Interview with Jean Linehan
The Town of Chevy Chase Oral History Project
Interviewed by Stephanie Brown on January 18, 2004.

STEPHANIE BROWN: This is Stephanie Brown interviewing Jean Linehan on January 18th at Maplewood Park Place in Bethesda. Jean lives currently at 4127 Woodbine Street in the Town of Chevy Chase. So Jean, you were born at the Columbia Hospital for Women?

JEAN LINEHAN: Correct. In Washington D.C., I went home to an apartment off of Connecticut Avenue, and then my parents bought a house in Chevy Chase, which was very far out of town. Actually they had come from Utah. My father went to law school at GW. And I think it was their intention to go back, but they never did. I mean they went to visit but they never went to live.

SB: Now tell about how your parents—your parents almost didn't get married, is that right?

JL: Well, that's right. Have I told you that? Yes. My father went on a mission to post-war Germany for the Mormon Church, and my mother went to Columbia University School of Journalism for her Master's Degree as he was leaving his mission. Then he went to GW, and she got angry with him for not writing to her. Finally he did apparently write her, and we do have a letter in which she said, "I'm thinking about it. I've thought about it, and yes, we will get married." So they did get married in Logan, Utah on the 23rd of December 1925, and came back for him to finish law school.

But he got a job working for David Lawrence, who was a writer and a columnist and a significant conservative, who had a business putting out newsletters, which were about what the government was doing. Particularly there was *US Law Week*, which reported on all the Supreme Court decisions, and there was *Patents Quarterly,* which started in 1929, which reported on all the patents that had—and all the patents cases, more to the point. Anyway all these—there were seven or eight of these publications. My father took a job as the editor of the Supreme Court one, *US Law Week* and went to school at night and finished up his law degree, and they never went back to Utah to live.

SB: And they lived at Woodley Park? They lived in those apartments?

JL: They lived in—across from the zoo, and walked me in my perambulator to the zoo. But they wanted to live in a house, and they decided to move to Chevy Chase, Maryland, which was really considered very far out by their friends. They went to a house at the corner of Maple Avenue and East-West Highway at the foot of the hill where East-West

Highway was cut through and Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School was being built, but the road was not completed. They bought that house for $12,000.

SB: Was that a lot? Was that a lot of money?

JL: They never commented to me on whether they thought that was too much, but when you hear what happened maybe it was. Because once the road was in and completed, cars in the early thirties, if you can believe it, were having accidents all the time. Every weekend there would be accidents and people would be coming in to use their phone and lying down on the rug, bleeding and so on. They couldn't stand it anymore, so they sold that house for $8,000.

SB: And that would have been in--?

JL: About '37. I was probably seven years old—I was probably in second grade at that time. And we moved to Beechwood Drive where I was able to walk easily to school, much more easily then. I can't remember walking to school from Maple Avenue but I must have.

SB: But that's a long way for—

JL: Oh, well it was interesting because Blackthorn was not cut through there. Aspen was. So we had two blocks of—sort of like a field in the backyard, and that was where the River Styx was. You may not have known that but that's where it was. [Laughs]

SB: So whom did you play with? Were there other children?

JL: There were other children on Chatham that I played with, and I guess on East-West Highway. And maybe sort of all around that big square there, there were other children and we played out in the back.

SB: In the field?

JL: In the field.

SB: Was there a creek by the river? Was the River Styx a creek?

JL: No! No, there wasn't any creek. I don't know where—[Laughs] I don't know where that idea came from. Except that I had a book called "Myths and Enchantment Tales", so I learned about the River Styx.

SB: So then you moved to Beechwood.

JL: We moved to Beechwood Drive, which was a great place for kids to grow up because every night after dinner everybody on the street, all the kids on the street of whatever age, played games together on the street.

SB: What kind of games?

JL: Oh, tag and kick the can, and various things like that. We'd choose up sides, and it would be people from five years old to fourteen years old all playing. I had three special friends in that block who were within a year or two of my age, and we played with dolls at each other's houses. The four of us, we would keep changing from one place to another. We would get mad at each other, and I would move my dolls to Peggy's house, and then Dee Dee would move her dolls to Barbara's house, and then we would switch back the other way. [Chuckles]

But anyway, Beechwood Drive is where we lived during most of—well I guess virtually all of World War II. My house was one of the farthest away from Leland Junior High that you could go to for an air raid drill. When we'd have air raid drills, there were five people assigned to my house, and off we'd go as fast as we could.

SB: So five people would come to your house? Then once you were assembled—

JL: We would go to the basement.

SB: You would go the basement. So what happened at Leland then?

JL: Leland was where we all went to school.

SB: By this point you were in junior high school?

JL: Yes. Oh, excuse me. Yes, I have skipped over Chevy Chase Elementary which I should not do, because when I went to kindergarten there the kindergarten rooms opened into the hallway and they had outside doors as well.

