

Rancho Cucamonga Oral History Project Interview Summary Sheet

INTERVIEWEE: James C. Frost

INTERVIEWER: Margo McBane

PROJECT: Rancho Cucamonga Oral History Project

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AUDIO EDITOR: Margo McBane

BIOGRAPHICAL SYNOPSIS OF INTERVIEWEE:

Jim's great grandfather, George Frost, knew the Chaffey Brothers in Canada and moved to the Etiwanda area in 1882 to work for them. George was a horticulturist. George was born in Britain and Vanelia Utman, his wife, was born in Germany. After the Chaffey Brothers went to Australia, George and a handful of other pioneer families put the infrastructure of the community together, building churches and a community center. George was a member of the Congregational Church. George purchased an existing general store in the mid-1890s, which he named Frost and Son. George served as the first postmaster, and then passed that job onto his nephew Chester (Chet) Frost, who served in that position for 40 years. George also served on the school board from 1886 to 1888. Jim's grandfather, John Frost, was born in Canada in 1883. John and Vanelia joined George in Etiwanda, after the baby was born. Charlie Frost, George and Vanelia's second child, was purportedly the first boy born in Etiwanda. John Frost was in the first graduating class in 1888. John became a member of the school board in the 1930s. From Jim's other side of his family, his grandmother was a Morris and moved to the area from Nebraska in 1904. She was the daughter of John Todd Morris, who lived in the Norton-Fisher House, which was across the street from the Chaffey-Garcia house. John Todd Morris, initially lived in Ontario, and became the first chairman of the Ontario Cemetery Association, which built Bellevue Cemetery. Jim's mother is from a Danish family, named the Hansens. Her grandparents lived in San Bernadino prior to the turn of the century. Grandfather Hansen became the manager of the First National Bank of Cucamonga, and then became the manager of the Banks of America in Cucamonga. Later he moved to Ontario to become the manager of the Bank of America in Ontario. Jim's relatives owned 40 acres in Etiwanda. George first started with raisin grapes, then he converted entirely into citrus. Jim's grandfather, John and his brother Will, bought the general store from their father in 1906, and it became the Frost Brothers Store. The store burned down in 1966. Jim's grandparents had 3 boys and a girl. Jim's father was born in 1906. The girl

died in the 1918 flu epidemic, and his brother died 2 years later in a boating accident at Big Bear Lake. A second son died in World War II. Jim's father went to Pomona College and worked for Pacific Telephone for 42 years. He served on the school board in the 1950s. Jim Frost work with the first committee to organized the incorporation of the city. After incorporation, he served as the first Mayor. Currently he is City Treasurer.

TRANSCRIPT

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MM In terms of what we covered before and what we want to get back on tape, is kind of a summary of your family background starting with your first relatives that came here with George Frost and when they settled here and why they came and where they came from.

JF That's one of those things that's hard to summarize very much. My great grandfather, George Frost, knew the Chaffey Brothers in Canada and moved down and into this area in 1882 to work for them. Great grandfather was a horticulturist and performing those activities here as well as served as trustee for non-resident landowners. George and Vanelia Utman Frost, George was born in Canada, or excuse me, born in Britain. He came down from Canada, married a German woman, Vanelia Utman and joined a handful of other pioneer families that basically put the community of Etiwanda together after the Chaffey Brothers had gone on to Australia. As in many founding communities there was a core group that put together the community centers and the churches and built the infrastructure after the basic design had already been created. My grandfather, John Frost, was born in Canada in 1883. He and his mother came down to Etiwanda after he was born. George proceeded him here without the family. Purportedly Charlie Frost, who would have been my great uncle, my grandfather's brother, was the first boy born in Etiwanda, in the Etiwanda

community after they came down. The other corner of the family, my grandmother, was a Morris, moved in from Nebraska in 1904. She was the daughter of John Todd Morris, lived interestingly enough in the Norton-Fisher House, which was across the street from Chaffey-Garcia House that you have seen. Which was where the first telephone company basically was established and the first switchboard was in there and that's a part of the historic landmark also in the process of being preserved. Soon after that, John Todd Morris, who lived in Ontario, became first chairman of the Ontario Cemetery Association. My grandmother had a brother die early in the turn of the century and there wasn't a perpetual care cemetery in the area and my great grandfather Morris, and four other people put the Ontario Cemetery Association together, Bellevue Cemetery. Great grandpa Morris was a surveyor and he did several years of survey in Bellevue. The other corner of the family, my mother, was a Hansen, Danish. Her family, her grandparents were in the San Bernardino area prior to the turn of the century. My grandfather Hansen became the manager of the First National Bank of Cucamonga and became the first manager of the Bank of America in Cucamonga when it was taken over by Bank of America. Subsequently he moved down to Ontario and became manager of the Bank of America in Ontario after that. So that kind of brings all the corners together.

MM One question for clarity sake is, your great-grandmother, how do you say her name?

JF Vanelia.

MM And her last name was Utman?

JF Utman.

MM Okay, for transcribing sake.

JF Right.

MM And with Hansen, that's spelled?

JF With an E.

MM Okay.

JF Danish E, Swedish O.

MM Okay. For George Frost then, he worked with the Chaffey Brothers and as you said he helped establish the infrastructure for the area. Did he himself buy land?

JF He did have some land, I'm not sure how much. I was fairly small and most of the ownership in Etiwanda was I think, with exception of the vineyards, and I would guess about 40 acres.

MM What was he growing?

JF Initially he started out with raisin grapes. I think that grapes grew very, very quickly and it's my understanding that several of the early citrus ranchers had a mix of both grapes, and in this case raisin grapes as well as lemons and oranges primarily. Then eventually that converted over entirely into citrus. My father was born in 1906; remembers helping to lay out the raisins to dry, I'm not sure when they were no longer grown here.

MM Is that an issue in terms of when you talk to the grape growers? They all say that you need a certain type of land, flat land and citrus growers need foothills, just for drainage and wind and temperature. Did the mixing work?

JF My understanding is it worked very well. In fact you can still see several of the

vineyards, immediately to the east of us on the other side of the freeway. We're probably in a transition zone from what you had talked about. Certainly the soil was very sandy loam here and probably worked very well on either crop.

MM Why did the citrus growers then transition only to citrus?

JF I don't know.

MM Oh, okay.

JF I'll pass on that.

MM Okay, I was just curious. Then he opened a general store in Etiwanda?

JF My great grandfather purchased an existing general store. It was built about in the mid-1880's or early 1890's and he purchased I believe in 1898. So he was one of the first owners, he served as the postmaster and the post mastership, if that's a word, past through to his nephew who was Chester Frost. Chet, who I called my uncle but he was really a cousin, served as postmaster probably from early '40's up until mid-'50's or later than that when he retired. As I mentioned earlier, one of the remembrances is when I lived in Etiwanda in about late '40's was going with Uncle Chet down Route 66 with a mailbag to meet the mail truck. They would swap mail and the mail truck had bins in it and they sorted mail on the way down the street so while they were driving to Cucamonga from here they were sorting mail in the back. They made a continual loop doing that so that was great fun.

MM So in terms of the store that he bought, the existing store, was that the only store in Etiwanda?

JF It was the only one, yes. Subsequently he sold it to his sons. Well, it was George

Frost and Son for a while and then it became the Frost Brothers store when my grandfather, John Frost and his brother Will owned the store.

MM The store was built when?

JF The general store was built in January of 1890. As near as we can tell and my great-grandfather, George Frost, acquired it in December of 1898 and then he pulled in his sons as...

