to get into what goes on. ... I think that's something, less said about it; so, go ahead, I'm sorry.

SI: Was that the only time that happened, where you had to take the full ride with the crew?

JC: No, it's funny, it happened to me again on the *Queen Elizabeth*, happened to me twice, and what it was is, we went out, oh, God, it was a terrible night, I mean, an easterly gale blowing like fifty miles an hour, with twenty-foot seas out there. ... As a pilot, what you do, you always come out on, most ships, and you make the lee. In other words, you put the ladder on the one side and you turn the ship and you get it going just at the right speed, because you're the guy that's going to hang on the ladder going down off the thing, but, on the *Queen Elizabeth*, it takes so long to get from the bridge down to the side port, where you get off, that the captain has to make the lee to let you off. ... I went down, the chief officer takes me down the elevators and through the deck, and we come to the side port and the seas are breaking right through the side

port and my boat couldn't even get near us and he couldn't get the ship around, because of the traffic situation. So, I wound up going south on it, to one of the islands. They were on a cruise. Of course, when you get there, I get off right away and fly home. I don't stay there, but, that thing, after I wound up going with them, there was nobody in the dining room, that the *Queen Elizabeth* was rolling twenty to twenty-five degrees, ... with the stabilizer, and she was stabilized, even with the stabilizers. ... A sequel to the story is, that was one of the meanest nights I've seen out there and when we were down off, going down the coast, an American ship came out of Philadelphia, a grain ship. *The Poet* was the name of it, which was a (C4?), a big (C4?), built during the war. They were big ships, loaded with grain, and, that night, he came out of Philadelphia, just gone. Nobody knows where. Apparently, ... when you load a bulk carrier, that's dangerous cargo, because of the weight. Apparently, she broke her back and just went down, thirty-eight guys disappeared. To this day, nobody knows, but it was that night. The night we were going past Philly was the night she came out and disappeared out there; so, another story. [laughter] [Editor's Note: The SS *Poet* was lost at sea on October 25, 1980. She was built as the USS *General Omar Bundy* (AP-152) in 1944.]

SI: I would imagine that the weather must play a big role in what you do.

JC: Yes, yes, and the pilot boats are good boats, so, I mean, the boats were always very [seaworthy], our boats were very seaworthy, because you're just, like, laying out there all the time. You're always out there in bad weather. ...

SI: How long was your career as a pilot?

JC: I was made a pilot in 1956 and I worked until the day I was sixty. On the day I was sixty, I said good-bye. [laughter]

SI: What were the biggest changes that you saw in that span? You mentioned the change in the passenger ship industry. What about within the organization? Were there any changes that stand out now?

JC: Well, as the numbers of ships dropped, the numbers dropped. We just didn't need as many pilots and, of course, it's like any business. I mean, your income was derived by the numbers, the times you split it up. So, if you ... had thirty less pilots, there was more money to be split up between the working pilots. See, you always adjusted your numbers by not replacing. In other words, if ten retired and you said, "Oh, we only need five more," then, you only made the five more. So, we had that ability to adjust our numbers, and, I'm sorry, what was your question?

SI: I was just asking about changes in the organization.

JC: Oh, I think ... it was basically the same. Nothing really changed that much. I mean, the methods of getting apprentices changed. You no longer could have it is a closed group, like it was. It's advertised and competitive tests and things like that, today, but that's it. That was about the only change and, of course, I think the equipment is better. The working conditions are better, because of the equipment and the type of ships you had. I mean, I went back, there were

some terrible ships. I mean, good God, some of those things, you didn't even want to be on, they were so bad and, back then, it was archaic. Every ship that came in from a foreign port had to stop for quarantine. So, quarantine was open from six in the morning until six at night. So, if you got on a ship out there at five-thirty at night and it was some falling apart old wreck and you had to stop for quarantine, you had to go up and anchor the thing in quarantine, and then, you had to sleep on it until six o'clock the next morning, until the doctor and the immigration came out and cleared the ship, and then, you took it to the docks. So, ... you spent a lot of time on places you really didn't want to be on, some of those ships, and what people don't realize, I mean, after the Second World War, a lot of the [nations], Greece and Spain and Portugal and Italy, they were in tough shape. I mean, they didn't have modern equipment or anything. It was a hard life for their people.

SI: Was language ever a problem? When you got on a ship, could you ever not communicate with the crew? Did someone always speak English?

JC: No. You picked it up, you picked it up, [laughter] like, "(Dreat, piano?)," that's, "Right, easy," in Italian, "(Siesta, piano?)," is, "Left," in Italian, "Steady," is, "(Kumsar?)," in Spanish. I mean, ... you picked up enough to get by, but, in all honesty, yes, they mostly spoke English. I would say ninety percent of them were cognizant of the English language.

SI: Coming from an outside perspective, I would think that the size of the ship would matter greatly, in terms of how difficult it is to pilot. Is that correct?