SB: Onto the street side?

JL: No, onto the playground side. One day I took my favorite doll Marie, to show her off and we had a fire drill. And I was so worried she was going to be burned up but she was not. We had, between the two buildings—we had a courtyard in the middle, and we had in the rear between the two buildings the long hall, the buildings were made of brick, but the long hall was made of wood and it made noise every time you walked through it. And everybody would run through it because it made noise, and that was fun.

My mother joined the PTA and when she did they asked her what she would like to do, which committee she would like to be on, and she said she would like to start a library. Because there was no library at that school, or any other elementary school in the county at that time. And the PTA president said, "Well Mrs. Dinwoodey, when you are the PTA president, you can do it." So Mrs. Dinwoodey became the PTA president and she and Marian Holland, the author of *Billy Had a System* and *The Big Ball of String*,

who lived up across the circle from the school, started the library. There's a whole history of the library that you can get and look at.

SB: Now, how did they start the library? Did they raise money?

JL: They raised money.

SB: How did they raise money? From the neighborhood?

JL: From the parents, and selling books.

SB: Like books that—Second-hand books?

JL: No. Little books. New books. They had an arrangement with somebody. Scholastic maybe? I don't know. The book sales were always in the long hall. I remember that.

SB: And this would have been about '38, maybe? 1938? Or was it during the war?

JL: This would have been—the library actually opened in the year that I was in seventh grade at Leland.

SB: So that would have been about 1942?

JL: Yeah, probably. Or late '41. I don't have a copy of that history but I'm sure the school does.

SB: Was Chevy Chase Elementary K-6 then?

JL: Oh, yes.

SB: You were there for seven years--

JL: Well, I actually went there for six years, because Mrs. Anna P. Rose, who was the principal, helped me individually, if you can imagine. She tutored me to pass some kind of test, which enabled me to skip second grade. I was put into a second-third combined classroom. I guess they had that number of children. I went next to fourth grade.

SB: How about that. And you were the only one?

JL: I was the only one.

SB: What did you think about it?

JL: Now, I think it was probably a mistake because—well, no. I wouldn't have all the close friends that I have from B-CC if that hadn't happened. But two things happened to me that enabled me to have these close friends. First of all, I was able to skip that grade, but I was socially not old enough to have done that. But secondly, in eighth grade Montgomery County, or at least Leland, put in what we would call today a tracking system. Which meant that the people who had gotten the best grades in something or other were all put in the same homeroom.

SB: This would have been about 1943? You would have been about 13?

JL: Probably. I still have many of those as my closest friends.

SB: How about that?

JL: Yeah, I just heard from one yesterday.

SB: That's wonderful. Because you were put together because you had similar abilities, and then you stayed together.

JL: Well, we stayed together. We stayed in—didn't really stay together all told, but we stayed together in friendship.

SB: So you went to Chevy Chase until about—

JL: Until '41.

SB: And then you were at Leland.

JL: I was at Leland. I walked to Leland. And one day, it was a Sunday before Christmas, and every year my mother used to put on a *Charles Dickens Christmas Carol* at the Mormon Church where we belonged. And she had a number of us at our house rehearsing various roles in it. I mean you read them. You didn't have to remember them. But she had organized—she had rewritten it into a play. Really a remarkable woman. Some of us were upstairs playing around, and others were rehearsing, and we would change from one to the other. And at one point people came screaming down the stairs saying, "Mrs. Dinwoodey! The Japs have bombed Pearl Harbor!" And my mother said, "Get busy and get to work here!" She thought they were kidding. And it was, of course, true. It was December 7th, and it was true. So the next day we all—now Leland at that time had a wonderful auditorium. The auditorium was surrounded by corridors. It had glassed in walls where you could see everybody, and an upstairs balcony, and we all sat in there and listened to President Roosevelt give his speech declaring World War II.

Then the other thing that I remember from that was that we would—we at least one time had a raffle or an auction of things, and each class brought in stuff. Our class brought in food, two or three bags full of food. My parents had given me a hundred dollar check, and I bid on the food. Other people got radios and stockings, but I got food. [Laughs]

SB: And what did your mother think about that?

JL: I don't know. She was very nice about it. [Laughs]

SB: So the children bid. It wasn't a parent event. It was a children's event.

JL: Well, the parents sent the money.

SB: The parents sent the money, but the children made the choices. And the money went to—?

JL: Raise money for the war effort.

SB: What was it like in the town during the war?

JL: Well, I've had an interview with Julie [Thomas] about that, too, so I'll give you the short version. My father was on the block committee or something. Whatever they called it. And he would walk around at night with other men and make sure that the blackout curtains didn't let any lights out so that they could be seen from the sky. My mother—oh, and let's see. His business by this time—he was very much involved in the same business—the publishing business that David Lawrence had started. It was a business that explained what the government was doing, in publications. It was more needed than ever with this war effort, so it prospered while others were not prospering particularly. It was threatened that it would fall apart on bank holiday, but it did not. It went better. It got better and better. Anyway, my mother and I, and I guess my sister—

SB: Who was?

