Male Speaker: Hard question first. Could you please say your name and spell it?

Arthur Bartlett: Arthur Bartlett. A-R-T-H-U-R, B-A-R-T-L-E-T-T, as in pairs [laughter].

MS: [laughter] There are two of you?

AB: Yes, there used to be.

MS: [laughter]

AB: My wife died.

MS: I am sorry.

AB: Yes.

MS: There really was. What year were you born, Arthur, and where?

AB: I was born in the U.K. in a seaport town of Faversham in the Kent County, on October 25th, 1919.

MS: What brought you to San Pedro?

AB: The plague.

MS: I should tell you something here.

AB: [laughter]

MS: This is a good example then. My questions will never be heard. So, if I say to you, "What brought you to San Pedro?"

AB: Oh, then I need to say –

MS: – you have to say what I said.

AB: Oh, right.

MS: So, what brought you to San Pedro?

AB: Well, what brought me to San Pedro was the plague in Europe in 1918. My father and my aunt decided that they ought to leave. Matter of fact, most of the family left for various parts, Canada, Australia. My two aunts and my father came here arriving on that famous *Mauretania* ship in 1923.

MS: Now, why San Pedro of all places?

AB: Because it was a port town.

MS: Start your sentence, "My parents came here because –"

AB: Oh, I'm sorry. My parents came here because it was a port town. My oldest aunt, who had traveled the world a bit, decided it was a good, healthy place to live, where there are opportunities for employment. This now is just the end of World War I. I came in 1923. But it was just at the end of that First War. And so, many people were leaving Europe. So, many were immigrating to the States. My aunt thought there would be more opportunity in San Pedro. Because Faversham is a seaport town and my grandfather was a ship's captain, owned two ships there. There was a maritime background, and she thought it would be interesting, which it was.

MS: Now, why not San Francisco which is probably more famous? Was it not in the [19]20s? Say that sentence again.

AB: Coming to San Pedro was really my aunt's thought because she was a concert pianist, played throughout the world, ended up in L.A., liked L.A., but she liked San Pedro better because that's where she ended up living. Then working opportunities in Los Angeles were greater. So, that's how we arrived.

MS: Now, what did your father do when he arrived here?

AB: He looked for a job. My father looked for a job.

MS: I am sorry I was talking at the same time.

AB: My father looked for a job because his sister said there would be opportunity in the port. So, he applied at the shipyard for a steam engineer's job. The reason he did that was because he found out that ships going into the dry dock needed two things. It needed steam, and it needed electricity. So, he became a stationary steam engineer. Proved to be a good thing because through the Depression, they still worked a few days a week.

MS: So, describe that job. What was his job?

AB: The Bethlehem Shipyard where he worked –

MS: Start again.

AB: His job –

MS: My father's job –

AB: My father's job at the Bethlehem Shipyard was to generate power in this power plant and steam in this steam plant. It was a combination of machinery moving and generating the necessary things.

MS: How long did he work in that job?

AB: My father worked at Bethlehem for forty-six years.

MS: Your mother was a housewife, or did she work too?

AB: My mother was a housewife. Later, my mother had a back injury. So, it was mainly she was a housekeeper raising my older sister and myself and my youngest sister.

MS: When you came here, you were about 4 or 5 years old then, right?

AB: Right. I was just 4 years old. I arrived in San Pedro in May, and my fifth birthday was in October.

MS: What are your earliest memories of this place?

AB: Earliest memories is my aunt's touring car making a trip around San Pedro. The thing that impressed me immediately, which I have remembered all my life, is a trip up to Averill Park. Averill Park has a fantastic panoramic view. It did then more so because there were no trees and buildings in the way. I was just really impressed. Can you impress a 5-year-old? I was impressed. Number two, the other impression and the thing I remember – and was still about 5 or 6 – was going in my aunt's touring car down to the Warehouse One watching ships come by. My older sister was 4 years old. I would speculate where these ships were going, what was in them as they were coming in, where they were going, and what were they bringing. It was just really almost an educational thing of speculation, of seeing these big things moving by you up the channel. Those were the two memories. The other third memory that I have is the transportation system. My first transport was on a trolley car going out Pacific Avenue to Point Fermin to a dance pavilion. Not that I went to the dance pavilion, but it was there that activities were going on. There were probably about three things at age 5, which –

MS: Let us go back in detail on those. I want to go back over those memorable experiences again. For people who do not know what Averill Park is, describe what was Averill Park. Describe it as a place. What did you do as a kid when you went there?

AB: Well, I went to Averill Park later in my life because it was kind of the headwaters for the water that drained off the [inaudible]. There were pools of water. Obviously, the water life, polliwogs, and frogs and all those things attracted me as well as other kids, to go in and try to catch them. But it was a very hilly park. It wasn't a flat park ever. That was part of the excitement. Because you would never know what was around the corner or up the hill or across the bridge or down in the gully. So, later it was an interesting place to go for picnics. You were almost isolated from each other by these little divisions of canyons and valleys and little hills. That was early on. I don't remember going back there until I was probably a teenager when we would have parties in the park. It was always the pergola that's up there, and now a rose garden, was the place where –

MS: Why do you not start again? The pergola –

AB: – and the rose garden has the best view of the harbor. It's up there on the one-level spot on top. So, it's a great place and lots of weddings there today. I know that lots and lots of weddings end up there.

MS: Now, you also talked about transportation. What was the transportation around? Where did people go when you were growing up in San Pedro? How did you get around?

AB: Well, the transportation and hub of San Pedro was the PE, or the Pacific Electric Building, which was on the corner of 6th and Harbor Boulevard. That was the center of life. Taxi cabs, buses, street cars, trains, everything merged at this location between 5th and 6th on Harbor Boulevard. So, the bus system in town was excellent. The transport from town into Los Angeles and Long Beach was excellent. My experience early on as a teenager was delivering the *Daily News*, which was a publication in Los Angeles. It came down at 4:00 a.m. on the train. You had to go down to the PE station to pick up your daily delivery and then roll it and tuck. Then mixed with all the kind of people that came through there, which in those days when I was 10, 11, was the Navy and all the activity that happens in a port, that was the focus, almost the center. You might say the transportation hub of the city, and it was.