MM And his sons are Will....

JF His sons Will and John in 1906 and then a year later it became the Frost Brothers Store.

MM Okay. Then did it pass down then to your father?

JF No, my dad kind of went off in a different direction. He graduated from Pomona College and went to work for Pacific Telephone and left them 42 years later. Never had another job.

MM In terms of your grandfather, was that Will or John?

JF My grandfather was John.

MM John. Okay, so did the store continue to stay in the family after Will and John?

JF It stayed in the family until the mid-'40's. Then finally left, the store burned down, arson, unfortunately, in 1966.

MM So what was the legacy, Will and John ran it beginning in 1906 until....

JF In 1906 for about 40 years.

MM Did any of their sons or children...

JF No, they sold it outside of the family. Of course Chet, who was Will's son, was the postmaster in the store forever. My dad who we just talked about was never

really actively associated with it.

MM Your dad was John's only son.

JF Not really. He had three boys and three daughters. My family may not have been all that atypical of that era. My dad had a sister die in the flu epidemic, 1918 and one of his brothers died in 1914, maybe a little later than that. I take that back, Bill died when he was 14 in a boating accident in Big Bear Lake. Near as we know they lost an oar in one of the boats and he dived in and it took three days before they found him. Then the third son, who was Jack, was killed in the Second World War. He was flying photo reconnaissance over Italy and then was missing in action for three or four years before the word came to a close. They were told, indirectly they were told through a priest, where the body had been found and buried and one of my aunts had a chance to go to Italy and visit the gravesite. It gives you a little extra feeling for the POW MIA issues that are still going on now with my grandmother having gone through that. That was a traumatic time, grandma collected antique glass during that period, it was partly therapy of having a missing son and already having lost 2 children. Years later we asked where some of these things came from and she couldn't remember, she had just blocked out that period of time completely.

MM Did the flu epidemic of 1918, from your family's stories, did it have a devastating impact on this area? Or did you hear anymore about it?

JF We didn't hear anymore about this area, but nationwide it was devastating from what I understand. Janet was less than 2 years old.

MM When she died.

JF When she died.

MM Could you describe the store? What it looked like?

JF Oh gosh, we have all seen photos of old general stores and it was one of those. You walked in the front door of the post office, on the left side, with the window, the cashiers window and the P.O. boxes, that are still there, that we have all seen and wished we had some of those. There was an island in the front or in the center where the cashiers were. Shelves on the outside, which was typical and then there was counters as I believe, down the right side and toward the back was where the meat area was. It did have a basement where some of the meat was kept and it was all kind of a cool area down there, probably where they kept ice early on. They sold gasoline and kerosene and white gas and I have never seen white gas since.

MM So was it a grocery store or a general store?

JF It was a general store. The carried absolutely everything.

MM Dry goods as well as...

JF Yes, dry goods as well. In fact we have some of the early journals that came out of the store and they charged customers and what they bought and what some of the prices were and it is just really fascinating to read some of those things. There are very few stores left of those. My wife and I inadvertently ran across one just south of Hearst Castle in San Simeon. There is one along the coast there that looked almost identical to ours.

MM What other businesses were in downtown Etiwanda in that pre-WWII period?

JF Well there really wasn't a downtown Etiwanda, there was the store here and a

school and a church, which was kind of the central cultural area I guess. Then down on Foothill and Etiwanda Avenue there was a fruit stand there and vegetable market, smaller scale and then some of the wineries and vineyards west of there.

MM What denomination was the church?

JF The church was Congregational, which was a spin-off from the early, I want to say the early Puritans, but actually they go back to the Mayflower. Then Sacred Heart Catholic Church was down on Foothill and it had been there for a long, long time.

MM But your family is Episcopalian?

JF My family is Congregational.

MM Oh they're Congregational.

JF Yes.

MM She brought the wrong notes.

JF Not even close. That's one of the things I remember from going to school here, something that will never happen again in our lifetime anyway. But there was a period, I think it was about once a month in the afternoon the Catholics would go up the street for Catechism and the Protestants would go down to the old church and we had bible sessions. "None of the above" stayed at the school and did whatever they did. That will never happen again.

MM Was there much linkage between churches of the Foothill region?

JF Not that I'm aware of but the Pastor we had, who was Loyal L. Wurt, the one that baptized me in the church, was actively involved in the Claremont churches so I

think there was some very close ties there.

MM A little bit of overlap.

JF Yes, a little bit of overlap but at our age we really weren't aware of that.

MM Was your great-grandfather, George, a founding member of the church?

JF Yes, the church was founded prior to the turn of the century. I believe the Congregational Church here was built in 1902 but the congregation itself had met in the school prior to that period. My grandparents, John and Jessie Frost, were early members of the church. I remember seeing them on the church rolls in 1906.

MM Was this a one room schoolhouse?

JF Originally it was. The school was on Etiwanda and East Avenue, northeast corner I think. My cousin Terry had some great photos of it. As you said, typical one room schoolhouse, community room and everything rolled into one. During the early years there were two school districts, there was a Perdeu School, which merged into the Etiwanda School District. Then I believe there is another school in Grapeland, which is near the mouth of, or throat of Lytle Creek. That also merged into the Etiwanda school district. And again, that's one of the things that the Chaffey Brothers put together early on.

MM Was your grandfather involved in the school district? The forming of the school district?

JF That's an interesting question. My great grandfather was a member of the school board in, I want to say 1886 to about 1888. My Grandfather Frost was in one of the first graduating classes in 1888 and Grandpa Frost was a member of the school board in the '30's and my father was a member of the school board in the

'50's. So all three generations were school board members.

MM Have you participated in the school board?

JF No, we haven't.

MM Were you going generation to generation?

JF Well, I got involved in the city early on so, no I haven't.

MM Then in terms of where they lived, where did your great grandfather live?

JF Of course during that period typically they all lived in the groves. His house was set into a 5-acre grove.

MM In his grove?

JF In his grove.

MM And where was that located?

JF His house was on the north east corner of Etiwanda and Victoria, which is just west of us, oh about 200 yards. It was set back in the grove and we lived in my great-grandfather's house when I lived in Etiwanda the first time. So it was right across the street from the schoolyard and set back probably 50 or 75 yards into the grove. Etiwanda had really great old barns, which I still remember. Huge walnut trees.

MM How big was the house? Was it, how many bedrooms, how many bathrooms?

JF It was three bedrooms, one bath. Oddly I can't remember too much of the interior other than the bedrooms we were in. Good sized kitchen. We had a wood burning stove that had been converted to gas which worked really well. I remember the house was really cold, still. We had a Siamese cat and I remember her sleeping on top of the doors to stay warm. That sounds like going barefoot to school but it

really wasn't like that.

MM What kind of house was it? Was it an Arts and Crafts style? Or?

JF I guess you would call it a Craftsman house but certainly nothing fancy, there weren't elaborate houses in Etiwanda. They were all very functional, they were grove houses, not any extra money spent in preparing them, just as this one. I don't know what style you would call this one, bungalow I guess or something.

MM Did it have a porch or anything?

JF It had a porch but just in one corner. It was set back into the house, as did this one which was later converted into a bedroom down here. The house I guess was eventually eaten by termites in the middle '60's and was destroyed as was the barn. Then again, it had just a small shed back behind the house where they kept the gasoline and some of the other stuff for farms and where we raised some of our animals. They had a carriage house which was just big enough for a carriage and then a lean-to on one side where we raised rabbits but would have been used for farm equipment then and had a room upstairs, an office upstairs.