JL: Who was Judy, who was four years younger than me. We would go over to the cafeteria on Saturdays where Mrs. Sowers, the school dietitian, taught us all how to can fruits and vegetables, and she also taught the mothers about nutrition. And my mother learned an awful lot, which she passed on to us during the war. Those are the two things that I remember. Of course we—oh, I found in our effects five or six or seven ration coupon books which I have given to the Chevy Chase Historical Society.

SB: And then your brother was born a year—

JL: Well, my brother was born in '43. By that time my mother was the president of the League of Women Voters, but you couldn't continue to do that if you were pregnant of course. So she stopped that. Being pregnant, she stopped being the president of the League of Women Voters.

SB: When David was born she was working with—

JL: She had been actually working for pay on books about the English language for young kids, like *See Dick and Jane* kind of books.

SB: Was she working from home?

JL: No. She was—Oh. We had a maid. We had a full-time maid at Beechwood Drive.

SB: Did she live in, or did she come every day?

JL: I think she lived in.

SB: What was her name? Was she black?

JL: Well, yes of course. There were several.

SB: Did she wear a uniform?

JL: Oh, yes, yes, yes, yes. I mean it wasn't very unusual at that time, so anyway, mother stopped working after Judy was born.

SB: After Judy, or after David?

JL: After Judy was born. That didn't mean that we didn't have the maid anymore but we still—but I was going to say, after David was born, we moved to Meadow Lane and Mother got involved with the Charter Movement that recreated the governmental system in Montgomery County which had been a boss system run by E. Brook Lee of Silver Spring, a developer and landowner. The government was run by a commission appointed by the governor.

SB: Of the state?

JL: Yeah. The state appointed our leaders.

SB: For the whole county?

JL: Yes. It doesn't seem reasonable at all now does it? Well, the Brookings Institution wrote a whole book about how it was unreasonable, and some of the civically minded people there around, created a committee called the Charter Committee and put on the ballot a question saying counties can have their own government created by themselves. And one of the men who was on that committee lives in this building. He's 94. He was a friend of my mother's.

My mother used to put on her red hat—I wish I had that—and go out and give speeches about how important it was to run our own lives, our own government.

SB: Where would she speak?

JL: Oh, probably to women's groups. I have no idea. So in 1944 the question failed on the ballot.

SB: On the state ballot in November of '44?

JL: On the state ballot. No county had home rule at that time. That's what they called it. Home rule. We wanted it. Nobody else voted for it, so it didn't pass. But much to my surprise, they turned around the next day and started over. And four years later in '48, it won.

SB: And they worked all over the state.

JL: Well, they must have. They must have.

SB: And you were about to graduate from high school, right?

JL: Yeah. By this time I was in college. It did pass and my mother was appointed to the first personnel board to create all the personnel policies of Montgomery County. What was passed was a council manager form of government, in which there were, let's say seven. I'm not sure. I think seven council members, some of who'd been on this committee of course, and they appointed a paid executive to run the government.

SB: So people elected the—

JL: Elected the council, and then they hired somebody, just like the Town of Chevy Chase does. A town manager. A county manager system. A council/manager. And then at some point between then and now, I can't tell you what year, the county executive, county council form of government, was suggested by a charter review committee. That was one of the things in the charter of the county that every so many years, and I can't tell you how many, a commission would be appointed to go over the rules, go over the charter and see what might need to be changed. My sister was appointed to it. I was very impressed. Along with this man who lives at Maplewood. They recommended a county executive, council/executive form of government, which ultimately we have now.

SB: Now, the Town of Chevy Chase at this point was Section Four and was there any—who picked up the trash? Who—

JL: Section Four of Chevy Chase was smaller than our town is now. Ray Jaeger for instance, who was one of our town managers, ran it from his house.

SB: Well, let's go on now. Let's see. Did you walk to B-CC?

JL: Oh, yes, across the railroad track and up the hill in the mud.

SB: B-CC wasn't as large then, of course, as it is now. Is that right?

JL: No, it wasn't. The two buildings that are out in front were there. It had two gyms when I was there, the girls' gym and the boys' gym. And two classroom buildings, and that's really all. Chevy Chase Elementary had only two buildings. They were parallel to each other and they had the long hall in back and later on the front was built across. Leland, when I went there, was where the town office is now. And then they tore that one down and rebuilt it over where the tennis courts are.

SB: So there were two Leland Junior Highs before it was leveled?

JL: That is correct. And they did a rotten job of building it the second time.

SB: Why did they tear it down?

JL: Which one?

SB: The first time. Why did they tear down the original? They outgrew it? Or it was cheaper to tear it down than to fix it?