MS: Well, talk about the newspaper business as a young boy and describe it. Because most people today, the paper appears in the morning, if they get one. Describe what you do. You went down there, what you do. What was the scene like? Who was there? How did you prepare? How did you deliver? That whole story.

AB: Well, let me begin by saying that I began my career as a salesperson at the age of 7 selling the *Pictorial Review,* which was a monthly magazine for 10 cents, mainly geared toward women. Sold that in the neighborhood and then found that I could sell. Then began to do pretty well. Then the *Liberty* magazine came out. That was a weekly for 5 cents, and I began to sell that. Then I found out that one of the places that was important to sell them was at the PE station. Second place was to get aboard the ships that came in and which were in those days, the fleet. The West Coast Fleet was out there. I would go down and get a shore boat and go out and sell magazines aboard a ship and hopefully make friends with a baker or the cook, and we would eat. So, at an age 7 and 8, I was one of the top salespersons in San Pedro. Then I graduated later after that into – as you become a teenager – to a paper salesperson or delivery. But it was really selling because you had to buy the paper yourself, and you had to collect the money, and you had to deliver. So, I began to deliver the *Daily News* in the morning before school. Then graduated from that – if that's a graduation – into the *News Pilot* in the afternoon. So, I ended up with two routes selling and really had a business going, as a lot of kids did.

MS: Now, you said you were good at it. Give me a sense of your sales pitch that was effective in getting people to buy your paper. How did you do that?

AB: "You can't live without this magazine. It has all the latest information." That was the *Pictorial Review* for women. For the *Liberty*, "You can't not buy this because it has all the latest information that's available in the country and has good stories," and so forth and so on. For the

delivery of the papers, it was just knocking on doors saying, "Don't you think you ought to know what's going on in your community? You ought to really take the *Daily News*." That was geared more to the working-labor class. *The Times* was a Republican paper. The *Daily News* was a Union Manchester Bode publication. The hardest part of the whole thing was collecting money from the people who were transients. The Navy people would be in for two, three, four months, and then they leave. If you didn't get your money, you still owed for your bill. That and the news probably was the same Army and Navy people that I – so, I began to be selective [laughter] after a while. If you felt like they weren't going to be around, obviously you weren't going to take a start and put your effort and money into a – collecting once a month was a rather interesting process as well. 50 cents was what it was for their *Daily News*. So, it was all part of an education thing and a part of understanding of people which I thought I did pretty well.

MS: Now, was Beacon Street on your route?

AB: Beacon Street was not on my route. Actually, I lived in North San Pedro when we came, up in the Barton Hill area. Then we moved to the Bandini area. Then we moved to this Point Fermin area. Then in fourth grade, we moved up the hill to Leland Street which is up on the top of the hill. Starting at 6 and 7 years old selling the *Pictorial* was down on Point Fermin area. Then when I moved up the hill, then began to do the newspaper business. So, I was only involved with Beacon Street with the *Daily News* going down in the morning, picking it up in my younger days. My older days are another story.

MS: Well, we are going to get onto that.

AB: [laughter]

MS: So, we are going to keep you young for a while here. Who were the kids that you hung out with? What did you do as a young boy aside from the papers and school? What were the activities that you did? Who were your friends?

AB: Friends? My friends, we all lived within the neighborhood. It was usually a neighborhood group. We would get together in the four vacant lots, which was our recreation area, ball field, soccer, football, baseball. All over San Pedro, all over north, south, east, and we in the west formed neighborhood ball games. We played each other. We played the Point Fermin group. We played the 15th Street group. We played the Bandini Street group. So, where teams were going and that's how we became acquainted with each other in various parts of the community that I remember.

MS: What was this community made of? San Pedro has an interesting mix of backgrounds and cultures. Describe that and how you connected to that or in any way you did.

AB: I connect to the multiculture of San Pedro. Because certainly as we were talking the other day about the number of ethnic groups, and it's interesting we didn't pay a lot of attention to them early on. I had a neighbor next door when I lived up in the Leland Street area who was a Yugoslav. Well, the first terms you learn are your swears. Swearing is the first. Kids learn that quickly on. But I learned to eat the Yugoslav food. Across the street was a Mexican. We found

out later how tequila was made.

MS: [laughter]

AB: Because he had these big agave plants around the yard. We didn't know that until much later. But because we mixed with Italians, we would learn about Italian food. Me, being an English person, obviously the foods were entirely different. So, with kids that came home where we would eat different food. For the first time in my life, I remember – I must have been 10, maybe 8 – eating tuna fish, barbecued. I thought it was really great, wonderful. Never have lost the taste for it actually, still one of my favorites. The groups in town though, they were divided a little bit by community. Yugoslavs and Italians were on the east side, near the water. The Mexican groups were out in north. You probably gotten ahold of Mexican Hollywood. I'm sure that Alameda maybe talked about it.

MS: Well, that is you right there.

AB: So, that was the north end. Then the north-north end and the northwest end were the Norwegians and Swedes basically. Then, of course, in school, you met all these various kids in places.

MS: Well, let us talk about some of these neighborhoods. Mexican Hollywood, tell me what is that? First of all, do you have any idea where the name came from?

AB: No.

MS: Well, tell me, what was Mexican Hollywood?

AB: Mexican Hollywood was about where the cruise terminal is now. The first people that lived there, from my understanding, just moved in and built homes. Later it was developed and became a rather interesting community, self-sufficient onto itself, took care of it very, very well. My understanding is that Mexican Hollywood got that because two people worked in the studios at one time. I think one was an actor and one maybe something else. My understanding, that's how it became known as Mexican Hollywood.

MS: What kind of community was it? How would you describe it?

AB: Well, all Mexican families. I think I may have learned to eat tacos and burritos in that community of people. Very hospitable.

MS: Was it a poor community? What physically did it look like?

AB: No, the buildings were clean. The neighborhood was clean, well kept. The yards were well kept. It was a well-kept community of people, yes. I've forgotten what year actually was its demise in just after World War I, about the [19]50s, somewhere in the [19]50s, yes.