JC: Yes, well, it's a component. ... A component is size, which is length and beam, and draft is a component, how deep in the water it is, horsepower, how powerful it is, is another component. Rudder power is a big component, how well the ship steers and everything, and, of course, today, the modern ships have thrusters, bow thrusters and stern, which will give you a side mobility which did not exist back then. I mean, you had to do everything with them and, I mean, Liberty ships were very underpowered. They were only fifteen hundred, two thousand horsepower. I mean, different--it's like comparing Model T cars to today's cars, no comparison whatsoever.

SI: What would you say were some of the more difficult jobs you were involved in?

JC: Oh, I think an interesting one, I don't know how difficult it was, was ... on the Centennial. [Editor's Note: Mr. Cahill means the National Bicentennial on July 4, 1976.] They asked me to fly [out]. I got on a Navy helicopter and flew out 135 miles from New York. I got on the thing at 36th Street, New York, and the helicopter flew me out to the [USS] *Forrestal* [(CV-59)], the big super carrier. We were about a hundred miles off New York and we were coming in to anchor off Rosebank, Staten Island, was going to be the reviewing stand for the President. ... They were big carriers. I mean, she was one of the [first big ones], even the same size as today's super carriers, way over a thousand-foot long, and I remember landing on the flight deck and they brought me up to the bridge of the thing. ... The Captain introduced himself and the navigating officer. The Captain said, "He'll take care of you," and the navigating officer told me they wanted to be there at, like, two o'clock in the afternoon and I said, "That's the wrong time," and he said, "Why?" and I said, "Because it's going to be the strength of the flood tide coming in.

We're going to be coming in with the tide behind us, trying to anchor," and he said, "Well, that's our orders." So, we went up to up there and I came under--the Verrazano Bridge was there--I came under the Verrazano Bridge and I started to turn left and they had the X on the chart where they wanted the anchor and, of course, we're turned sideways now and there's this thousand-foot ship, drawing forty-some feet, ... being pushed sideways by a tide. ... We got as close as I knew we were going to go and I said, "Let go the anchor," and he says, "We're not there yet." We were, like, a hundred yards away. I said, "We're never going to get there." I said, "We're going sideways faster than we're going ahead." With that, we had missed. Now, we were three hundred yards, four hundred yards [off]. So, then, they said, "Now, what do we do?" I said, "Now, we back this thing down through the Narrows and start all over again." So, I was--they were four-screw--I was twisting that big carrier in the Narrows and a fellow on the tugs that were there, watching, he said, "Look," he called me on the radio and said, "look behind you." ... We were putting waves over the Belt Parkway with the propellers, with the power. [laughter] So, we backed down through the Narrows. We came back up again, and then, we did it and got it the second time and anchored it. ... I always felt a little guilty, because it was in July and it was hot and the Captain gave me tickets for the reviewing stand, with the President, on the deck, for my family. ... I got off and I remember saying to myself, "I don't want to sit on the deck of this thing on the Fourth of July, in the heat," and I threw the tickets away and never told the family that I had the tickets, [laughter] because [it was] a little selfish, but that's sort of a funny story.

SI: Wow. Did you ever run into crews that were resistant to what you were saying? It sounds counterintuitive.

JC: No, on the whole, most of the time, you would find that they left you alone, because they really didn't have the knowledge that you had and, of course, more than half the work was done in the dark and, I mean, they can't see anything. I mean, they don't know what the heck they're looking at, where you do, from your long experience. ... I don't know, it's an interesting job. ... I had the worst collision in the history of the Port of New York, to my knowledge, which was not my fault, but time and position. I was in the wrong goddamn position at the wrong time and that was it. I was stuck. ...

SI: Can you tell me about that?

JC: Oh, yes, ... very easy. In--when was it, June? Okay, I'd been on vacation in May. Can we take a break? ...

[TAPE PAUSED]

SI: Ready?

JC: Yes. ... I'd been on vacation. The way the Pilots worked it back then, ... we'd work three months and get the fourth month off, so, two, three months a year. I had been on vacation in May and I went back on the board, onto the rotation system. They called me at five o'clock and said, "Oh, you've got an American container ship, *The Sea Witch*," was owned by American Export-Isbrandtsen [called American Export Lines at the time]. It was loading containers at