JL: I'm thinking. I don't know. I don't remember. I do know that the second time there weren't enough children in our area and they had to combine it with Western Junior High. And they decided to keep Western Junior High and do something with the Leland building.

SB: And this was in the—this is recent. This is fifteen years ago, was it?

JL: Yes, because—well, more than that probably because it was '89 when we celebrated the opening of the Leland Center and it had been at least five years in the decision process and the building process.

SB: So almost twenty years.

JL: Well, I could tell you. My youngest son Peter went there. Peter graduated in'83 from B-CC and he was in the first class of ninth graders to go to B-CC.

SB: So Leland was seven, eight, nine?

JL: Yes, it was. It was a building that was extra, county owned, and the county didn't know what to do with it. The town wanted to have an impact on what they did to it. Cathy Wolf and I were appointed to the committee, along with, of course, some of the town council members who came to the meetings. Jane Lawton was, I think, the chair of the town council. They didn't call it mayor then. Bill Wildhack was very helpful. Anyway, there were people from Park and Planning Commission, education department, the county budget people. All sorts of people that we met over and over and over. Oh, and I had already been involved in a remake, a revitalization of Chevy Chase Elementary. Oh that was interesting, that was when—

SB: Wait, now let's go—

JL: Yeah, make sure which we're talking about.

SB: So you finished B-CC in '47 and you went off to the University of Utah for a year.

JL: Well, I went—Oh. I didn't write that down did I? I went to Swarthmore, and then I spent my junior year at the University of Utah.

SB: It was a year "abroad."

JL: Yes, it was my year "abroad." That's right.

SB: Did you have family connections at Swarthmore?

JL: No.

SB: How did you choose Swarthmore?

JL: I was a very accommodating daughter. My mother went and talked to the college counseling office—

SB: At B-CC?

JL: At B-CC. And she talked to her friend Ralph Himptstead who was the executive director of American Association of University Professors, and she got a list of five or six colleges that she thought would be good for me. This was in probably tenth grade. She and the counselor arranged my schedule for the next two years so that I would be sure to have the courses that were needed to get in any of these—you know. And I got into Vassar, and I got into Swarthmore, and I chose Swarthmore because they gave me a scholarship. A little one.

SB: A named scholarship, or—?

JL: Alumni scholarship.

SB: Alumni. And this was a merit-based? This was before the days of financial aid scholarships? This was a merit scholarship?

JL: Well, definitely. The whole cost of Swarthmore at that time was twelve hundred dollars. [Laughs]

SB: For four years?

JL: No, for a year.

SB: A year at Swarthmore for twelve hundred dollars.

JL: And I got five hundred. So that's not too bad.

SB: That's a chunk. [Laughs] That's almost half. That's wonderful. How did you get up there? Did you take the train?

JL: Yeah.

SB: You took the train to Philadelphia and—?

JL: Well, I took the train to Philadelphia and then took the Westchester Local to Swarthmore. Or my parents would drive me sometimes. One time my mother drove me. David came along because he was a little kid, and he said, "Mother, it's all right. She's stopped crying now." [Laughs]

SB: Was it hard to leave home?

JL: It was hard to leave home, yeah.

SB: I mean, you were the eldest, too, so it must have been hard for your parents.

JL: Must have been. I would guess so.

SB: They didn't let on. So you were at Swarthmore until '51, and then you came back to Washington.

JL: And I had many interviews, and I couldn't find a job. Senator Morse, do you know who he is? He was a very influential Independent. He had been a Republican and he became, ultimately I think, a Democrat, but he had been an Independent. And he was very well known for strong views and for speaking up in the Senate, and he was a friend of my parents. He offered me a job if—now, get this: I had gotten a political science degree from Swarthmore and was a member of Phi Beta Kappa, and he wanted to know whether I took shorthand.

SB: Because you were—?

JL: A girl.

SB: Well did you—?

JL: I didn't take shorthand.

SB: They don't teach that at Swarthmore.

JL: No they don't, and I didn't learn it. I did learn typing somewhere. Oh, I learned typing at B-CC I guess. My husband John will probably tell you typing was the most influential thing he ever learned because he had to do it all of his career.

SB: So you didn't go to work for Senator Morse?

JL: I did not. I went to work for a very brief time, for a brief interval for the American Alumni Council. My father's—by this time the Bureau of National Affairs had separated from David Lawrence's operation, and David Lawrence had offered that part of his company to the employees—or to five of the employees, the managers, led by my father in 1947. And they decided that they would do it but they wanted to enable everybody to be involved. All the employees to own it. And they set up what is still the first, oldest, fully employee-owned company in the country.

He was president, founding president. And his vice president was John Stewart. Well, John Stewart had a brother, Ernie Stewart, who was coming to Washington to set up an office for the American Alumni Council, which was an organization of alumni directors, and alumni fundraisers, and alumni publications people try to do a better job and learn from each other.

SB: College alumni?