MS: Another neighborhood we hear about is La Rambla.

AB: La Rambla.

MS: Tell me about that.

AB: We lived in the La Rambla area. That's the Bandini area. That's where my aunt lived. That's where we lived when we came first. Our first home was there. We moved twice into the area before moving out. Out and up? No. Out and up? Yes. I'm not sure it was out and up in status, Point Fermin was – anyway, La Rambla was a working-class neighborhood. It was developed. Then at one point in time, as I recall – and I haven't been able to verify it, and I've asked a number of people – it was developed and called New Jerusalem. Why? Maybe some of the Jewish community lived there. I don't know. Not sure. Nobody seems to know that. But New Jerusalem was a development up in the Bandini area.

MS: What did it look like? What kind of place was it?

AB: Oh, well, there were middle-class people. I remember going to school on the first mayday that I remember. That would've been after I was 5, kindergarten mayday. It was a mixed group of people that I remember. Were there any upper-class areas in San Pedro? I think in the neighborhood I would remember people who were storekeepers, professional people, et cetera, in all the areas.

MS: Going back to your growing up, you spent your time in Averill Park. You spent your time selling your newspapers and all of that. I know we talked about your friends and that kind of thing. You went to school. Where did you go to school? What were you interested in school?

AB: I started school at Bandini, started kindergarten there. Then we moved to Point Fermin, kindergarten again. Went to Point Fermin School until the fourth grade. Then we moved again. Did we move up? Yes, we moved up the hill. It was a bigger house and a different neighborhood until the fourth grade. Then I went to Leland School. Then from Leland School to the next level, which was now called middle school, Dana Junior High School, then to the old high school. So, we were the last class out of the old high school which was on the 13th and Gaffey. Then graduated from the first class out of the new school in 1938.

MS: How did the Depression affect San Pedro? Any experiences or stories you have about what the effect of the Depression was on San Pedro?

AB: The effect of the Depression, there were lots of people who were hungry that I recall. Because I remember going with my father to surplus food that was available. I had a small, little, red wagon that I would pull down the street and pick up the food and bring it back. But since he worked at the shipyard and did work three days a week because I had to keep electricity and steam going, we did – I guess as a child growing up, everybody was hungry, but never starving. So, we did things in the neighborhood. People grew things, shared, in our neighborhood, at least. That would've been in part of the Point Fermin and in part of the Leland activity.

MS: [19]30s also, particularly [19]34, [19]33, [19]35, you were very young. But there was a major strike that went on here.

AB: That's right.

MS: Talk about that. As a kid, were you aware of that? What did you see? What was going on about that?

AB: The only thing I recall is in our neighborhood, in the [19]34 strike, were the people who were involved with it, a neighbor who was a longshoreman, the Yugoslav neighbor, or Slav as we called them then. The neighbor was a longshoreman, and we would hear stories. I was not involved in any way with that, that I remember at all.

MS: You did not see anything?

AB: No, I didn't see anything. No.

MS: But what did it do to the community? Did it divide the community? Was it disruptive? What were the feeling of –

AB: Well, the strike was not disruptive to parts of the community. The parts of the community that depended upon the income of the longshoremen and the seamen, obviously were affected. But I don't recall it being a – I know the people who were on strike would get their groceries on credit. So, nobody seemed to be too disruptive. Then they obviously paid them back afterwards, which was a good record for these people.

MS: Now, you, for a while, worked as a longshoreman on the docks. How did that happen? Tell me about that experience.

AB: I worked at a number of jobs in my lifetime [laughter]. But one of the interesting jobs was scraping and painting ships as they were lifted out of the harbor on a dock. I got that job because my father worked at Bethlehem Shipyard. It was interesting. I was then 11 years old. The 11-year-old got to stay at the bottom. As the ship came out, all this stuff would be falling, all the moss and all the barnacles and everything would be falling on you. Then the worst part, of course, was the paint. In those days, they used red lead. It would rain the guys on the bottom when we were on the bottom. So, my mother would ask me, "Do you think it's worth your 25 cents an hour for me to clean your clothes?", which were almost always ruined with red lead. In today's world, can you imagine having your body covered with red lead? The longshore job was you had to shape-up. If you knew somebody, they'd call you when they got a job. The worst job I ever had was – and I was then 16 – was moving blood meal in these open weave – the sacks were gunny sacks type and were open weave. You'd end up with all this blood meal on your sweat. The next hardest job was the latex, bundles of latex were about 2-foot square. If you didn't have a hook, you couldn't hold onto any corner to them to stack those four high-end boxcars. Then bananas, same thing with bananas, it was a labor of fighting off spiders and snakes and then all the other animals that came with a bunch of bananas until later they began to box them.

MS: Let us go back to the shipping job. What was that job? Describe it so I can understand what you did and what was happening to the ships and all that.

AB: Ships would come in for repair. There were two companies, the Los Angeles Steamship Company and the Bethlehem Ship Building, that had dry docks. A dry dock meant that if you float the ship on it, they will chalk it up with chalks, lift it out of the water, and then do all the repair work on it, standard way with a lifting dock. The men, as it was coming out, you would be on a pontoon. You would scrape the ship as it was coming out and the same as it was going in. After it was done, you would paint it as it was going back down in the water.

MS: So, where were you? You were standing on this pontoon? What tools did you have?

AB: Scrapers.

MS: The tools that I had –

AB: The tools that I had for scraping were scraping tools like big shovels and also wire brushes, no electric brushes, all hydraulically operated.

MS: What were you scraping off? What did it look like?

AB: Well, we were scraping all the growth that goes on them. A ship going through the water picks up all kinds of growth, barnacles, seaweed. Everything that grows in the ocean clings to the ship, and that slows it down. You slow down the ship, and it doesn't pay for itself.

MS: So, I understand this is probably not only dirty work, but smelly work. Describe the working conditions.

AB: Well, the working conditions in the shipyard weren't that bad actually. It was dirty work, but it was not particularly smelly at all. The worst smell was the red lead as you were putting it on. That was probably the worst smell. The docks were open air. Thinking about it later, thinking about all this red lead and all this stuff that went into the ocean, went into the seabed, it would have been a mess down there.