MM In the barn?

JF This was in the carriage house.

MM Oh, in the carriage house, so that was separate from the barn?

JF It was separate, right across the area. So it was a pretty good sized set-up as far as that goes. The barn had the great hayloft and those kinds of things, with a storage area underneath,

MM Was there a garden? Did they have a little kitchen garden?

JF It was fairly small. I think Etiwanda, the community was such, and of course my

grandfather and his dad owning the grocery store, I don't think that was too much of a concern. They could probably buy vegetables cheaper than they could grow them themselves. As we mentioned the first time also, the store was the cultural center of the community. People went there almost every day for their mail and their perishables. That was the gathering place, the focal point for the community. My grandmother went there every day pretty much to buy the evening's meal.

MM Now which one of your, was it your grandfather or his other son that got the house? George's house?

JF Well, George's house....

MM Or is this George's house that you are describing?

JF This is George's house that I'm describing. We lived in that for a while and I know one of my aunts and her husband lived there right after they got married, which would have been early '40's. George died, I believe in '32 and I would have to double-check that. But the house stayed in the family for a considerable period of time after that. Then it was sold after we moved out which would have been mid-'50's. This house was built on what was the south east corner of my great grandfather's orchard. We are in the sole surviving quarter acre of what was part of his 5 acres and this house was built in 1905. So the two houses were just down the street from each other.

MM This house was built for John or for Will?

JF For John. My grandfather had this built as a wedding present in 1905.

MM George had it built for him?

JF No.

MM It was his present?

JF No, no, no. George sold the property to my grandfather. There was no giving, they didn't have that kind of money around.

MM So it was John's present to his wife.

JF Right.

MM Okay.

JF To themselves, I guess you could say that.

MM Could you describe your house, John's house?

JF It's kind of evolved over time as several of those. Well we started at the back of it and moved forward. My grandfather died in 1972, was well into his '90's. My wife and I got married in '74. At that time my grandmother was at the age where it wasn't safe for her to live alone. As it worked out, my wife and I bought the house from my grandmother at the time when she moved out to where she could receive better care. The first problem we had was a leak in the water pipe from the water lines that used to go up to the cisterns when the house was first built. The house was built without running water as were all of the grove houses of course. They all had pipes typically that went to the highest corner of the property and that's where the cisterns were and that also provided some water pressure to the homes. It had a water pump in the kitchen sink, no running water. It probably had an inside bath. It was also built without electricity. In 1905 that was borderline. I initially was surprised that a house would be built without electricity that late since many houses were being wired in the early 1890's certainly. So I thought

that was kind of a curiosity. It had a small porch in one corner on the street side, which subsequently was converted into a bedroom. A good friend of my grandparents had a serious illness. They let him live here while he was convalescing and converted the house so he would have a place to stay. So downstairs, a good sized living room, kitchen, dining room, which would have been probably fairly elaborate for then, and a couple of bedrooms and bath downstairs. Upstairs, somewhere during the evolutionary process the roof was sectioned and there was a hip roof and the upstairs was enlarged to handle the growing family. Another story that may or may not be true. When two of my great uncles, Billy, he was the one that died in Big Bear, and Jack, the one that was killed in the war, one of them broke his arm across the street at the school ground and the other broke his arm falling off the roof of the house when they were converting it. So they both had matching broken arms at the same time and there are a couple of photographs of the two of them, which is really a hoot. So the upstairs initially had a large room that was subsequently converted into about 3 small bedrooms .

MM And that happened in the...?

JF It would have happened around 1916, give or take a couple of years.

MM So it was quite a big house. You're talking 5 bedrooms.

JF Yes, it really is, it's about 1800 square feet, it's kind of long and thin so it's much larger than it looks from the street.

MM When did they install the electricity finally?

JF About 1909 or 1910. There are lots of bizarre things that happened. There needed

to be support groups of people that own old houses. We have gotten together with some of them because there are just lots of things that go wrong with them. But it was converted so either the wires were running down the outside of the walls or up through the crawl space or down through the top. So there isn't any electricity inside the walls because that was just simply too hard to do.

MM Did they have a bathroom or did you use an outhouse? And when did they include a bathroom?

JF It's always had a bathroom as long as I've known. It would have been one of the modern conveniences. There is a toilet on the back porch that happens to be inside the original phone booth from the general store. Because grandpa was a citrus rancher as well as being co-owner of the general store and grandma refused to let him inside the house when he came in from the groves unless he was stripped down and changed clothes. She would not let him inside the house to do anything. Typical of that period I'm sure.

MM I have a note here that during WWI your great-grandfather invested in Liberty Bonds? Did you know anything about that?

JF No, I don't but I would be amazed that anyone didn't. I'm trying to figure out a polite way of saying that. He would have been a successful merchant at that time and with the community efforts that Etiwanda put in, particularly, I'm sure that they did absolutely everything they could for the war efforts.

MM In terms of your uncle Will, what kind of civic participation did he have? I mean you mentioned your own father participating on the school board.....

JF Well again, those core families, especially, Will would have been born in, I'm

trying to think, John, my great grandfather is one of the eldest. There was a core group of families and Will would have been involved in the school board and in all of the civic associations.

MM Did you know anything about the Etiwanda Service Club?

JF The Etiwanda Service Club was, I guess the equivalent, if you want to call it that, of the Chamber of Commerce. The Service Club, however, such as those groups were in that era, primarily a men's group as opposed to the church ladies groups. Civic groups did just a tremendous amount of good will and service to the communities during that period. Etiwanda Service Club actually survived into the late 1970's.

MM And we have a note here that he was a member or participant of that.

JF Yes.

MM Okay. And then also that the Service Club sponsored indoor baseball teams and they built and lighted a horseshoe contest! And they also funded the annual 4th of July picnic.

JF I don't know about the indoor baseball team. Softball was the sport of the day, oh gosh, probably well into the '50's. They were almost semi-professional softball teams. Regina Winery had their own baseball team, several of the wineries had their own, we've got a couple of the trophies around here that...

MM Who participated in those? Who would be members of the softball league?

JF Primarily employees of the various industries or businesses.

MM So these are adult men?

JF Oh yeah, absolutely. We're talking serious stuff here, probably early 20-ish.

There were no school-based teams that I'm aware of. Even when I grew up, up through the early '50's there was no organized baseball in Etiwanda, or soccer, or anything else as far as that goes. Most of the activities were either during school time with outside activities, 4H or whatever. There was a good-sized baseball diamond across the street at the school that survived into the early '60's anyway. It got replaced by temporary classrooms.

MM Were these softball leagues, were they baseball leagues or softball?

JF Softball.

MM Okay. They were men because usually you associate softball with women's leagues.

JF Not out here. No, Etiwanda probably didn't have more than 1000 or 1200 residents.

MM At what time are you talking about?

JF Actually up through the late '40's, early '50's. So this was one of the cultural events of the evening I guess, we would go to softball game out here.

MM Would they happen in the evenings?

JF Probably not. I don't recall any lighting in the softball fields.

MM Would they happen on the weekends or weekdays?

JF I don't know. The 4th of July picnics were big time. You mentioned the Service Club may have sponsored that, as those were always held across the street at the school and that was again, almost the entire community would turn out for those.

MM What relationship would there be in 4th of July, was that only Etiwanda or was that a joint picnic between Cucamonga, Etiwanda and Alta Loma? Or?

JF It would have been Etiwanda and primarily was focused around the school. The school and the churches so it would have, I guess, encompassed pretty much whatever the school district boundaries would have been.