JL: College—well, independent schools also.

SB: And it was a networking—? What we would think of as a networking—?

JL: It—well, what we would think of—yeah. But it did not have a Washington office. He was to set up the Washington office. Somebody's secretary in North Carolina was—from the University in Chapel Hill—was probably going to come and work for him. And could I help until then, because I didn't have a job.

SB: And you were living at home?

JL: And I was living at home.

SB: And home was still Beechwood Drive, or—?

JL: By this time it was Meadow Lane.

SB: Meadow Lane. It was 7200 Meadow Lane.

JL: So I went to work for him for a brief time, and the woman from North Carolina decided not to come, and he wanted me to stay, and I stayed. And I stayed for nine years. The two of us started the office and I continued to be the second for most of that period as we grew in staff. And the thing that I enjoyed most about it was I ran conferences, and I was the one who worked with the magazine editors, the alumni magazine editors from around the country.

SB: Did you travel?

JL: Yes.

SB: To different universities?

JL: Well, to different meetings with people. We had nine different divisions and regions, and we would have meetings everywhere. I didn't go to every one, but I did go to a lot.

SB: Where was the office? Was it downtown?

JL: The office was at 1785 Massachusetts Avenue, which is a beautiful, historic building where Andrew Mellon lived and began to be interested in the paintings that he ultimately donated to the country.

SB: But how did you get there? How did you get to work? Did you drive? Did you drive with your father downtown?

JL: Yes. As a matter of fact, I did drive with my father downtown. He would be going to the Bureau of National Affairs and I would get off and walk across Dupont Circle. I haven't mentioned to you that when he was first working for BNA, it was on M Street and 22nd across from what's now Blackie's House of Beef. And there were all kinds of little—it looked like Baltimore looks today with many, many little row houses and steps and so on, and alleys. And Mother would say—sometimes mother would say, "Would you like to go downtown and get Daddy?" Could you imagine wanting to go downtown in the car?

There was always a parking place out front on M Street, but we would go in and Daddy, if he wasn't ready, he would give me a big piece of yellow paper and a soft, black pencil and I would do something with it.

But anyway, when I was working for the American Alumni Council, most of the time I came with my dad, which meant that he got there very early and so I got there very early. But that was okay. [Chuckles]

SB: And when did you come home? Was it an eight to five kind of day?

JL: Well, a little longer on both ends. Yeah. I could go home on the bus. The L2 went up 18th Street, and I could walk home and get off at Chevy Chase Circle and change buses and go to Thornapple and walk home. That worked, too.

One time there was a terrible, terrible snowstorm. We were invited to the Stewarts', John Stewart and his wife Helen, for dinner. The Dinwoodeys, and Ernie and Loie Stewart, and John Stewart and his wife. Anyway, this terrible snowstorm occurred. The two men from BNA came and got us, Ernie and me. And it took us something like four hours to get to Arlington, by which time Helen Stewart had drunk all the martinis. [Laughs]

SB: How did you get back?

JL: I don't remember that part. I just remember a long, long period. And then at one time Judy was working down near Dupont Circle for the Boy Scouts. On S Street and Connecticut. And a woman who was working with me and I picked Judy up in a snowstorm and it took us hours and hours and hours to get home again.

SB: Now what was your mother doing then in the '50s when David was still little? He was still in school in the neighborhood.

JL: Well one thing that she did was she led a church group that—a book club kind of, you might say. But it was mostly mother explaining who Hawthorne was, and who Benjamin Franklin was. Her research was very, very thorough.

SB: What did you do besides go to work?

JL: Well, one thing was I joined the Choral Society. I joined one down on Massachusetts and Thirteenth. I had always been a tenor since high school. That was one of my favorite things to do in high school was to belong to the choir. Faye Finley Shaw was the choir director, and she taught us well. We sang without music, and without accompaniment. And we were good. There were probably fifty of us. We had that for a class. Maybe I was an alto then.

But when I went to the University of Utah, I think that's when I got interested in being a tenor, because it was more comfortable. We sang—oh, I can't tell you which piece, but anyway, we sang with Maurice Abravenel and the Utah Symphony. It was probably Bach or Mozart. I'm not sure.

So when I came back to Washington, I did join a chorus. But it was quite small and just getting started, and wasn't doing too well. I went to a program at the National Cathedral, of the chorus there. Not the church chorus, but the other one. And I decided I would try for that. And I did. I tried out, and I got to be a tenor there. It was called the Washington and Cathedral Choral Societies, so obviously it had been put together from two.

SB: And this was in about '55? '56?

JL: Maybe. Yeah. No it was—well it would have been at least '54. And I met a very nice tenor, who introduced me a very nice other tenor with whom I have been married for many, many years. [Chuckles]

SB: Forty-four this year, right?

JL: Forty-five this year.

SB: Forty-five. So you were married in '59.

JL: '58. So it's already been forty-five.