MS: Was this a dangerous job?

AB: Not particularly. The job wasn't particularly dangerous. Generally, it was like any kind of work around a ship. You have one hand for yourself and the other hand for the job. So, you were always aware when the things were moving that you had to hold on. For a 15-year-old, you were pretty agile. It didn't seem rather dangerous at all to me. The worst thing was probably slipping. When the guy on the bottom gets all the red lead and then gets all wet and slippery on the scaffolding that's there, that's probably the hardest.

MS: Now, you mentioned working on the longshore, the shape-up. People know what that is. Tell me, how did you get a job in the dock? What was the shape-up?

AB: When you wanted a job, you would go to the union hall. The word would get around amongst us that they were hiring people today because they had a lot of extra work. So, they would hire these extra people. You'd go in and shape-up, which means that you hope that somebody you knew was calling the job. In cases that we knew some of the people, and you would stand there and try to be very obvious. You couldn't raise your hand. But you would try to, yes, make a movement. Then you would get hired.

MS: Was that a dangerous job working in the hole like that?

AB: Well, I didn't work in a hole. Mainly, we were stacking in boxcars. So, I didn't do a lot of hole work. But it was dangerous in the hole, yes. But that was a higher-paid job. I don't remember, other than bananas. Bananas, those who worked in a hole got more money than the people who worked on the dock putting it onto the –

MS: What kind of men were working with you? Was there a particular camaraderie, or you were all just doing your job?

AB: All doing the job. Actually, there was a certain amount of camaraderie. If you knew some of the people, then you would obviously. But it was a mixture of people. Mainly people were doing their job. Unlike today, people worked quietly, basically, and did their job.

MS: December 7th, 1941, where were you? What do you remember?

AB: I remember December 7th very vividly. I was in the Air Force in Denver, Colorado. I was on a weekend pass and hiking around up in the mountains. Now, we're talking winter in December, but we were hiking around. Didn't know a thing about it until the truck driver picked us up. We hitch-hiked back and told us what had happened. We immediately got to the base, and everything was total chaos.

MS: When did you leave San Pedro to go into the service?

AB: On November 4th, 1941, my wife's birthday is when I went into the service. Actually, I was really trying to get in the Navy with all my other buddies that I had. My friends were in the Navy. I was going to Compton College, working nights at the YMCA, and got a day job at the shipyard because I could read blueprints. I thought it was going to be all right, and I might get deferred [laughter] working in an industry before the war. But they knew, obviously there was a war coming on. Obviously, they did. When Kaiser was putting in a bid to build a shipyard, we knew it then. The draft came along, and I registered. But I was assured by – not assured. Yes, I assured that I could register later because I would be a part of the war effort. That was the ship building effort anyway. So, I was still going to school at Compton – Compton was a two-year college – and taking engineering, math, and science and things that needed to lead up to engineering. I was interested more in aircraft engineering because aircraft was just coming into being in [19]37 and [19]38. Got caught up in making money because it was good to make money. In [19]39, you could get a job in the shipyard. I could read blueprints. I had a good job in the blueprint department and then got drafted. But my friends and I went over to Terminal

Island to the Navy base and had preliminarily signed up for Navy duty. But I thought, "Well, I may get out of this. So, forget it," [laughter] and didn't sign up. I went over just for an interview. Then he didn't tell me that I would not get drafted working in the shipyard. But I got drafted when I was in the shipyard in 1941 and recruited. Then after preliminary basics, I got in the Air Force.

MS: What did you do in the Air Force?

AB: I was a B-29 armament gunner. The first B-29s out were the B-29As where they came into Lowry Field in Denver where I was stationed.

MS: I am going to skip that Air Force experience because we want to get to –

AB: Anyway, just to let you know, I flew all over the country, basically training people with the new equipment that was coming out. Then my mother died in [19]43. I was in Chicago opening a radio operator school for the Air Force.

MS: So, you stayed stateside during the war then?

AB: All the time, yes.

MS: Because really, so much of your career has been involved with the church, talk about how you got involved and when and what were the circumstances?

AB: Actually, I was involved with a church. My mother being a Presbyterian, we, as children, attended the Presbyterian church. My experience with the Episcopal church was my best friend – we sang in the choir at age 13. They had better-looking girls and when we went to the dances. So, I didn't stop going to the Presbyterian church, but I did note that. But Jimmy's friends were all better-looking girls for some reason. Didn't parlay that in any way until later on. But that was my first experience. I was about a 12- or 13-year-old. We attended church as a family regularly. When my father was working the ships at the shipyard, it was a little awkward. But my sister made sure, and my mother made sure until she wasn't able, that we did attend the churches. So, we did basically. When the revivals would come into town, we were there with the rest of the people in town.

MS: So, talk about it. What are some memorable revivals? Who were the preachers?

AB: I don't remember the preachers at all. But I do remember some of the songs and the hymns that were sung.

MS: Describe it. What went on? Was it a tent revival?

AB: The tent, they would come in like the circus. We had circuses come into town. Actually, the circuses were right next to the Mexican Hollywood. They came in on the tracks, were close to them, and they came in and set up the tents there. Same way with the revivals. They would come in. They set tents there. Then they would send them up. But also, on the north end of

town and about where the freeways come together, it was all open land in there. They would always have a big tent revival in there. A lot of the town would attend. There was something different, a little excitement of some kind, a little music.

MS: Could you describe one to me? What was it like?

AB: Mainly the sermons I remember are hell, fire, and damnation sermon. If you're not saved, you're going to hell thing. I do remember those. I thought, "This is strange. That's not what I learned as a child growing up." But my family decided it was not a bad thing to hear apparently, because we all attended. The whole family went to these revivals periodically. I think it was more my dad was interested in hearing what people had to say and of meeting other people than we kids. Usually, it was an hour and a half. A lot of haranguing, as I remember, a lot of music, a lot of singing, a lot of sing-alongs, things you could sing-along like they're doing today actually. That was fairly regular. I think about two or three times a year, as I recall, we would have a revival meeting of some sort besides the ones in L.A. and Long Beach. But these were just locally that we did attend.