Howland Hook, which is a container terminal on Staten Island. I said to my wife, I said, "You know," I said, "my grandmother," she was in her nineties, she was staying at my aunt's house for a weekend, I said, "I'm going to go in and have dinner with the two of them." So, I went in and I sat down with my aunt and my old grandmother and we had dinner. ... We were due to sail at ten o'clock, or nine o'clock, I don't remember what time. So, I went to the ship, went up to the Captain's room. He was the senior captain with American Export Line, John Paterson. I knew him, a nice guy. They were late loading containers. They were still accepting containers. So, we didn't sail until it was around eleven o'clock on June 1st. We undocked the ship, went back, went through the Kills, going the north way towards the Upper Bay, came out of the Kills, headed towards the Narrows. It was a beautiful night, God, what a night, no wind, clear, mild. It was just a gorgeous night and no traffic, no ships moving around, just a couple of tugs and barges off to the right. ... On the right side, as you go through the Narrows, headed to sea, on the right was one ship anchored that had been anchored there all day. It was an Exxon [ship], but it was the *Esso Brussels*, which was a Belgian tanker, very large tanker, under the Belgian flag, loaded with, I later found out, Nigerian crude oil for Bayway [Refinery], and one thing about Nigerian crude oil, it's a very light, gaseous crude oil. So, we were way up above him. We're three, four miles up above him, yet, coming down towards the Narrows and there's nothing moving. So, we put the ship on maneuvering full speed, which was twelve knots, not excessively fast, but we had an ebb tide behind us. This was about half past midnight. All of a sudden--I had altered the course of the ship to the left a few degrees, to compensate for the tide coming down out of the harbor--and the quartermaster, apparently, changed the course to the left that I had given him, and then, he rotated the wheel to the right to stop the swing of the ship--and, of course, I didn't know this at the time, this all later came out--at that point, the steering gear failed. A key fell out of a coupling on it, which was supposed to be a dual steering, but, in reality, it was a single, mechanical steering when it got back to the stern of the ship. ... The Captain, I always remember, his comment was, "That damn steering gear again," and he switched over from one steering system to the other. Neither one had any effect. The ship is now starting to swing to the right. I immediately had stopped the ship, put the engines full astern. I ordered the anchor dropped and started blowing alarm whistles, with the big steam whistle, a lot of noise, and made a call on the radio to stay clear of us. Well, long story short, we hit the *Esso Brussels* and, just before we hit them, I cleared the bridge. I ordered everybody off the bridge, I ordered the Captain to get the mates and the seamen off the bow of the ship. We hit the tanker and the tanker went instantaneously, blew up. The flames were over the towers of the Verrazano Bridge, high as six hundred feet. Both ships were locked together. ... We were driven all the way back to the stern of the ship. We stood on the deck for a few minutes and it was so bad, I looked and the aluminum lifeboat above my head was melting. It actually started to bend and, make a long story short, we were trapped in the after house for about an hour. The whole ship was consumed, both ships, and I think about twenty-four people were killed and that was it, bad story, bad story. ... At that point, after we were [driven back to the stern], the way we got out of it was--well, I don't know how deep you want to get into this--but ... we were forced into the after house and what saved us was that the engine room was still operable and they had a fire pump running. ... We had a small hose and we played that on the deck and on the walls, to cool it down. I remember kicking in the door of somebody's room--that's where the crew lived, all the way aft, in the after house--kicking somebody's door in and I took a bath towel and stuck it in the toilet [laughter] and wrapped it around my head, to be able to breathe, and,

after a while, I could see we were [in trouble]. Some of them said, "Let's jump overboard." I said, "You're all going to burn up, you go in that water," and, after a while, it got to the point where I said, "Eh, got to do something." So, I had them wet down a blanket. I put this blanket around me and I went out with a flashlight and I could see a light off ... in the smoke, in the flames, and I started flashing the light. It was a fireboat and that's when they realized we were alive on this thing. So, they got in and got us. ...

SI: In any of your training, had they ever trained you for something like this?

JC: No, never, never. That's instinct. ... You just do what you've got to do and, of course, then, the other side of the coin is, there, it was a big collision. We burnt the paint and the electrical cables off the Verrazano Bridge. We actually took all the paint off the bottom of it with the flames, because we drifted down under it, the two ships locked together. ... Then, the next thing was, now comes the investigation and that lasted thirty days, five days a week, in the United States Custom House, in the courtroom up there. So, I had the dubious honor of sitting there for thirty days and hearing this thing hashed out by all the attorneys for Exxon and Export, the Coast Guard and the Department of Transportation. ... I always remember, one of the things, about the second day, a fellow came up and shook my hand and said to me, he said, "I just want to let you know, you don't have anything to worry about." I said, "Well, who are you?" He said, "I'm from the Department of Justice." They were there to see if there was any criminal liability because of the loss of life that was involved in the thing and it was not a very pleasant experience, but unavoidable. ... I think, a commentary on life, "Time and Position," if you're in the wrong position at the wrong time, you're screwed and there's nothing you can do about it. That was one of those cases.

SI: What year was that?

JC: 1973, June 2, 1973, at twelve-thirty at night, thirty minutes after midnight, yes.

SI: Did you face any other emergencies like that? Obviously, nothing that bad.

JC: No, God, no, nothing like that.

SI: Were there any other catastrophes?

JC: No. The thing is, no, nothing that stands out, but, when you're in a job like that, you've got the elements. Suddenly, you're on some big, light ship and the wind's blowing thirty-five, forty miles an hour and, I mean, you could tell stories forever, but things happened, ... but you just forget about it, because it's part of the job. ... Somebody that's an active pilot, he could write a book on all the different things that happened, but, no, I'm just trying to think of that. That was the only serious thing I was ever involved in, that I can recall. No, that's it.

SI: Tell me a little bit more about the lifestyle of a pilot. You said you were on four days, then, off three. Am I remembering that correctly?

JC: ... Well, no.

SI: Does that change as you become more senior?