SB: So, after you married John Linehan from Danvers, Massachusetts—

JL: That's the one.

SB: You moved to Georgetown. Is that right?

JL: No, I moved to Georgetown before, which was very clever of me. I was separating myself from my family kind of. You know, trying to get on my own. And I did move to Georgetown and that made me—I don't know whether John would have pursued me all the way to Chevy Chase or not. I don't know. [Laughs] But anyway, it worked out well.

So anyway, we moved into my apartment. He had an apartment at 1914 G Street, which is now part of the World Bank building. A World Bank building. His apartment was sixty-four steps up, on the fourth floor. No elevator. It cost $52.50 a month. My apartment was on the second floor of 3016 Dumbarton Avenue in Georgetown. I had a—it was an odd apartment. Oddly shaped apartment. You went in the door, and then you went down a long hall. And then ultimately you got to the living room, and the bedroom, and the kitchen, and so on. In back of the living room, a nice porch with wisteria growing. That was nice.

Anyway, I was paying $105. Twice John's, exactly. So we kept John's and we rented it out to people from the World Bank. These were people who—all we could figure was that they had never had to take care of anything themselves, because they certainly didn't take care of our apartment. We had to come in and clean up every time somebody would leave. So we finally gave that up.

But we were still paying $105 for our apartment on Dumbarton Avenue. And one day we got a message that the rent was going up to $125, all in one fell swoop like that! Can you imagine? Terrible! So that precipitated our looking for a house. We looked everywhere. We looked in Arlington, and we looked on Fessenden Street in downtown, and in Chevy Chase, D.C., we looked on Oliver Street. I don't know. John could maybe tell you others. And we found—one day we were going to my parents for dinner and there was a sign saying Open House. So we went into see this open house, and we liked the way this house was set up, and it cost—the price was—I think the price was $28,500.

SB: Wow. And this was 1960?

JL: Yes.

SB: And that's when you moved to 4127 Woodbine Street.

JL: That's when we moved. But it took a long time to work that out because the man who owned the house was in the foreign service and he had brought back huge, huge furniture which wasn't appropriate for this house at all. And he had painted the house chartreuse inside, not outside. He had done a lot of other things like make a new bathroom. I think I—I know I told you that they had to take the roof off to get the tub into the new bathroom they made out of the closet. And we were loath to get this house that was chartreuse, although we knew we would be painting it anyway. So, what we ended up doing, after I had taken my valiums [laughing] that I went to the doctor's to get because I was having headaches, we ended up paying $23,500.

SB: So you talked him down?

JL: Five thousand less.

SB: Because there was so much work?

JL: Because it was a buyer's market. And poor, dear man he didn't make—he made some money anyway. John's favorite thought about it was that it had no grass to mow. He had mowed a half acre of grass in Danvers every week. And it didn't have any. It had pebbles in the back, and in the front—well there wasn't any grass. I guess there were bushes or something.

When we came out there after we had bought it, we came out and he showed—the appointment was to show us how to operate equipment. He said, "Look what I did for you." And he had put down this row of turf in the front that we were horrified to see. So we tried to make it grow and it never did. Jeff Kanne [a neighbor] was remarking the other day that we had remarked to him when he was trying to sow grass in his yard that it wasn't going to work. And it didn't. It's very hard to sow grass.

SB: So tell me, when you lived on Woodbine Street, who were your neighbors? Who lived in our house at 4129?

JL: Betsy and Buddy Gilman. And they live in California, and I hope they are okay because we didn't hear from them at Christmas. And they had five kids. And across the street were the Patches. And they began to have more children, and he had told her that she could have the maid one day a week for every child. And she had three children, and the next birth was twins. So she got her—

SB: She got five days. [Chuckles]

JL: She got her five days, and what's more, she got her new house around the corner because this house only had two bedrooms.

SB: Now which was that? Was that the Kanne's house, or--?

JL: The Kanne's.

SB: And then who was right across from you?

JL: Mrs. Wall. Prunella Wall. She had been there a long time. She had a daughter and a son, but they were grown up. She was an expert on azaleas.

SB: And then in the MacGlashans house?

JL: I'll think. But next to us was the Youngs, Robert Young. And they had four children, older than ours. And as you know, as you go up the street up the hill, you lose touch with the people up the hill. Although when our kids were in elementary school they were very—we were very good friends with the Speidens who lived in the house that's being remodeled now. And we went with them several times skiing in New Hampshire and Vermont.

SB: Were there block parties?

JL: No.

SB: But was there sort of street life, more than there is now because people didn't have air conditioning? Did your kids play in the street?

JL: Oh, no. No. You couldn't play in our street because cars wouldn't see you.

SB: But did they play in everyone's yard?

JL: Well, they played with each other. They certainly played with the Speidens. The Speidens had a side yard. They played in our backyard. We had dogs. We had Shelties, and we bred them a couple times.