MS: Now, did you know Aimee Semple McPherson? Did you know about her?

AB: I knew about her, yes, certainly. She made the news [laughter]. We talked about her. Our family, obviously, would talk about those things. Yes, sure did.

MS: Now, as a young boy, were you a religious person?

AB: What's a religious person? Was I a religious person? I don't know whether I was a religious person, whatever that means. I knew there was a need for something beyond ourselves. I had a feeling that, going to Sunday school, going to revivals, there was something beyond. It wasn't all just explainable, a certain amount of mystery that I recall, not too inquisitive. We were just passing thoughts that went on. So, was I a religious person? Does that mean going to church and Sunday school? No, I don't think that's what it means. It's more of a dedication, a commitment. Part of that revival was you would commit yourself to Jesus and coming forward and et cetera. Our family didn't do that. Our family prayed. We read the Bible. I think all of that had a bearing on understanding. We sang. I remember as a child we had a player piano. I remember pumping the piano and learning to read as the scrolls of music went by. We'd sing along on Sunday afternoons.

MS: Did you have favorite hymns?

AB: No, not generally, can't even remember unless I think really hard which they were. Actually, I don't remember.

MS: I have to understand this, you were formally ordained? When was that? What were the circumstances of that?

AB: Let me tell you about those circumstances and where it all begins. It began when I was in the Air Force, and I didn't get moved overseas. I asked the question, "Why not? Was something

not happening that should be happening?" When I was discharged in 1945 at March Air Force Base with a bunch of other guys, many who had seen combat and me who had not, we began to talk together about what is it about it that we managed to survive? There must have been a reason. It was a purpose in life of some kind. I asked the question. Then having married in [19]43 to my wife Francis who was an Episcopalian and when we raised our first son, obviously in [19]46, we went to the Episcopal Church. That was my first experience in the Episcopal Church. At that time, the old St. Peter's, the first church in San Pedro, it was too small. The congregation was getting larger. We're in a neighborhood that was not growing. So, they called a new rector. He decided we ought to move in [19]49. That's when I really got involved in [19]49. The first was the planning of a new parish church and moving and convincing people [laughter]. That's the thing to do. It was hard to do. Some of the older people didn't want to move way up there on the hill where we finally picked the spot way up on 9th and Western. So, I was part of that movement. So, from that, the new rector was a part of the associated parish which was looking at the liturgy in another way. The liturgical movement in [19]49 and [19]50 became the norm for a lot of us in Southern California. So, I was a part of that. The learning process was very – then of course, if you're teaching Sunday school with a new curriculum and things are all new, you begin to ask a lot of other questions. So, in [19]50, I asked the question, what am I doing here? In the meantime, I was working for Southern Counties Gas Company as a project inspector. Things were booming and pipelines were going all over. They were leasing the workout. I became an inspector and traveled around. I was still asking the question, "I must be more than this." So, in 1950, I began to think about it seriously. In 1959, I decided that I would think about it really seriously. So, I talked to the family about it. I talked to my wife and decided that because the – oh, well, I'll back off a minute. The Seamen's Church Institute in town, one of the oldest institutions built in 1881, was in an old building and still standing at the 1st and Harbor Boulevard, that building and all of its complex buildings around it needed somebody to come down and talk about whether the work ought to continue or – because the building was condemned, whether we ought to get out of the business of ministry to seafarers. So, I went down, did a survey for the bishop. The outcome of that was we ought to build a new building, get out of this old one. If we're going to do anything at all, let's build a new, modern building. So, that's when I got involved in 1957, [19]58, and [19]59. Then when we built the building in [19]57, they said, "Well, you did such a good job. Why don't you come to work?" I did in [19]59. In [19]60, I decided that they needed a clergyman, started seminary in [19]60 and moved to Berkeley to the Church Divinity School of the Pacific and graduated in [19]64. I've been going ever since.

MS: Talk about the Seamen, the oldest church. Who were they ministering to? What was their importance in the community? What were the particular problems they faced?

AB: The early ministry to seafarers was put together by a group of people in the community of various denominations. There were no other churches really in town going at all in [19]81. They met in buildings, et cetera. But it was a group of people. They call the organization the Social Service Ministry to the Seafaring Community. Because we had obviously lots of seafarers coming in, lots of rowdiness, a lot of fights, a lot of drunkenness, a lot of real problems. So, the social service group decided they ought to have some effect upon these people in some way. So, it began. Then it splintered off into the Beacon Light Mission which did the evangelical work and mission work. Then we, the Seamen's Church Institute, later became

known as – we became part of the Diocese of Los Angeles. We would take on the ministry to the active seafaring community, going aboard ships, welcoming them into town, trying to stabilize their life activities in a more social way. Because of the long history of Beacon Street, you may have been hearing about was one of [laughter] pretty wild. Beacon Street, we called it one time the roughest street in the world. I don't think it was, but that's what Ripley said it was.

MS: So, as a man of God on Beacon Street, what were your challenges?

AB: Well, actually the challenges there were that on Monday mornings, I would go to court to see who was in, who got picked up, and see what I can do to help them. Then I began to learn how the people on Beacon Street, the people who owned the businesses and the women that ran the boarding houses and the hotels were a marvelous group of people who were really concerned about the welfare. Began then to work with them in developing a relationship, which later proved pretty well an important thing because I could call them and say, "Gee, I've got somebody that needs a hand. Can you put him up for the night," et cetera, et cetera. So, I began to develop a relationship in that area.

MS: Tell me some of the people that were important to you down in that Beacon Street area. Who were they and the people you saw?

AB: To carry it little further back, one of my friends who was part of our neighborhood up in the Leland Street area, his father was a policeman. His beat was Beacon Street. Bigfoot (Hacky?) was the ruler of Beacon Street. He was big. He was about 6'6", had about a 14-foot boot on. He really was something else. That was my first experience, so that I knew where to go if I wanted some answers to things. But the names of people, boy, that's been a long time ago. I've forgotten some of the names of the women [laughter].