JC: ... Back then, we worked a strict rotation board. In other words, in the office was a big board with all the pilots' names on metal things, which I have mine, by the way, and they would move you up. In other words, as they needed pilots, they just kept moving you up the board. When you came in from sea, you went to the bottom. So, it was a continually rotating type system. I know they've changed their whole system of work. I mean, I just know they have, because of their numbers. I mean, where we had a hundred--I would say our average was 120--they probably have fifty-eight or sixty. So, it's a completely different system, but much more modern. I mean, ... I know they have a car. They get around. They have their own cars that take them to the piers. Back then, it was [that] you rode the subways and the buses and nobody cared how you got there. That was up to you to trudge around to these docks and different things like that. So, it's like everything else, modern times.

SI: Did any of this impact your family? Were you away from them for quite a while?

JC: No, I think ... the impact was, you never knew when you were off. The joke in the family was, I worked ten Christmases, ten in a row. I wasn't home for Christmas for ten years and that was just the luck of the draw. [laughter] Somebody else had ten off, but it was just how it worked out. The only good thing was, when you got a vacation, it was a thirty-day vacation. So, it was a nice vacation. You could really plan to do something with the kids and go away or do something like that, because you were just off, and the biggest thing about the job was--and I think it had a big impact on my life for everything I did--you didn't have a boss. Nobody told you what to do and the beauty of the thing, and it's something that I admired, was that you did the job, when you tied that ship up and they signed your little ticket, your order that you got paid from, that was the end of it. You were probably never going to see the guy again. Nobody was going to say, "You should've done this or should've done that." You were done. It was a done deal, until the next one, and I think that's pretty rare in this world, where you don't have to worry about what you did yesterday. ... It was just very compartmentalized, a very nice way to live, I think.

SI: You said the assignments came on a rotation.

JC: Yes.

SI: Does that mean that you would not really know how much you were going to make on each assignment?

JC: No, no; oh, remuneration, good question. No, what happened was, okay, for the month of June, all the ships that came into New York and went out of New York, the pilot had a little ticket order with the name of the ship, the agent and the draft and everything. That was signed. We had an office staff that would send out bills for each individual pilot's work. At the end of the month, all that money came in and was in a big pool, right. Let's say it was a hundred

thousand dollars. The young pilot who was getting fifty percent--then, it was divided into shares. If there were 120 pilots, it was divided into 120 shares. The pilots that were just starting only got fifty percent of a full share. So, you never knew what you were going to make from month-to-month, because it ... depended on the traffic, what the port generated that month. So, that's the way it went. You didn't know if you're going to make two thousand dollars a month or fifteen hundred a month. You never knew, and so, that's the way you got paid. You got a share. Everybody, you were equal partners, except for the limited pilots, who were working their way up to the hundred percent share. Did I answer your question?

SI: Yes, I was just curious about that. It seemed to me, if you got stuck on small ships, that could really affect your income.

JC: No, no, it balanced out, because you might've been on the smaller ship that only paid two hundred dollars, say, back then, but your fellow that was right ahead of you was on one that paid eight hundred dollars. So, all the money [evened out] and, out of that, first thing that had to be paid was all the hired crews, the cooks and the engineers, the fuel for the boats, the office staff, everything to run a business, and then, what was left over, the surplus, they called it, that was split up between the members, and everybody was equal. No pilot was any better than [anyone else]. Everybody was exactly the same. ...

[TAPE PAUSED]

SI: We are back on and, on the record, thank you very much for the wonderful lunch. Over lunch, you were telling me that, later on in your career, you got involved in the leadership and governance of the Pilots Association.

JC: Yes. We had always been based, our pier was always, like, [leased?] from the City of New York or the Coast Guard and, back in the early '70s or late '60s, we had the opportunity--I found out that the Reynolds Shipyard was on financial hard times. ... To make a long story short, we cut a deal and we bought half his property in Clifton, Staten Island, and we got a big, old warehouse that was on it and I actually came off the board, stopped piloting, and supervised the construction of the pilot office and the new pilot pier, and so, I did that. Then, the other thing was, it came time to get a new pilot boat and we were having no luck in finding [one]. I had gone to France, to Nice and Cannes, looking at [vessels]. Renault Automobile had their family's yacht, (*The Amazonian?*) was the name of it, was a big, diesel-powered yacht for sale, on the French Riviera. I went over and looked at it and I took it to Italy, to Sanremo, right over the border, and put it in a shipyard and, make a long story short, it was not in good shape. So, we didn't buy it, and then, we got in contact with a Dutch shipbuilder in Rotterdam, Dahmen Industries, and we negotiated a contract. I negotiated a contract with them to build a new pilot boat, which is the pilot boat *New Jersey* and it's still in use today, and that was back in the mid-'80s. ... I went over and I lived in outside of Rotterdam for six or eight months and built that thing, and then, ... we put a crew on it and sailed it over here, and that was the story. So, I built the pilot boat, the pilot pier, the base and that was, more or less, my active times when I was in a leadership role and did the negotiating for the Association.

SI: Were you elected to that post?