MM Those are the two main institutions in Etiwanda, you would say?

JF The churches and the schools?

MM Yes.

JF Oh yes, absolutely. As you will recall, Cucamonga was a long way away, there was nothing but vineyards between here and the next windbreaks to the east of us.

MM Were most of the residents of Etiwanda white residents? Or were there Mexicans? How would you characterize?

JF I would think the majority was probably Hispanic.

MM Of Etiwanda?

JF Of Etiwanda.

MM Oh really?

JF Yes.

MM These were the workers in the vineyards and the orchards?

JF Well, we had a mix. First of all it's hard to define where Etiwanda is. We kind of looked at the zip codes for the post office because there aren't any legal boundaries anywhere. I'm just trying to think, because we had the viticulture area here so we had a great deal of Italian descent folks. I would guess they focus into the Catholic church. Caucasians, or whites, probably not atypical, would have owned, unfortunately most of the property, Hispanics...

MM Where would the Hispanics have lived. Is there a barrio area? They weren't

living on the ranches?

JF No, not out here, there wasn't a barrio area. Proceeding the Hispanics, there was a community of Chinese, which was focused about 300 yards west of Etiwanda Avenue, on Victoria. In fact years after they had left, some of my cousins found several old mottled artifacts that came from the Chinese community. We still have some of those. I'm kind of talking around the Hispanics because the community was so integrated that, you know, I never had any feel for whites in one area or Hispanics in another or....

MM So it was more mixed?

JF Yes, you know, it was just never really an issue, I never thought about it.

MM Were they living in the groves of the white owners? Or where would they be living?

JF Well, there were very few houses. The only ones I can speak of personally are East Avenue, just south of Victoria, one of my good friends lived there. I remember his grandmother made just terrific frijoles and handmade tortillas and that's all I know.

MM Good food.

JF Yes, it was just never an issue, certainly not with us. I'm edging around your answer because I really don't know.

MM It probably wasn't something you were aware of when you were younger.

JF No and it wasn't a matter of a barrio and everybody else.

MM It wasn't like the Northtown of Cucamonga?

JF No. As I'm sure you've talked about with speaking with Hofer and others, where

there was such a close relationship between the foreman especially. In this case my grandfather, you know, it developed into more of a friendship than an employer-employee kind of thing and we just never thought about it.

MM In terms of your life, okay, your father went to Pomona and then he worked for the rest of his life?

JF Yes, he graduated Pomona College. In fact he was in San Pedro during the earthquake in the early '30's. An occupational deferment during the Second World War. He worked for Pacific Telephone of San Diego, which was the communications center for the Pacific Fleet and spent pretty much the balance of his professional life in either San Bernardino or Riverside. He graduated from college and never worked for anybody else.

MM So did you grow up in the San Bernardino/Riverside area?

JF I moved 2 or 3 times before I could remember. The earliest I can remember is living in Riverside up until I was about 4 1/2 or 5 years old. My dad worked for Pacific Telephone of Riverside. That's when we moved to Etiwanda as a family and lived in what was my great grandfather, George Frost's house. We were here until....

MM And that would be what year that you moved in there?

JF '49.

MM And you were 4 years old at that time?

JF I would have been 5 when we moved, I flunked kindergarten the first time so I went to kindergarten in both Riverside and Etiwanda so that puts me in there somewhere. I wasn't ready for kindergarten.

MM So you were born in 1944?

JF Right. Yes.

MM Okay. And what was your birthdate?

JF February 8th. Oddly enough, I'm trying to think of the formal name, the Etiwanda People's Improvement Company was incorporated on February 8, 1900, which was my birthday. That was the corporation that provided most of the infrastructure to the community of Etiwanda.

MM Who was on the family board of that?

JF I know that George Frost was one and the others I'm not sure of. I can find out for you, I'm sure.

MM But you do have relatives that were part of that.

JF Oh yes, I have relatives that were part of everything out here.

MM Alright. And so you're born, you live in other places, you finally move to Riverside and then you come here in 1949.

JF Right.

MM How long did you live in the George Frost house?

JF I'll back up a little bit, I was born in Alhambra and then I think I was down in San Diego for a while before they moved to Riverside so this is all during the war period. Then we moved up here and we moved out when I was halfway through the 5th grade so we were here for 6 1/2 years.

MM Where did you move in the 6th grade?

JF Then we moved to Ontario into what had been my grandfather Hansen's house, which we bought from him. Actually he sold it to my uncle and my uncle sold it

to my parents. So I lived in Ontario in the same home from halfway through the 5th grade until I got married in '74.

MM Why did they move from George Frost's house?

JF I really don't know what the reason would have been. It could have been for a larger house because the family was growing up. I had two older brothers and...

MM So it was three in total in your...

JF Yes, I have two brothers and that's it. At that time from my understanding there was a need to help my uncle also and buying the house from him was a way to help him out so there were a lot of things there that young kids don't know about.

MM And your father was still working at the telephone company in Riverside?

JF San Bernardino at that time. Yes, I remember his working both there in San Bernardino and Riverside.

MM What were your impressions of Etiwanda? Or do you remember what it was like to live here up until 6th grade? Or fifth grade?

JF I'm lucky I do remember most of it because when you see the old photographs and there is nothing but orange groves. Etiwanda was always a unique place. Early on of course, when we would go on a vacation or a trip or something and we would come back in the valley and we would see Cucamonga peak first and we knew we were getting close. Then we would see the trees, the windbreaks and then Etiwanda and that's when we knew we were home. Because Etiwanda was, if you back off 5 miles from it there is nothing but a patch of green between the Eucalyptus and the citrus groves and it just stood out as an island at the base of the foothills.

MM Did Etiwanda have more windbreaks than Cucamonga or Alta Loma?

JF No, no more than Alta Loma, I don't think.

MM So it wasn't, you would see windbreaks for the region?

JF For the region. Etiwanda probably had a few more because we were closer to the throat of Lytle Creek and Cajon Pass and winds were a little heavier here. In fact on the northern edge of the windbreaks up around 24th Street there was a lath grid nailed up against the north side of the trees, which isn't there anymore. It was another way to help slow the wind down a little bit.

MM Was it effective?

JF Well, it certainly had to help. Yes, the trees would have created a vortex generator to help cut the wind down.

MM How tall would the lath grid be?

JF Oh gosh, I would say at least 30 feet.

MM Oh, you're talking big.

JF Oh yeah, we're talking big time here.

MM And was that put up by the local ranchers?

JF It would have been. Again, those were the northern most wind breaks, so there is no protection from the winds coming off of the mountains above that. Bob Elingwood went up there, the former mayor of Ontario and I showed it to him early '80's. Of course, most people didn't know about it. It blew my whole train of thought...where were we headed?

MM Okay, I was asking you to describe Etiwanda.

JF Oh yeah.

MM So it's all groves and windbreaks.

JF Yes, very little else. I had a good friend on East Avenue and Etiwanda. The only way to get there is either down Victoria or through the groves. There weren't more than I would say 6 houses between Etiwanda and East Avenue. They were all set within the groves. There was really nothing else there except the groves and vineyards. To the west of us there was a wash area, sage brush and some cactus and we had a German Shepard and every few months she would come back with cactus needles in her nose from chasing cotton tails through the cactus.

MM Would people go, who lived in Etiwanda, would they go shopping in Ontario or Upland? If they needed to do major shopping?