MS: Tell me more about Bigfoot. What was he like?

AB: If you mention Bigfoot Hacky to anybody, practically, if they were at all anything on Beacon Street, whether they be a shopkeeper or a hotel keeper, he kept the order and many times, physically.

MS: Who were some of the prominent places where you found your congregation of these?

AB: I found my congregation in [laughter] a number of places, in the Silver Dollar Hotel, in the Log Cabin café or bar or both, Shanghai Reds, Tommy Goodfellows, the Porthole. These were the local places that catered to the seamen, and the Bank Cafe. Most of them would bring their money in and leave it there. Because I knew if they got drunk, they'd lose their money. They'd put it behind the stick, as they called it, or in the bar. It was my job sometimes to make sure they got their money back. You have to listen to both sides. "Did you spend all your money?" "I don't remember." "How can we then go and ask them for an accounting of your money?" But it worked out. I had a good rapport with people. We helped many, many cases.

MS: Now, what did you do? Did you roam through the streets? How did you function?

AB: Well, no. We functioned in a building that was built especially for seamen. It was the first new building, as I mentioned, after we left our old Seamen's Church until we built this new building. All glass so we could see out and people could see in. Matter of fact, it's still on the art and architecture of the peninsula, one of the places to visit, done by a marvelous architect. That was my office. That was where I had the services. That's where we gathered for all kinds of activities. From there when there was a need, I would go down to Beacon Street or whatever the needs were. Sometimes it was down for a drinking party. I would go down and drink with them in the bar. We would raise the roof on special occasions and had a great time. It was one of camaraderie as well. Not that I needed to do that, but once in a while it was this party going on, what can you say? "Join us. All right, come on, get in."

MS: Was there any particular, for want of a better term, parishioner or somebody that you really remember that was helped by what you and your organization did?

AB: Well, I remember the number of people who were helped that I still hear from, two or three of them. One, a Japanese seaman who called the other day and said, "Do you remember me?" I've been retired from that for twenty-three years. I said, "Yes, Japanese Pete." I said, "Yes, I do. What's going on?" He said, "I just wanted to know if you were still around." Then the other day when we had a National Maritime Day, one of the young men that I'd helped get his papers and got his first job, who was called Sinbad the Sailor. Sinbad went to sea for a number of years and then got married. Matter of fact, I performed their wedding. Then he stopped going to sea for a while. I think he went back to sea again. Then he's longshoring now. I saw him the other day. Yes, I see some of the people. I recall some of the people like Captain (Conley?) who would periodically dress up as an Indian because he was part Indian and come into the center and dance around and sing Indian songs. So, there were interesting characters. But the interesting thing is I could sit in my office at times and knew everything going on. People would come in and share what was happening and who was doing what. "Oh, you got picked up? Can you go down Monday morning and see with the judge?" I knew the judge well. I would offer the opportunity instead of thirty days or twenty-nine, it was – not thirty. Twenty-nine days was the average for a drunk. Then Alex, some friend of mine who I went down with that morning, he only gave him two days. He couldn't figure out why he wasn't getting twenty-nine days. It just bugged him so much he quit drinking [laughter]. Alex Rapallo and Alex Popoff were big Russians. There were a number of characters we had. If I sat long enough, I could tell you lots and lots of stories about them.

MS: I have a feeling we are going to have you come back, because I know you have to get away.
Tell us, what was Beacon House? What is the story of that and your involvement with that?

AB: All right. My involvement with Beacon House is that I founded it [laughter]. That happened, as many miracles happen in our lifetime. It was a miracle because in 1970, the diocese, which was supporting the seamen who work in port, decided, because of tight constraints of funds, they were going to cut us off, cut our budget in half. I said, "What can we do? Well, they're halving the budget. Now, we can't do all the things we were scheduled to do." At that time, I had an interesting board of directors. A house became available, a piece of property right next door to us. The Beacon House became available. Everything became

available. Oh, and then the other thing is that we had borrowed $20,000, which became due, and everything came to a head in [19]71. It looked like the end of everything. One night, I got a call from the diocese saying that somebody is up here. They have left a lot of money to you. I said, "I'm coming. I'll be right up." He said, "No. You don't need to do anything. It's already taken care of. They're going to leave it to the institute." That was $25,000. It took care of our twenty. We had five left over. We bought the property. We formed the Seamen's Center Guild of Women. They ran a thrift shop. They paid the mortgage off. The next thing you know, the Beacon House came into being. Because one of the seamen said, "I have a friend who's drunk. I think he's staying in this old house." I said, "What old house?" So, a block away was this old house. I went down to see it. Yes, it was rolling with everything wild. I thought, "Gee, this is interesting." So, we sat out in front of the center one morning, cup of coffee, and said, "There's got to be a place for people to go who have a need, drinking or drugs." I said, "I have a friend who will let me know." So, I had a friend who was in the real estate business and found out that he was representing the owners of that house. I said, "Oh, that's John. I know John, and I know Mark. I may have –" that was a third of the people. I said, "Let's make a deal." So, I leased that building for $123 a month without the board and my board even knowing about it. I just did it. I went around with a hat in hand and paid the bills. Beacon House got started. Now, Beacon House has seven, eight homes now in the area. So, I founded that in the midst of all the chaos that was going on in our life at the institute. All these amazing things do happen. That was one of the miracles.

MS: What are you the proudest about Beacon House? What makes you the most proud?

AB: Because it has an outreach in the community.

MS: You've got to say Beacon House.

AB: Oh, Beacon House. The Beacon House has an outreach to the community. The community finds they cannot do without it now. Every activity, from security to help in any way at all, the Christmas parade, all the activities in town are focused on it. It was interesting. When we hired the first woman to run a men's recovery house, it was bringing the change. It's the only woman that we ever know off that has been the director of a men's house. Mary Proper pulled that all together and got them to look out beyond themselves and move out to the community, which they did.

MS: What is the process of recovery for someone who is an alcoholic who goes to Beacon House? What is the process they go through?