JC: Yes, you're elected to that post. ... Every year, every twelve months, in December, the Association elects somebody to an executive committee to run the Association and be there daily. So, I did it for a couple of years, and then, ... after that, I went back to piloting, and then, when I reached retirement age, I had enough things going on in my life that I knew I wouldn't be sitting around, bored. I think it was after forty-two years, I said, "It's time to call it a career." In fact, when I came home and told my wife, Betty, who was alive at that time, that I was going to retire, she said to me, "What are you doing that for?" and I said, "Who do you know works forty-two years in the same place?" and she said, "Nobody," and I said, "Well, that's it, I'm out of here," [laughter] and that was the story on that.

SI: I am curious. For the six or eight months you were in Rotterdam, overseeing the construction of the pilot boat, what did you do every day? Would they just report to you on the progress of the boat?

JC: No, no. ... It was in 19--I think it was '86--and it was winter. ... Well, two things, I remember, happened over there. First was, Chernobyl blew up, the Russian nuclear disaster, and that cloud blew over the Netherlands. [Editor's Note: The Soviet Union's Chernobyl reactor in Ukraine blew up on April 26, 1986.] ... The other thing was, it was the coldest winter in a hundred years and they had the hundred-mile ice-skating race and it had been a hundred years since all the canals froze in Holland that they could have the race and I was there that year. We built, the hull was fabricated up on the North Sea, in a place called (Fox Hall?), and I had to drive up there every day, supervise that, and then, it was towed down. When it was floatable, it was towed down into Rotterdam, to be put in an inside shed, where all the outfitting, the internals, the engines, the furniture, everything, electronics, were installed. So, I was there, basically, every day. At six o'clock, I'd go home to the little apartment I had and watch the television and read and I'd stay about, I'd say maybe eight, nine days, and then, I'd fly home for the weekend and spend a weekend home, and then, I'd ... go out to Kennedy and hop on a KLM flight and go back and forth, and it was a lot easier traveling then. You could get the tickets easier and it wasn't crowded. So, that's basically what I did over there, during that construction of that.

SI: Going back a few years, during your time as a pilot, you moved from Staten Island to out here. Can you tell me what precipitated that move?

JC: Yes. The house I built in 1958 on Staten Island, when I was a young pilot, only the second year, was in a rural area. There was only a couple of houses around and dirt roads and it was really nice. I guess that--I don't know--I guess I was always the type, and my wife was the type, we liked not to be crowded. They were building the Verrazano. They were going to build the Verrazano Bridge and I knew, once the bridge was built, that was it. [laughter] Staten Island was just going to develop like everyplace else. [Editor's Note: The Verrazano-Narrows Bridge opened on November 21, 1964.] So, I started looking around, and then, I drew a circle and any place that I could drive to Staten Island or to New York in an hour-and-a-half, I would consider. So, I found these eleven acres ... in 1967 and I built this house. I hired local guys that I knew

enough that I could get it done and I built this, physically had this house built by myself out here then, and, of course, back then, it was a huge house. It was about four thousand, thirty-eight hundred square feet. Today, it's not a huge house anymore, but, back then, it was a big house and, of course, I had six children and there were eight people going to be in it and that's how I got out here.

SI: It is very nice. When you say you built it, did you actually physically build it?

JC: Mostly the design work on it, oversaw it. I mean, when you have the construction company, I've built probably two, three hundred houses, you can't physically pick a hammer up and stand there. You'll never get anything done. I mean, you've got to expedite, call, make things happen and plan things. That's what the good builder does. I mean, I physically could, but it would be a monumental waste of my time to sit there and hammer nails.

SI: Did you have the company at that time?

JC: No, I incorporated the company in '68, the year after I got out here.

SI: Okay. I was not sure if you started the company after you retired or earlier.

JC: Oh, no, no. [laughter] I used to have a lot of balls up in the air at the same time. ... I think, as I said to you, I had the construction company and that was another thing--the pilot job fit in pretty well with it, because I would be home all day, that I could supervise my construction jobs, and then, at night, I'd go in, and then, I'd let another pilot [go?]. ... So, I did that, and then, the other thing was, I was on the school board and, through the construction company and meeting people out here, I ultimately went on the board of the Hunterdon County National Bank, which was the biggest bank in Hunterdon County at the time. We had seven branches and that's before the days of the megabanks. So, somebody, the president of the bank, asked me to go on the board and I went on the board of that bank and I was on it for many years, and then, we sold Hunterdon County--the board, we voted and got the stockholder approval--we sold it to First National State in Newark and that was the biggest bank in New Jersey at the time. I then went on the board of that bank for several years and, after that, I think, it was sold to Wachovia Bank and that's when I exited, because that was a national bank and I certainly was not up to going on that board. So, when it was sold to Wachovia, that was the end of my banking business, but, for many years, I was on the bank boards and doing different things that way. ...

SI: Going back to the construction company, you started that in 1968. How large was the company then? How did it grow in those first few years?