SB: And then did you have the puppies when you bred them? Or did they go somewhere else to have puppies?

JL: Well, they went somewhere else. No, no. We had the puppies. We had the mamma dogs and they had the puppies. Well, we had one dog at a time, and then we would have maybe one of the next litter for a while. Then we sold them all.

SB: When did Denny and Mary and Peter arrive?

JL: 1961, '63, and '65.

SB: So you were in the house. You were already in the house before you ever had children?

JL: Oh, yes. Yes we were.

SB: And when did you build the addition on the house?

JL: The back addition we built—let's see. Denny was going to first grade. So when would that be?

SB: '66? '67?

JL: Yeah. And we built the front one when Mary's son Jacob was going to kindergarten.

SB: So that would have been—?

JL: '87.

SB: And what did you do while your children were small? You didn't work from '60 to '66.

JL: Well, when you adopted children in those days, you couldn't have a job.

SB: The woman couldn't have a job.

JL: Yes. The mother had to be home. Since I had a monthly publication that I was putting out, there wasn't any way I was going to be able to drop it in seconds and take a baby. So I dropped it in early '61 and went home and spent nine months waiting. [Laughs]

John and I went to—every time we went out of town we would tell the adoption agency, which was the DC Public Welfare, that we were leaving and give them my sister's phone number, and tell them to call her and tell her to call us. She would know where we were. Well, we had hardly arrived at John's mother's house in Danvers, and she was at the grocery store getting food for us when a call came from Judy, "They have a little boy for you." Well, we waited until John's mother came home. She said, "I would

have been out the door. You didn't need to wait for me." Anyway, so we did wait and then we came directly home and got Denny.

SB: Oh my. And how old was he?

JL: Denny was six months. Generally adopted kids were older than they are now. Mary was three months. And Peter was nine months. Peter had had pilactic stenosis, which is projectile vomiting. Our doctor told us it was one of the things that doctors liked best because it was easy to fix. It's just a little valve. So he was nine months. He was an after-thought. They called us. We didn't call them. They called us and said, "Would you like another child?" and we said, "Well, yeah. Okay."

SB: So when he came, you had three children under five. You had a houseful.

JL: Yes. Oh yes.

SB: Did you have help?

JL: I had Creola Caraway. [Laughs] Isn't that a wonderful name? She came every two weeks, or something like that, to clean and let me out. No, but I really—I didn't really have much help. But we did send them to St. Aidan Montessori School, so I had those hours in the morning where I took care of one and had the other two in school.

SB: And then you went back to work in '66.

JL: Well I went back to work part-time, and that's what Dallas Read did. She was able, and she is still able today, to get people to do—She told us one time, "You can find somebody to get anything you need done if you will pay them to do it. Anything you need done." And she arranged for her husband's trips to the doctors, she arranged—she has arranged for all sorts of things. But this is apropos of the fact that we had an all-woman office. None of us worked full-time. None of us. But she was able to manage that.

The project that I was working on was funded by the Labor Department Manpower Division. They were interested in the fact that people in the service in Vietnam had learned the clinical laboratory field, and when they'd come back and get out of the service, they didn't have any credentials. And so what we did was to help people in the field set up a intermediary step, a ladder so that people could get up to be medial technologists or at least medical technicians. There was no such thing as a medical technician in the civilian laboratory field. And we set up four laboratory tests with the help of Educational Testing Service, and I was the point person in the office for that.

SB: Where was the office?

JL: At Pooks Hill Road in Bethesda.

SB: What was Bethesda like then?

JL: Well, Denny would have told you that it was much, much, much too crowded, but it wasn't. It didn't have any of these high-rise buildings.

SB: Was it a busy downtown? A busy, not downtown, a busy street life? An market-day kind of—?

JL: No. No.

SB: Restaurants?

JL: No. No. One or two. The Post Office, the Madonna of the Trail, the Farm Woman's Market. Every so often when I'm waiting at a light I look and I try to see something that was here at that time. The Bethesda Theater has been much in the news lately because it's being renovated as an apartment house, and the theater itself is going to be a legitimate stage. And it never says anywhere in these articles that this building was used for graduation from B-CC.

SB: Because B-CC didn't have an auditorium.

JL: At least by the class of 1947 it was used. We lined up in the alley beside it, and walked in to *Pomp and Circumstance*. And don't ask me who spoke, because I don't remember. [Laughs] I remember who spoke at Peter's graduation. They had Art Buchwald, because a member of the class was his goddaughter. You couldn't possibly get him otherwise. And they had it at the Kennedy Center Concert Hall, and Peter was the Master of Ceremonies.

SB: Oh my. That's right, because he was president of his class.

JL: He was president of the class his senior year. Is this apropos? Can I tell you this story? Okay. In his sophomore year he ran for president of the class, which I didn't think was anything like Peter because Peter's so quiet. But anyway, he did and his girlfriend was his agent, and his motto was, "If you don't vote for Peter Linehan, you'll probably vote for somebody else." [Laughs] And he won. And he beat Michael Barr.