AB: They have sixty days or ninety days, depending on in house, can't do anything without a group. Everything was a group. It's under the AA program or meetings. There are activities of all kinds functioning around that every day. Now, as they move out of those ninety days, they can go out into the world whenever they do. Now, with the sober livings we have now, they live and go to school. All of those activities that are going on are still going on. That was in 1970.

MS: What is fish? What is your involvement with that?

AB: Fish was a program. Fish was a program that came out of Canada in 1965. The program was that if you can pull together a community of people to help feed the poor and the hungry, you can help the community by a fish program. So, a fish program started. We had people come in to tell us about it. Mainly, the process is to have people bring things into our cupboard. We started with a little cupboard and got into a storefront. That moved and got expanded and expanded to clothing and expanded to any number of things now. It's mainly now taken over by the inner interfaith housing in the community.

MS: So, is it a thrift shop kind of arrangement? What is it?

AB: No, no thrift shop.

MS: What is it then?

AB: Free food.

MS: Free food.

AB: We managed to, in the beginning, get the people in town, the grocery stores, and the shop owners and stuff to give us food, and people brought it in. We classified it and had volunteers bagging it up and giving it away.

MS: I mean, all the years you have been doing this, what is special about ministering to a harbor, to a port town? What is special about it? For you, what is the most gratifying and most challenging about it?

AB: Well, the most challenging part of it is whatever your ego is – because you don't see people. Once you've ministered to people on board ship, they've been gone. You may never see them again, or you may. So, if you've got a big ego, that needs to be taken care of, and you have a problem. So, it's individual, one-on-one at moments in time. It's a challenge for those who have a big ego. But if you don't, if you understand what you're doing and understand you're doing it for the Lord's sake, then you don't have a problem. So, the numbers of thousands of people that I have met over a period of time, some I have met again and still see some of them over a period of time, you have to let them go. You have to do what you can do at that moment in time and let them go. That's probably the hardest for people. [laughter] The hardest about the whole job was trying to raise enough money to keep things going, which was – we had events in the community to raise funds, et cetera. So, that was probably the hardest part.

MS: When you were ministering to some of these seamen, are there certain issues you hear again and again and again? Are there things that you have to deal with?

AB: The things that we deal – that I dealt with mainly, first thing is, if it was ashore and they came to see me, it was because they had a family problem or a drinking problem or a runaway problem or immorality, et cetera. If it was aboard ship, it was loneliness, hadn't heard from a family, or there was a death in the family or the uncertainty of where they were or how they were being paid or whether they were paid or the work – all of that, which ended up in litigation in

many cases as we intervened with companies to even just to get them paid their overtime or get any money at all many times on some of these ships. They used to come in here from other parts of the world. They were terrible at taking care of the people. So, we would hear their stories and try to do something about it, which we did. Many cases, we're able to get the longshoremen to let the lines go, and they had to stay there. We sat. Ships sat there until they worked out the problem, which was really good.

MS: Was that a specific story? Tell me that story about stopping the ship from going.

AB: Yes. Well, the last time or the first time we had a ship in Long Beach, the master of the ship was keeping double records. Crew never knew what kind of money – they knew what they had been told they were going to be paid. Then we went aboard. They would show us these records. We'd say, "What is this?" Then they would say, "No, no. There must be more records." We would go over and over that. They would insist that it was not. We finally couldn't resolve it. So, we got the longshoreman involved. They wouldn't let the line go. The ship couldn't go. Then we told them, "Well, [laughter] the master of the ship got to do something." We finally forced him to deal with this problem, which he finally did, and the ship did sail. The tough part about that all is that the men were worried about what the captain would do for them dealing with it with us. Sometimes we tell them, "You just better fly home, just leave the ship."

MS: So, it sounds to me a lot of the work you were doing was almost – one more question then because I know you have to leave. You were doing advocacy work, almost like lawyers.

AB: That's right.

MS: So, how much was it directly concerned with God? How much of this concern was just basic welfare issues?

AB: Well, underneath it all is obviously – for me, it was dealing with God and his admonition to care for the needy, for those who have needs, whether they were hungry or starving or whether they were in anxiety over a job or something. It's all part of that, that I see it is. I didn't have any problem in relating it all too. Then many times, I would have a service aboard. They had asked for one. It would be a service of celebration that it worked. A number of times, we were able to do that or to go onboard a ship that was – everything was in chaos. I go aboard. We would have – and sometimes a captain would ask could I come. Things are going wrong. We go aboard. We'd have a church service and a communion service. Things would slow down a bit and things would level off of it. So, yes, there were all kinds of ways in which the kingdom of heaven can be explained and experienced.

MS: Perfect. That is probably just right, huh?

MS: Just right.

MS: I am going to have to ask you –

AB: All right.

MS: But first of all, just remind the transcript, say your name again and spell it, so we –

AB: Right. Reverend Arthur Bartlett.

MS: Okay.

AB: Did I need to spell it?

MS: That is okay.

AB: B-A-R-T-L-E-T-T.

MS: Good, good. You came here when you were 4 years old. What year was that?

AB: That was in 1923.

MS: So, what are your early memories of the port? I mean, 4, you do not have many memories. But what are your first early memories of the Port of Los Angeles?

AB: Well, the first early memories in the Port of L.A. was my aunt taking me and my sister on a trip up to Averill Park, which has a marvelous view of the whole harbor. I was impressed. This was my first big look after arriving to see this marvelous harbor out there with all kinds of things that were strange, wonderful [laughter]. That was the first one. The second one was in our trips that would – now Warehouse One was built in 1915 when they're opening the Panama Canal. Then next to it, it was a parking area. People can see *Vista*. That was the second place my aunt took us and said to my dad, "I think that's where you may be working at, Bethlehem shipyard, just a cross away from the *Vista*." The ships were coming and going. My sister and I were speculating on where they were going and what was in them and all that sort of thing that a 5- or 6-year-old – I was just going on five in October.

MS: So, it must have been a pretty impressive sight to see all these big ships going by, coming from where, going to where.

AB: Yes.

MS: So, did you get a sense of any sea lust burning early on or any interest that sort of started early watching all these?