JC: Well, back then, of course, it was a lot simpler. I incorporated the business and I would acquire land and, say, I acquired a parcel of land that could be subdivided for five or six houses, I would do the five or six lots, take it through the subdivision process with the township and the county, get the approval. Then, I would start to put the houses in and people would come along and see them and buy them, and that's the way it went. I ultimately got up, the biggest was, I was doing maybe twenty, twenty-five-house subdivisions. We'd put the roads and the curbs in

and the big thing was getting it through the processes, doing the percolation test and getting the approvals from the town and the county and everything. ... That's the way it went and I ran that right up from '68 to probably '95, in that period of time, maybe even 2000, up until about 2000, and then, basically, I folded the corporation at that point. There was no sense keeping it going and my son worked with me for many years, my older, second son, Brian, and he has his own business right now, his own construction company, but that's the way that was and it was fun.

SI: How many employees did you have at your peak?

JC: It was, permanent employees, three, but it was basically all subcontracting, because, not to get into [details], but you can't have a framing crew and frame a house for a week, and then, have them sit around. ... It's like everything, it's like it is today, everybody's a specialist--plumbers, electricians, sheet-metal people, insulation people, framing carpenters, floorers. ... The secret of a construction company is having good subcontractors who can perform to a certain standard and at a certain time for you and that'll make it go.

SI: Were all of your projects within Hunterdon County or did you go further throughout the state?

JC: Basically, they were all, I would say, all in Hunterdon County. I did a few when I was on the board of the bank, First National. They had run into some problems with some developers up in way up in North Jersey, and I don't even remember exactly where, and they asked me to go in and bail them out and get them organized and I did that. It wasn't a major part of my construction experience. It was basically in Hunterdon County and, whether I was lazy or what, but it was fairly close to home. I used to like to work where I could get to it.

SI: It must have been very challenging to juggle all of these balls and oversee all of these projects.

JC: Yes. ... I look back on it, I sit here and talk to you and I say, "Well, I was an active pilot and I was going to Europe and I was running, building a couple hundred houses around here and I was on the bank board and the school [board]," I don't know how I did it. I look back on it, it's lost in my memory, how busy I was, but, I guess, with my mental--I wouldn't say physical--but with my mental makeup, it was probably good for me. It just kept me challenged all the time and that's it.

SI: Did you ever face any challenges in these townships in getting what you wanted through the planning process?

JC: No.

SI: Overall, would you say they were helpful, resistant?

JC: ... I found people, I would even actually say helpful. I think, human nature being what it is, I think how you address people and approach people is how you'll be treated. I mean, I think

you're a fool if you think you go into a meeting and you've got all the answers and you're right and they're wrong. They're not the enemy. ... I mean, I used to just listen to them and I think you listen to all sides and you sort through it and come up with what's logical. That's everything. I think that's the thing that a lot of people miss out, "What's logical? What are the facts?" and do it.

SI: Were a lot of these communities looking to expand?

JC: No, I think if you wanted to take Hunterdon County, even back then, I found that there was a great respect for your rights as a property owner and a taxpayer. I don't think that exists today in a lot of places. I mean, ... I know of some of the regulations that are in place and they're almost ludicrous. [laughter] I mean, when somebody says, "You've got to take your roof leaders, from the rainwater that comes off the roof, and put it in a dry well, so [that] it goes into the ground and doesn't run on top," I mean, that's really stretching pretty far, things like that, but I found the old-timers--and, by the old-timers, I mean, I think I was, like, the first wave of new people that came to the area--I think they were great people. ... I mean, they certainly had a respect for your property rights and they were certainly conscious of taxes and what people had to pay and I don't have a bad word to say about them and I think all the people that serve on these planning boards, some of the ideas are, maybe, a little misguided, but, on the whole, they're good people. They're trying to do something that's right. ...

SI: When did you first become interested in politics?

JC: I think the fact that I was, basically, a friendly guy and liked--I mean, if you've got a machine that's digging up potatoes and I'm walking by, I want to go look at the machine and talk to you and see how it works. So, I think I made a lot of friends along the way and I think some of the local fellows, who I'd made friends with in the first year or two that I was out here, came up to me and said, "Hey, we could use you. Run for office," and I'd say, "Yes, what's involved in it?" Next thing, I was involved. ... It was all done on a friendly thing. I had no inclination to change the world or push my views on anybody else, ... and then, it became a point where you got to know the people, the town clerk in the town, all the [public servants], treasurer, and they were good people trying their best and, if you could help out and do something with them and make things a little better, you did it. That's all. It was ... not a power trip or anything like that. [laughter] It was just, "Be one of the guys."

SI: Was the School Board the first thing that you got involved in?

JC: No, the first thing, I think, they asked me to go on the Planning Board of Alexandria Township. Then, they asked me to run for the Township Committee and become the mayor, and then, after that, the School Board came into it, and what else did I do? That was it. That's my public service that I did.

SI: Do you remember approximately when you served on the Planning Board?

JC: I would say in from, like, 1970 probably all the way up through the '80s, early '80s. That was a long stretch, and the Township Committee from '72 on, for maybe six, eight years. I don't really have a recollection of the length of time, and the School Board, I know that was ten years. That was a ten-year period. ...

SI: During your time on the Planning Board, do any of the challenges or issues that you faced come to mind?