JF Both but primarily Upland. Atwood's was there, Upland Feed and Fuel has been around since I think the turn of the century. I think Alta Loma at that time, Alta Loma, Cucamonga, were still small enough to where they probably didn't have the amenities that larger communities, Upland and Ontario, would have had. I would say Upland would have been first choice primarily.

MM Why was that?

JF Because of the qualities of stores. JJ Atwood was there and downtown Upland had a little of everything.

MM And you didn't feel Ontario had the sampling?

JF I think it did but probably not enough to justify going the extra distance. Of course early on, we're still talking horse and buggies probably until at least 1910 and when the Red Car's came in, the P and E Tracks were developed.

MM Do you remember the Red Car's?

JF No, but I remember the tracks actively being used and the depots.

MM I guess they kind of had been torn out right when you were little.

JF Yes. Of course that's how people commuted, what can I say? So that kind of decreased the need for an extra vehicle in the household of a family. My grandfather received a degree from Los Angeles Business College. He got there, he got to school.

MM Really, he commuted?

JF Yes, sure.

MM How often did he have to go?

JF I don't know. He got his diploma, that's about all I know about that part of it.

MM So you moved to Ontario and then you stayed there until you were married? And then what happened?

JF At the same time I got married this house became available because my grandmother wasn't...

MM This was '72?

JF '74.

MM '74.

JF Yes. I lived in the Ontario house through the college years and Vietnam got in the way so I wasn't there all the time but that was my home base.

MM How long were you in Vietnam?

JF 26 months. 2 years, 2 months and 2 days.

MM What was your position there?

JF There were several. My final one was I was in charge of a crew that did trouble

shooting on weapons and gunnery systems on a couple of different types of aircraft in the Air Force.

MM So you were in the Air Force?

JF Yes.

MM You stayed there the whole time? Or were you going back and forth? Or?

JF Well, during the entire 4 years, my initial job was to have been a weapons mechanic, whatever that means. I'm not sure if even the Air Force knew at the time. The first function I had in the air force was the Beale Air Force Base.

(End Side A; Begin Side B)

JF We do that, yes my career field in the Air Force was weapons mechanic and initially I was trained to load nuclear weapons and warheads on B52 aircraft. That is the first thing I did, I was stationed in Beale Air Force Base and was there for about 11 months and ultimately wound up on a team that trained crews and loaded special weapons and that's always a neat little word that's used, I thought, to describe nukes. We couldn't, we really didn't call them nukes at the time. Anyway, training people in how to safely load nuclear weapons on B52 aircraft and warheads in some missiles that the B52's carried. Then Vietnam conflict, the war was full force then and in August of '68, I went to Vietnam, at Bien Hoa Air Base. It wound up being about 18 miles up the road from my brother who was stationed in Saigon at the time. It had it's advantages. They were hard put to not let me go down and see my brother when I wanted to so I was able to see John every 2 or 3 months while we were there. Because they knew we had some leverage. One of us had the option of not going at all had we chose to do so. So I

extended my tour in Vietnam and wound up being there the 2 months, 2 years we were talking about. The final position was working nights in charge of a crew that did trouble shooting, on weapon release and gunnery systems on A37 and F100 aircraft. Which was just really a great job, something that I really enjoyed. I had been an electronic hobbyist prior to getting into the Air Force. At that time they were desperately looking for people. So prior to your enlistment they said, "What do you want to do?" I said, "I wanted to get into electronics." They said, "Fine, sign here. By the way we are going to show you how to load bombs on airplanes." Okay. Because that's what they needed at the time.

MM Did you enlist right out of high school? Or did you start college?

JF No, I had a couple years of college.

MM Where did you go to college?

JF Initially Carnegie Tech in Pittsburgh. They had electrical engineering and I pulled back from that for health and economic reasons, it was God awful expensive.

MM So that was more than a hobby.

JF Yeah, it was more than a hobby and I had another year of electrical engineering at Cal Poly after the war was over. But I went to Chaffey College and that was a period when the draft board was always around the corner.

MM So you volunteered? You weren't drafted?

JF Neither one. I took my Air Force physical and waited for my draft notice and then enlisted in the Air Force. I felt they had more opportunities and had an older brother that had served in the air force and thought that would be a better benefit

to me. So that's how I ended up in the Air Force and then when I got out, fortunately with the GI Bill and all, I was able to complete my college education and defer having to work my way through college for a couple of years.

MM That was at Cal Poly?

JF I finished up and got my Associate degree at Chaffey College and then went to Cal Poly and graduated from there in '74 and Gwyn graduated from there in '76.

MM When you came back, what did you do right after coming back? Was that when you went to Chaffey to finish your AA?

JF I got back in Oct. of '69 and was back in school in Jan. of '70, as soon as the next term started I was back in school.

MM And then how long did that take you to finish your AA?

JF Oh, a long time, I graduated from Chaffey in June of '71 and Cal Poly in June of '74.

MM That's where you met Gwyn?

JF I met her at Chaffey, in a chemistry class or some odd thing.

MM When you graduated in '74, what was your degree in? Electrical engineering?

JF No, I had a mentor at Chaffey in a business class and switched over to business administration so I have a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from Cal Poly.

MM Okay. And then did you go for further graduate work?

JF Not yet.

MM And so after you finished at Cal Poly where did you begin your working life?

JF While I was attending Chaffey I was evening manager of the bookstore. It's

somewhat odd, in '74, as I was approaching getting my degree I had accepted a job in industrial engineering with Oscar Meyer. At the same time the Chief Accountant at Chaffey College submitted his resignation and I applied for his job and became Chief Accountant at Chaffey College and served in that capacity for about 6 years. I told Oscar Meyer, "Thanks but no thanks." They said, "How much more money would you like?" That was my first introduction to "you better negotiate" when you're getting a job. They didn't offer me enough so I went to work for Chaffey instead, so I've been in professional accounting capacities ever since.

MM Where did you work after Chaffey?

JF Chaffey with L.D. King Engineering, a land planning and land use engineering firm.

MM How long did you stay there?

JF Was there for 2 1/2 years, until summer of '82. And that's when the recession hit and those companies were closing their doors and pulling out of their shops. LD King was fortunately able to survive but they closed down the operation they had in Santa Ana and withdrew into their Ontario office and they were able to survive the recession though many similar companies did not at that time. I still have a great relationship with the owners of that. That was one of those where they said, "You would probably have about 6 months to find another job, take all the time you want." Okay.

MM Then where did you go after that?

JF I have had a couple positions, I worked as Supervisor of Student Aid Accounting

Office, Cal Poly and Pomona, handling the accounting side of student financial aid and ultimately wound up where I am now, which is in construction accounting. I work for a company that does demolition and concrete cutting and coring work out of Santa Ana.

MM That's a long drive.

JF Yes, it's a long drive. They make it worth my while and that's a great field. Also a couple of times I worked for small private businesses that had both ethical and economic stresses and I left those. It's refreshing to work for an ethical company that can pay it's bills, it's a great combination.

MM When did you begin your civic interests?

JF Gwyn and I became involved in county planning issues, actually the year after we got married. It would have been about '75 or early '76. There were some local planning issues that effected us personally and we wound up going into the planning commission of San Bernardino 15 miles down the road.

MM Is that where you were living? In San Bernardino?

JF We were living in this house.

MM But it was San Bernardino County?

JF The local planning issues were being controlled in San Bernardino County. They weren't by the City of San Bernardino, but the County. So at that time we got involved with the incorporation committee. Subsequently I wound up on the organizational committee and wound up....

MM Is that the Tri-Community Incorporation Committee?

JF TCIC, which is Tri-Community Incorporation Committee. I'll give you the

details on that if you like...