Anyhow, so the next year we said, "Are you going to run for class president again?" And he said, "No. I'm going to let Michael do it this time." Michael did. So the next year, "Are you going to run for class president?" Yes, he decided he'd run for class president. It was his senior year, and Michael ran too. And Peter won. So Peter ran the meeting. I mean the graduation.

Peter was in the Chorus, the Madrigals, the band, and the jazz band. All of which played and sang, and he had to run from one place to another. And he also had to

introduce the speaker and thank him. And he had a few little things to say, and then said, "And heeeeere's Artie!" And we're just like, "Oh my God!" Come to find out, Art Buchwald had suggested that as a way to introduce him. [Laughs] So it was okay.

But at the end, Art Buchwald had described his own high school years, which were spent in the military in World War II, and he came back from the military and went to USC or UCLA—I don't know which one—without ever having gone to high school. And he said, "Eat your heart out. You wasted four years, kids." [Laughs] So, these kids—the committee knew this, so they had an honorary present for him. And Peter got ready to produce it. He said, "We have something for you. We want to thank you for your speech, and—" And he looked under the lectern and it wasn't there. And he looked back on the chair and it wasn't there. And he looked at other people and nobody knew anything about it at all. And he said, "Well, it's like Christmas. It's the thought that counts." [Laughs] And ultimately they found it backstage, and it was an honorary degree from Bethesda Chevy Chase High School. [Laughs]

SB: [Laughing] Well that's wonderful. And he was seventeen, eighteen years old and he came up with this. That's wonderful. So they all went to Chevy Chase School, and then Leland?

JL: Well, Peter went to Chevy Chase and Leland, and then to four years of B-CC. Denny went to Chevy Chase and Leland, and kind of dropped out of school. Never finished. He went to B-CC for a while, and he went over to Virginia and lived with friends and went to school there. I don't know what equivalent he might have had, but he never finished high school.

And Mary—well the first thing we discovered about Mary having a problem was that—first of all, Mary was the sweetest, quietest baby. She would sit in her little seat, you could take her anywhere and visit somebody, and she would just sit and smile. And then something triggered her motor activity and she began waking at night. In the middle of the night, climbing up on things. She was very good at climbing. She could climb this door jam, and over there and back down, as a little girl. And I don't want to say anything more about that, but in any event, Mary went to a special school after that.

SB: So you were on the PTA. You were involved with the PTA?

JL: I was involved with the PTA, yes.

SB: At all three schools.

JL: At all three schools, yes. Particularly at Chevy Chase Elementary where we got involved in a renovation. I guess it was a million dollar renovation, which is nothing now. The one they just did was seven million I think.

SB: But it was a lot then. It was a lot in the early ‘70s.

JL: Yes, it was. Sally Troyer was the president at one point. Several different people were president of the PTA, and I was vice president. And I’ve never liked being the one stand out person, oddly enough. [Chuckles]

SB: You like to be the number two—?

JL: Yeah. I thought up a lot of things to do, and good people to get to do them, and got them to do them. But—

SB: Now what about the town? When did the town become the town and not Section 4?

JL: You’ll have to find that out. I don’t know. It’s been in the last twenty years. And there was a discussion—there was a postcard vote about what it should be called. It had to do with Section 8, which is up where Dallas lives, beside the Leland Center and on up by the park. And they wanted to join us, and they did.

There was the question of whether our town had the right to complain about big buildings going up in Bethesda. And because we were not on the edge of Bethesda, we didn’t abut it, we didn’t have the right to complain. So I think that was the really compelling force. And it happened.

SB: It happened. Did you serve on the council?

JL: Never. No. My father did.

SB: They were still living on Meadow—

JL: When he was on Beechwood I think. Way back then he was on the town council. I remember they used to walk. The town council would walk the eleven miles of sidewalks, or roads, or whatever just to check it out.

SB: There are eleven miles of sidewalk?

JL: That’s what I remember.

SB: And there were sidewalks—Were there always sidewalks as long as you can remember?

JL: No. No, there were not always sidewalks. But there used to be a rule that if you wanted a sidewalk, you had to pay.

SB: For the construction?

JL: Yes.

SB: So could you have a street that had sidewalks every other house then?

JL: Oh no. No, no, no. You had to have the whole street—If your block wanted it.

SB: And is that why some blocks have sidewalks and some don't?

JL: I think it is. I think it is.

SB: Well how about that.

JL: Well, they're not across from us.

SB: I know. I know. Which I've always thought was curious. Well I think that's a good place to stop. [Laughs] Is there anything that you wanted to talk about?

JL: That I can enlighten people about? No.

SB: Now I know that's not true. [Chuckles] Well, this has been a wonderful interview.

END OF INTERVIEW