JC: No, ... see, what you're doing is, you're asking because it's very contentious in a lot of planning boards in what goes on today. It wasn't [then]. The pressure was not--when I was involved, there was no heavy pressure on the townships out here, especially Alexandra. There was no builder waiting to build a hundred townhouses or two hundred houses. The biggest one was maybe ten or eight or nine or something like that and, when I was active, there wasn't the pressure that there has been through the '90s and the early 2000s. So, it was a different animal than the one you're used to right now. It wasn't contentious at all.

SI: Did you have to run for the Planning Board or were you appointed to the board?

JC: No, the Planning Board was appointed. The Township Committee was an elected and the School Board was elected.

SI: What do you remember about campaigning for the committee? What was campaigning like in those days?

JC: [laughter] I think campaigning, like, in those days, was that your friend'd come up and say, "Hey, Jack, how about running for the Township Committee? What do you think?" "Yes, okay, I'll do that." "Okay." Then, he'd tell Frank and Frank'd tell Mary and Mary'd tell--that was the campaigning. There was no publications ... and, of course, the local *Hunterdon Democrat* would have the elections, when they were coming up and they'd list the candidates. So, that was the total of [the campaign]. If I had to campaign, I probably wouldn't have been bothered. It was just not me. [laughter]

SI: What stands out about your time on the Township Committee? What do you remember as being issues that came up frequently? Not that they had to be contentious, but what were the main issues that you faced?

JC: Oh, the main issues that we were dealing with back then was, basically, you had professionals, engineering professionals, that were hired by every township, and legal, you had an attorney and you had a town engineer, and, of course, ... at that time, things were starting to pick up and they wanted to upgrade all the zoning, the zoning, plus, the engineering requirements for land development and things. ... That was, I'd say, the big thing, "Did we want to be bothered with this? Did we want to be bothered with that? What did the county think about it?" So, if I had to summarize, there was nothing really [contentious]. It was doing your job, "What had to be done? What did the state want? What did the county want? What did we want? What compromise could be reached or how to implement the requirements?" I don't consider it

contentious or any big things. It's just a period of my life that I gave it to community service and I did my job and that was it. ... What else can I tell you? ... The only other thing, I think I've had a fairly successful life, businesswise and everything, and the only one that I really stubbed my toe on was, down in Clinton is a big lighting store, Hesco Lighting, and the fellow that owned the lumberyard, he said to me, "Hey, we should build a racquetball center. That's going to be a big sport." So, we built this, he and I built this, huge racquetball center and, I think, the month after we opened the doors, the fad went right down the drain and, in about one year, we decided, "We'd better get rid of this thing," [laughter] and we sold it to a lighting company, where they turned it into a big showroom down there, but that's the only other business venture that I had in this area and that didn't work out that well. [laughter]

SI: During your time on the committee, were there any initiatives that you are particularly proud of or anything that got built that you pushed for?

JC: No. I go back on it and I look today at this town and this township has parks, they've got a large payroll of extensive people, road crews, things like that, got all sorts of community locations, parks and things. Back then, [when] you met, the town clerk kept his office in his living room. The town treasurer showed up at the meeting with his briefcase. There was no town hall, there was no town parks, there was nothing, and everybody was very aware of where the money was spent, what the taxes were. I attribute that to the fact that the time period I'm talking about was [influenced by] the old, local Hunterdon County people. Today, the people are so much more affluent. They want big parks, ball fields, police department, all of this. It all costs and, I mean, I look, I'm probably paying twelve times the taxes. My taxes have gone up a multiple of twelve times, *on the same house*. So, it's the old story, you want this stuff, you pay for it, and why I'm going off on this bent is because you're saying, "What do I [remember]?" I don't remember anything about it that stands out. I mean, I just did my job and did what we had to do and it was pretty commonplace and pretty easy to do.

SI: Was it in the 1980s when you served on the School Board?

JC: Yes, I would say in the '80s, then. That was ... very rewarding, because the rewarding part about it is, you're dealing with a bunch of well-educated people, all the teachers over there. Like any time you get a group of seventy, eighty teachers, they all have their own opinions and ideas on different things and there were no big decisions. The school was basically built and it's still the same way over there, still sufficient, and, to me, it was just ... interesting, a lot of fun. I enjoyed going to the meetings, because it was stimulating to talk to them and they were good people. ... There were some good board members who were good friends of mine and I enjoyed their company and it was, again, we did our job. We did what was right and that was it.

SI: Was there a growing need for more elementary schools and high schools, that sort of thing?

JC: Yes, the elementary school, they built a new school, but that was after my time. That was after my time and, certainly, I think it's an important component of any town to have a good education system.

SI: Does anything else about your career in politics--public service, I will not say politics--stand out in your memory?

JC: No. I know what you're saying, what could I really talk about? but, gee, ... I just felt like it was my job and I did it and I think I did it well and I guess the proof of it is, there were no big, contentious decisions. Everything I did seemed to be accepted. You talk about Hunterdon County, some of the things that I find, especially as I get older and I ride by ... a certain site that I remember from fifty years ago and I always remember, one of the--I've said this to a few people, told them the story, if I may.