MM Yes.

JF Yes. There were a couple of incorporation efforts, at least 2. In the '60's there was a feasibility study prepared on the incorporation of this area. It was very vague. There are very few copies of that still in existence, but at that time it was determined that it really didn't make sense for whatever reason, to incorporate and it kind of died on the vine. The Tri-Community Incorporation Committee in probably about mid-'75, it started out comprised of 3 representatives each from what was then the Alta Loma Chamber of Commerce, Chamber of Commerce is a pretty vague word for the group, it was more of a homeowners association and such. The Cucamonga Chamber of Commerce, which were primarily industrialists, and the Etiwanda Service Club. It started out with 3 members from each of those organizations, which were pretty much considered representative of the communities that they served. After that group had been active for several months, the participants in the process, kind of the membership at large, appointed 3 members at large from each of the 3 corners of the community. The service club designations dropped out. At that time I was appointed as one of the Etiwanda representatives on the Tri-Community Incorporation Committee. Ray Trujillo was the other and Arnold Markey who worked for Amaron Steel, was a third.

MM So who did you represent?

JF I was one of the 3 Etiwanda representatives.

MM But you weren't representing a club or anything?

JF No. The organization's transition from that formal representation to representatives at large, whoever happened to show up for the meeting and acted interested. So that went on a while. While this was going on I became a member of the Municipal Advisory Commission which in an unincorporated area is as close as we went to a city council. The local organization basically makes recommendations to the board of supervisors and acts as a firewall between the citizens and the supervisor. I also became a member of the CSA 50 Board, which was the County Service Area 50, which was Parks & Recreation. We had very few county service areas formally in existence then. So all that rolled into the incorporation of Rancho Cucamonga in November of '77 so Gwyn and I were involved in the process, probably for a year and a half.

MM How was Gwyn involved?

JF We pretty much did everything together during that period. We didn't have kids until '78, so we pretty much did everything together.

MM She came to the meetings?

JF She came to the meetings. We pretty much participated in all of that. We were active in trying to get the vote for the incorporation of Rancho Cucamonga.

MM How did you do that?

JF Oh gosh, how did we do it? I've got one of the posters here. We have a few of the sole survivors.

MM Did you go door to door? Or?

JF Well one thing, the Daily Bulletin, the Daily Report at that time, the local newspaper, did a pretty good job of reporting what was going on with

incorporation, both pro and con. Of course we felt that the incorporation was so advantageous that we absolutely loved any publicity we could get because it helped advertise what we were up to.

MM What were the advantages that you saw?

JF Local control was at the top of the list. One of the others, and happens in any incorporated area, is to try to make sure we got a fair share of our tax money as far as services and return to the community with what we put in. You know, looking at the dollars that had left the Tri-Community area and the County of San Bernardino as a whole for decades and decades, we really didn't see too much return for our money. Planning issues were really at the forefront, there were decisions being made that we didn't necessarily agree with.

MM What would those decisions be?

JF How housing and industry was being developed.

MM So with the suburbanization.....

JF Lack of planning. Well there is checkerboard planning too, no particular pattern, no particular controls, no restraints to speak of and one of the first things that we did after we incorporated was put a short term moratorium on any future development. Not to stop development, but to sit back and say, "What are we doing here and where do we want to do go." We didn't have any no growthers on the council per se, although certainly there were plenty in the community as opposed to, "it's going to come, how can we make the best of it." That's pretty much the focus that all of the councils have taken.

MM The people that were against incorporation, what was their position?

JF I wish I could pull out one of the flyers I have. I have no idea how, there were about 8 or 10 bullets and one was, “Do you want to spend 9 million dollars on a city hall?” It was really a “smaller is better” issue. You know, “We can do it alone.” We need to keep our own localized environment alive and well, but it never really penciled out. Actually the bulk of the tax money was coming out of Etiwanda at that time because of the huge industrial base we had, as opposed to Alta Loma. It was primarily residential, it was very little commercial.

MM What was the industrial base of Etiwanda?

JF Primarily the steel plants.

MM Oh, with Kaiser.

JF Well....

MM Not Kaiser?

JF Kaiser was unincorporated and in the Fontana area but Tamco, Amaron Steel, were huge money makers, which was really unknown by the communities in large. They never really saw the benefits of it. Schlosser Forge was up and coming. So there was a lot of significant industrial use in the area, primarily in the Etiwanda communities. So Etiwanda probably had the better tax base.

MM So going back to how you and Gwyn solicited for this incorporation vote.

JF Well again, we counted very much on newspaper advertisements for what we were doing. Late into the process we actually hired a consultant to help give us some advise, Sutton and Associates. Bob Sutton was the one that helped us out who was a spin-off of Jim Lloyd who was a local congressman and had a consulting firm out of West Covina. Bob Sutton worked for him. Bob and Ruth

basically helped put together a campaign where we got information and materials out and mailings and it was pretty much if you got the money to lick a stamp you did and we sent something out. This kind of all snowballed toward the tail end where we were coming up against county deadlines. There weren't any significant contributors, you know. It wasn't the kind of thing that you had today. You know, if people went back now to find out how much we spent on this I think they would be amazed because it was just a matter of probably a few thousand dollars total. It was primarily because we had so much volunteer time, so much individual effort.

MM What did you feel were the key factors for it passing? The volunteer base? Or the consulting?

JF Just because it made sense. The time was right. There was also a great concern that if we didn't incorporate then different parts of the community would be absorbed either by Fontana, Upland or Ontario. That would have been a natural extension of their spheres of influence into Alta Loma and Cucamonga and Etiwanda and we just felt that was inappropriate. It was too large a piece and when we incorporated I think it was about 32 square miles, something like that.

MM How big was the population base of the tri-community?

JF I would say 39,000. But we incorporated as the third largest city in San Bernardino County and we still are. We don't particularly want to, you know, we don't want to get any bigger. It probably will come just because of basic land area that we have, we probably will be larger than Ontario although I don't know of anybody that really welcomes that. That really wasn't an issue, it was just

more, as I said earlier, if the development is coming, let's try to make sure it makes sense and is appropriate.

MM When did you decide to run for the city council?

JF Good question. I can't remember exactly when, I can remember where. The election was early November '77 so I'm guessing it was probably about September. Our thrust, Gwyn's and mine, was always to do what we could to support the incorporation of the Rancho Cucamonga area. We were out walking in what's now the Victoria Planned Community, out walking through the wash, and talking about the incorporation, had our dog with us, all the family. That's the first time we really discussed my running for city council. It was partly because we knew that Etiwanda needed some strong representation. We knew that Ray Trujillo, who was president of the Tri-Community Incorporation Committee, was going to be running. We felt that the odds were better of Etiwanda being represented if we had both of us on the ballot because we knew that at least one of us had a good strong shot at it.

MM How many did they select?

JF The original ballot had 36 candidates.

MM And how many were going to make the city council?

JF 5. And one of the ways I campaigned out here was, "You know, Ray Trujillo is on the ballot and we needed a representative so vote for one us." I didn't say I'm better, I didn't say he was worse because I felt that he would have made a terrific representative. He subsequently wasn't elected. I never campaigned against anybody. Mainly Gwyn and I figured that Etiwanda needed to be represented and

we had an in depth knowledge at that time of all of the issues surrounding incorporation and had been intimately involved in it for over a year. It sounds selfish or egotistical but we thought we could do as good or a better job than the other candidates on the ballot, pure and simple. Sounds silly but it's really what it boiled down to.

MM How many of the members of the Tri-Community Incorporation Committee decided to run for city council? Or I guess how many members were on the Tri-Community Incorporation Committee and how many then decided?

JF Well, they had an executive board of 9 members and then whoever showed up. No one was ever excluded.

MM You had a core of 9.

JF There wasn't a formal membership. You didn't buy membership, you came to the meetings, you threw money in the pot when you felt like it but there was never a membership fee or whatever so nobody really knows what the membership was. It's just, go back through the minutes, and find out who came to the meetings. Then of course some of the people that ran said they were active in the incorporation effort and they really weren't. Maybe they showed up for a meeting or two so who's to say really. I would guess coming down to it there probably weren't more than 5 or 6 of us that were active that also ran for city council.

MM And how many made it to city council?

JF Okay, back to the other comment I said, I'm not sure it's one or two or maybe three because some of these other folks kind of rolled through the process and

probably considered themselves active members of the Incorporation Committee and I would never say that they were not.

MM Okay. And then what.....

JF I will say one thing though. The biggest surprise was Bob Prasser who was chairman of the MAC and very active in the incorporation. He probably knew more about the issues and had a stronger government background than any other individual that ran for city council and he did not make it.

MM Could you describe a little bit about those early council meetings? Where did you meet? Where was city hall originally?

JF Okay, where do I start and how do I keep this down to 5 hours or less? There are so many things that went on. The first thing we did of course was the 5 council members elect sat down and said, "Now that we've got it, what do we do with it?" Almost literally. Jon Mikels was the only one that had any book experience in government. I think he had a masters or whatever but he didn't have any practical experience per se. There was me and I came out of Chaffey College and had the depth of the community family involvement that perhaps no one else did. Mike Palombo, who is a small businessman, Jon Mikels, who was working for the Youth Authority, I believe at that time. Of course you know Jon is county supervisor now. He had the technical, book work that the rest of us didn't have. Phil Schlosser who was a self made millionaire who owned Schlosser Forage and Charlie West who was the general manager for Abatibi who made wood paneling on Arrow Ave. So we had two industrialists and the other three guys. At 33 years old I was in the middle as far as age. Jon and Mike were both younger than me

and Phil and Charlie were older. That was a little scary, here we are a bunch of kids running this, what do we do now? The first thing we did was advertise for an interim city manager, who was Ken Hunter who was the retired city manager from the city of Ontario. First thing he did at the first meeting was show us his advertisement for his successor. That was his first role, to get a replacement quick. Ken was just terrific. He had a lot of advantages. There was great deal of negotiations with the county involving tax increment, how much do we get, what do we do with it, and how do we keep our services. He could go in there and not worry about ruffling any feathers because he wasn't going to stick around anyway. It was a huge advantage because he didn't have to be a diplomat, he could just go in and knew what our rights were and he didn't have to live with it. The first meeting, I'm trying to think of when we finally hired a city manager, maybe that will come back to me, I want to say March of '78 but I'm not sure. That would have been a give or take a little bit, Ken was only with us for about 3 months.

MM Why was that?

JF Because he was strictly interim. He was just there to....

MM Is that his desire or your desire?

JF Both. Both. Again we had a brand new city, huge and just had to put a structure together as quickly as possible and interim's don't cut it, especially when we get full time people that come in and they have employees that the interim hired that may or may not be a good fit and all of the other issues that get involved with it. So the first thing that Ken did, and actually that would have happened before our

first city council meeting, was hire Beverly Authelet who was a clerk/secretary and Harry Empey who was the finance guy. We inherited 4 county employees. The CSA 50 we talked about, which was Parks and Recreation, had four employees, Bill Holly who was the executive director, Mary Whitney, and Rex Whitney, at that time her husband, who was a grounds type and Fred Weekly. We had those 4 people and through the legal process we absorbed them into the city as soon as we incorporated. So we had those that we inherited and then Harry was, well Bill became the Mr. Outside guy, Bill Holly. He was just super at that and Harry Empey became Mr. Inside. They kind of divided the city into those functions initially and then Beverly tried to figure out what everybody was doing. The first city hall was on loan from Bill Re kard Insurance on Archibald Avenue just north of Foothill. That building doesn't exist there anymore. It's about 100 yards north, about where the corner of that Millers Outpost is. That was the first city hall, it had two rooms. Harry and Beverly were in the front room, the city manager, Ken Hunter, was in the back. The restroom was on a door through Ken Hunter's office so if you wanted to go to the restroom you walked through the City Manager's office and then into the restroom and then back out again. It made for some very interesting times.

MM Why did you choose that location?

JF It was free. Well, we didn't have a checking account, we used my address for the city. I still get mail for the city that comes here from some of these fringe organizations. We didn't have a post office box, we didn't have a checking account, we had zip.

MM Who offered this to you for free?

JF Bill Re kard Insurance Company. It was vacant at that time and he said, "Here you can use this until you get your act together." That's one of the other first thing Ken did was to get a P.O. Box for the city so we had an official address other than my house.

MM Did you use the city as a model on other cities?

JF Not as much as some people think. I thought I was stretching out, where did we go and what did we do kind of thing. I'm going to come back to your questions in a little bit as far as the initial structure is concerned. The first city council meeting was on the second of December of '77, in the orchestra pit of the Alta Loma High School Auditorium. We set up a long table there and of course there was a huge amount of community interest. I keep thinking back about that meeting because it had to be just one of the most God awful boring things people had ever come to. Because once we got past the ceremonial stuff, you know, the resolutions from assemblyman and senators and congressman and all of that stuff, we got into the business at hand which was the adoption of all of the county ordinances by reference and all of this legal stuff that we had to go through. It just went on for hours and hours and hours. Like I say, it just had to be really boring because we weren't really sure what was going on. It was more, here it is, here's why I say yes and let's move on. So there wasn't a whole lot of discussion, it was just absorbing all of this stuff that was coming at us. Sam Crowe was appointed city attorney at that time. We took some heat for that because he was city attorney for Ontario and actually a former council member for Ontario. Sam just did a super

job for us but that was construed as a conflict of interest. I disagree with that because I never saw any sign of that. So that was where the first meeting was, the first council meeting. Subsequently we also inherited the Lions Center, which was where CSA 50 was based which was basically a cracker box on East Avenue, or excuse me Baseline. That's where CSA 50 hung out, there were executive offices there. There were some serious restrictions on its use. It had been previously a county library. It was donated to the county and subsequently to us by the Lion's Club and the deed restriction said you cannot use this for office space and we could not use that for city hall because of the restrictions on the property. We did use it for council meetings and CSA 50 continued to operate out of there and subsequently it was expanded and converted and all that stuff. That's why we never used it as city hall. We got some property on Baseline, we rented some space on Baseline from Henry Reiter on the north east corner of Hellman and Baseline. We started out with a part of that building and then it just kind of grew like a cancer. We grew across the parking lot and in and out and stayed there after this evolutionary process until '91 when the current city hall was built. Let's see, what else have we got...first of all, when we incorporated we were able to acquire tax revenues that came into the county from November through June 30 of '78 but we were also able to continue the same services being provided by the county.

So one of the oddities there during that period, we had the Highway Patrol still responsible for the roads and the Sheriffs Department was responsible for crime. The Sheriffs' Office, we set them up in a temporary building next to Alta

Loma High School behind the tennis courts, north of the tennis courts. So that's where the Sheriffs' Office was based. We continued to use the Highway Patrol through June. Subsequently we moved the Sheriffs' Office. Now this is probably getting into far more than we wanted to, and we just kind of grew by bits and pieces.