SI: Sure.

JC: Back ... when I first went on the bank board, there was a fellow named Floyd Hoffman, was on the board, and he was very, very elderly. ... I never knew that Hunterdon County, at one time, was the peach capital of the United States, [laughter] but they had a big blight that killed off all the orchards, back in, like, 1910, but this Floyd Hoffman had a peach basket factory in Califon, New Jersey, which is about ten miles from here. Now, I was maybe forty-five, he must've been seventy-five, eighty, and he said, "Would you like to see my peach basket factory?" I said, "I'd love to see your peach basket factory." So, I went up to Califon, and these huge trees we have out here are the tulip trees, white wood trees. They're a very soft wood. They're not good for lumber, ... they're very soft, but they're huge--I mean, they grow hundreds of feet. Well, they would, loggers would, cut these things in eight-foot lengths. ... You went up there, he had an old Scotch boiler that they fed with the scraps of the wood from the process and they made steam and he had a fieldstone steam house, about eight-by-eight, and they had a steam-operated little crane and they would put these big logs in the steam house and steam them for twenty-four hours. Then, they would take them out and they would put them on a huge lathe and turn it into a veneer, like a plywood veneer. Then, these old men would pick these big sheets up, flop it on the table and it had a knife that you pulled and it cut it into the strips of wood for the peach baskets and the wood was so pliable. Then, he had four or five old guys standing at benches, with nails in their mouths and hammers, bending the strips and making peach baskets. ... To this day, I'm certain that belonged in a museum, the whole process, steam-powered, fed with the scraps of wood, steaming, and to see the way that was [made]. ... I try to describe it to you, you probably can't picture what I just said, but, to me, it was just fascinating that they were making these peach baskets and it's gone. I mean, that equipment should've been saved for a museum someplace. ...

SI: What are some of the other big changes that you have seen in the county over your fifty years here?

JC: Well, I think the biggest thing is just by the sheer density, I mean, my kids, even when I built this house, they could go sit in a chair up on that road up there for six hours and maybe one car might come along. With the increase in population, the increase in cars and people, and, of course, the other thing is, as it grew and you see the days of the big shopping malls and all the shopping centers, all the local stores are gone, the local butcher and the little local grocery store and the mills. ... Another thing around here, they're all overgrown, there were a few operating

mills around here, where they actually had waterpower to grind wheat and things like that. So, that's the stuff that it's gone and you go back, you can wax poetic about the past and you can only remember, you can't go back, but I look and ... where I get a little, not concerned, but, when I, because of my age, can remember these things that were so interesting, there's the old machinery and the way things were, and that's gone and most of it is forgotten. As the generations go on, it just disappears, ... but that's it. ...

SI: Usually, towards the end, I wrap up with a little bit about your family.

JC: Yes.

SI: You said you had five children.

JC: Oh, no, okay.

SI: You have more.

JC: My children, I had six children, six children, four daughters, two sons. I consider, when you talk about careers and everything, I consider that my crowning achievement, is the family. They've all done well and I think they're wonderful people. I look, I have eleven grandchildren. So, between my son-in-laws, daughter-in-laws, sons and daughters and grandchildren, I've got twenty-two, twenty-two people directly related to me. ... One lives in New York, one has a home over in Erwinna, which is very close by, and the others are all in the area. So, it's been a good, close family and ... I attribute my ability to have led the life that I've led to the family I was blessed with. They gave me the ability to do this and ... I think you have to be a special type that can jump into and out of a lot of different careers without being frenetic. I think, I see some people, they're hyper, they're doing [a lot], but I was lucky. I had a family backing me up that allowed me to do all these things, which I really enjoyed, and I can see where, if you had a wife or a family that didn't back you up on a thing, ... you'd have a problem. You couldn't do it. So, that was it. No, I think it's been a great ride. [laughter]

SI: Would you like to tell me about your second marriage?

JC: Oh, my second marriage, Pelley. Back in 2000, my first wife, Betty, the mother of the children, she passed away very suddenly, very unexpected, just, bang, she was gone. Life goes on and what was it? about two years later, I met Pelley. She had lost a husband and she had one child and we kept company for two years, and then, we were married and that'll be ten years ago next June. So, that's how we met. So, basically, I was married to the one woman for forty-some years, forty-six years, I was widowed and single for four years, and then, I met Pelley, and then, we married. ... I've been married the ten years and a lot of luck, two good wives, and she's a great wife. [laughter]

SI: Is there anything else that you would like to add to the record, anything that we skipped over?

JC: No, I can't think of anything. ... I don't know if you get a sense of it, ... if I had to sum it up, I did my best. I tried never to ... hurt anybody and I don't think I ever have. That's always been my philosophy on life and that's about it.

SI: You can certainly add more to the transcript if you would like.

JC: I think we, you and I, have whipped this to death. [laughter]

SI: Thank you, I appreciate all of your time today.

JC: That's great, Shaun. ...

-----END OF INTERVIEW-----

Reviewed by Shaun Illingworth 2/21/14

Reviewed by John T. Cahill 3/13/14