MM Well when did you get a police force?

JF We negotiated with, if you want to call it negotiation, we negotiated with the county Sheriffs Department for services. It just penciled out better than anything else. Jon Mikels and Ken Hunter and I sat down representing the city with Earl Goodwin, who is the County CEO, Chief Executive Officer, and Sheriff Frank Bland. Bland said, "Mikels tells it better than I do," but Bland said, "Basically I won't provide you any less service, I really can't provide you any more, take it or leave it, here's what it's gonna cost." That is kind of where it started, though we did end up studying that and with the level of service that could be provided by the sheriff it was just more cost effective than anything else. That may change eventually but the only reason for having our own police department at that time would have been strictly ego and political reasons.

MM So do you still not have your own police department?

JF That's correct, we still have a contract with the county. Terribly expensive but we still contract with them.

MM How did you raise the money for doing the new city hall in '91?

JF City Hall was built with redevelopment money. One of the things that our Council did was buy the land. Somewhere around here I've got one of the original tract

maps or design for all of that. It was to have a jail by the county courthouse and city hall. But our Council bought the land knowing that we would need it and knowing that there wasn't anything to actually build it. The price was right on the dirt. Again, subsequently that was built with redevelopment money, it came in at, I want to say 20 million but I'm not really sure, so the 9 million dollar city hall, the incorporation antagonists talked about really became much more than that. You gotta have a place to live.

MM And then how long did you serve on City Council?

JF I was appointed by fellow Council members to serve as the first Mayor and I was that until 1980 and then I stayed on the council for a four year term after that until '84. This gets into another interesting side story, so in '84 I chose not to run for reelection for city council and was asked to run for City Treasurer which I did and I still hold that elected position. So I have done it continually, elected city official, I always hate that word "official," but...

MM So the city treasury position you have to be reelected every year, how often?

JF Every four.

MM Every four years?

JF Yes. There are a couple of quirks in the first City Council. First of all, the county counsel really didn't know how to put cities together then. I don't know if this was on the earlier tape or not, nobody really did. The county's had more experience since then. They forgot a couple of things. They forgot to put the city clerk and city treasurer on the ballot along with the Council members. So after incorporation took place, we appointed the City Manager to serve as City Clerk.

Officially, Beverly Authelet did the work, he had the title and Harry Empey, they Finance Director, was appointed to serve as Treasurer. In 1980 they both ran for election. So in 1980 our city manager became our elected city clerk for which he took a lot of heat from his peers. Our finance director became the elected city treasurer so I replaced him in '84. Beverly Authelet ran for city clerk in '84 and served in that capacity until she left Rancho. The other thing that happened is strictly a matter of timing. In November of '77, we incorporated and the next regular general election would have been April of '78. That in theory is when council elections should have been held but because it was less than a year after incorporation all five of us came up for reelection in '78. We survived a recall effort prior to that time that never got past the petition stage, anyway, all five....

MM Why did they want to recall you?

JF It was a "not in our own backyard" to stop the development thing which was predictable. I think it was taken almost as a compliment that they came after all five of us because you know we were probably doing something right. They didn't pick out any individual for gripes. The initial City Council, it was unique, just something that never happens, never will again, is we were able to work as a team. We were able to agree to disagree and we didn't count votes in the backroom or do any of those things that can happen in some elected positions. We just had a God awful amount of work to do and we were just able to work together to accomplish it, we think, and again that sounds kind of self serving but that's really the way it was. We just got along well and...

MM How long did the meetings last? The initial meetings?

JF We had some that ran until 2 or 3 in the morning.

MM You met monthly?

JF We twice a month. We couldn't meet any more than that because city staff had to have the time to prepare. Again there was so much going on there, we couldn't meet any less so we pretty much just had to run the meetings until we got through the agenda and it got pretty brutal there a few times.

MM How long did those long meetings last? How many years?

JF Not real long, probably only 6 or 8 months, if that. One of the complications, the city council also had to serve as the planning commission because we didn't have a planning commission yet. So not only were we handling normal council business but we were handling 100% of the planning issues also at the same time. Then on July 1, 1978, when we became responsible for it, by then we had hired Jack Lam to serve as our planning director. Lauren Wasserman served as City Manager. We acquired all of the county files and one of the reasons for the moratorium we talked about was to stop everything while we could go through all the files and find out what we had inherited. That took some pretty heavy negotiation too. Because the council made a decision to allow for the phasing of construction of everything that had already been approved by the county. There were hundreds of them, I used to have the number memorized but there were hundreds of these individual units that had been pre-approved. The segment talking about recalls, a segment of the population thought it would have been reasonable to stop and say, "No you can't do that, sorry, let's try again." But we felt legally that we couldn't do that and rather than face lawsuits we were able to

coerce the construction industry into phasing completion of those units and the building industry kind of came in and helped work as the fall guy. So instead of everybody coming in, we were able to phase out completion of those. One from what Lauren and Jack said, the county pretty much quit working on everything between the election and when all these files came. So we had an in-house planning group and they had to sort through pounds and pounds of paper to try to figure out just where we were.

MM What was the side story you mentioned between 1980 and 1984?

JF Oh, that would have been a continuation of the election. Again all 5 of us came up for reelection in '80 and the stagger was set in '80 when the council elections came up. Phil Schlosser and I had the highest number of votes in '80 so we picked up four year terms, the other three council members had two year terms and that's when the stagger first started. And then in '84 also, was it '84? No, it was '86 that the City chose to go to a directly elected Mayor. From '82 to '86 Mikels held the position of Mayor. Anyway, there are probably dozens of other side stories and that's probably just a completion of that one.

MM When you got onto the City Council, you and Gwyn had previously said that there were issues that you wanted to deal with. What were those issues and did you feel you were able to accomplish in your tenure on the city council?

JF Well, the main issue again was local control and most certainly we did. That got replaced by the dozens of other things, you know. Let's elaborate on that, "You know." It got into signage and flood control and you know at that point Council members become mini-experts on all these other things. Some of them think

they're the oracle of the world by virtue of having been elected. It doesn't work that way. We stayed very close. We've unfortunately had a young family, Becky was born exactly 8 months after we incorporated and Todd was born 2 years later. My two kids were the primary reason I didn't run for reelection in '84. Nobody with a young family should hold elected office, there just aren't enough hours in the day to do it all.

MM The last thing, are you currently on the planning commission?

JF No, currently City Treasurer.

MM That's your affiliation.

JF Yes, I've held that capacity again since '84.

MM I know we asked this before. What is it in your family that creates this desire for civic participation?

JF A mutant gene out there or something! Yes I just got an e-mail from my brother a couple of weeks ago and he said he is looking forward to retirement then he can go volunteer and do whatever he wants, forget about having to make money.

MM More participation!

JF Yes, well the discussion was about my daughter and having graduated, she's running off on this volunteer mission of hers until May of next year. One of these days she has to get a real job and start paying her dues! That's when the thing about the retirement came up. It's kind of a good news/bad news I guess, the opportunity cost for having served in elected office is pretty severe, especially at first. You know, in lots of different ways. I know the first two years Mikels and I burned 100% of our vacation on city business. So that's one of the sacrifices you

make. We were both working in the public sector. I was working at Chaffey College and he again was I think with the Youth Authority. It isn't, "take a half a day off and have a good time," because you have to be accountable when you're working in the school district, as I was. There are other things. Like I say, the opportunity cost is more than it should be. I don't want to go further into that.

(End of interview)