AB: Well, I think my interest began with some of the stories that my father told me about my grandfather who owned a ship or two, I reckon, owned two ships in the Port of London. Maybe it's the salt blood [laughter]. Maybe it's the salt in my blood. Who knows what it is. But yes, it was an affinity for ships and things and then with my father working in a shipyard. Now, my first voyage here, there was a ferry boat called the *Ace*, which went from 5th Street landing across Terminal Island, took about six minutes. I remember that. I must have been 5 or 6 then making the first trip to where my father was going to work. I remember it now as a long walk

from the ferry to the shipyard.

MS: So, what was the shipyard like? What did it look like? What did it sound like? What was it like? Do you remember?

AB: All the shipyard sounds in a shipyard that I could remember were whistles, steam, riveting noises, the noises of – they were more repairing ships then. They weren't building yet. They may have built some, but I doubt it. Mainly, it was a drydock that lifted ships out of the water and did the repair and all that. The smells from the ships coming out of the water and the seaweed and the growth on the bottom of ships and all that was rather exciting. That was my first impression when I was about 6 years old or 7 right in there. Then later, when I worked there, I was in the middle of it all. Well, what a feeling for the waterfront. Maybe it's the salt air [laughter]. Maybe it's the negative ions [laughter] and salt air that generates an interesting one.

MS: Now, you were a young entrepreneur. As a young boy, talk about your newspaper days and some of the adventures you had early on as a young boy.

AB: Well, my first moneymaking job was selling *Liberty Magazine*. *Liberty*, in those days, was a weekly – actually, it was a monthly magazine. The *Pictorial Review*, it sold for 10 cents, women's magazine. Then later, the *Liberty* was a weekly that came out, 5 cents. I'm thinking today how the children who can't really move around a community with safety. We were wandering all over the city. I was wandering all over the city, knocking on doors, selling magazines for a number of years when I was seven-and-a-half, 8 years old. Then I took on a newspaper delivery job when I was 10. I can't imagine today's world, a 10-year-old. Maybe they do somewhere. Now, delivering the local paper, which was a news pilot then. Then later, a daily morning paper and the daily news, which I did when I was 14, 4:00 a.m., going down to pick it up from the PE train that came in from L.A. We'll wrap the papers, get to school by 8:00 a.m.

MS: So, what was your sales pitch? Did you play on emotions, or did you drive a hard bargain? How did you sell?

AB: Well, the selling pitch was, like most things, the front page, what was on the cover [laughter]. What was on the cover of the magazine is what I sold. "You can't live without it [laughter]," whatever that featured. For women's magazines, the pitch was the latest menus that are coming out and clothing, et cetera. You must know what's going on in New York or in Hollywood, mainly in New York. The *Liberty Magazine* was a general, almost the size of a *Time* today, about that size. It had interesting articles. I would always pick one out and say, "Have you read this article yet? If not, [laughter] –"

MS: So, you –

AB: So, I had a route of people that I delivered to then. Once I established the relationship, then I would deliver. I knew about how many I would be able to sell each week.

MS: So, they were getting their advice on information from a 10-year-old. So, you must read

this [laughter].

AB: So, how did I know?

MS: Right. [laughter] I just learned to read this. It is important.

AB: Well, that was really the pitch that I think most of us used, as I recall. "Can't do without it. It must be up on the news. Today's world, you have to be up on all the things happening," et cetera.

MS: Now, during the war years – before the war years actually, you were here. Were you at sea – I forget – in the late [19]30s before World War II? Were you at sea at that time?

AB: I did. I was at sea. I took a summer job with a friend of mine who's had a friend whose father was a skipper on a standard L-ship that was coastwise. So, a couple of summers, I was a deckhand. That was my first experience. I still have, somewhere, my document.

MS: So, you could do it again if you had to, right?

AB: Well, [laughter] I don't think I could do it again physically, no. [laughter]

MS: Did you feel a calling to the sea, or was that just something –

AB: No, no, no, I didn't. That was just a summer job, working. It was just to make money. It was an adventure to make a few dollars. I can't remember the payoff, how much I got, and what I did with it [laughter].

MS: So, where were you on December 7th, 1941?

AB: On December the 7th, 1941, I was in the Air Force on a weekend pass, hiking in the mountains in Denver. I didn't know about December until a truck driver picked us up and said, had we heard what was happening and what happened. Of course, then we got back to the base in Denver. It was total chaos. I'm sure that some people knew what was happening. But most of the people or the information had gotten out. It was all new to us. It was a great scramble and speculation on what was going to happen. My God, we only had a year to go. Now we're going to be stuck. The first batch was in the [19]40s was a year of service. These people are just going to be getting out in December and October and December and January. Then we said, "Oh, boy. Now, looks like we're in –" that was our first reaction. We're going to be here longer than we had anticipated we would be.

MS: As you were growing up in San Pedro and going to school and everything, who were the kids – talk about the kind of kids in your gang – which was not a gang as it is today. But talk about the kids that were your playmates, your friends growing up to get a sense of what the community was like in San Pedro.

AB: Well, most of the children that I grew up with – and I grew up in three areas rather

interestingly. They were entirely different. The people living in the north of San Pedro were entirely different than the people who lived in the south and entirely different than people who lived up in the west end, where I grew up in three places. I didn't know so many people on the north end until later. We moved when I was 6 to the south end. There was a group of people there. They were only mainly a White community of people, mixed White, Norwegian, Swedes, Russians, Yugoslav, and Italian and a few Mexicans that were friends of mine because they were a couple of doors down. It's the reason I knew the Gomez's. Probably we played together without even thinking about ethnicity. They were just kids. We moved when I was in the fourth grade, which I would have probably been about 8 or eight-and-a-half, to the west end of San Pedro up on the hill. That was another different community of people. Interesting enough, most of them – we didn't live with any of the Black kids lived. We did associate with them in junior high and high school, but anything before that, very little. They were not segregated. But they were segregated by cost of living and cost of housing. So, there weren't as many of the mixed –

MS: But there were restrictive covenants. You could not sell in Los Angeles. You could not sell in certain neighborhoods to Blacks in those days.

AB: It could be. But to my knowledge, there was only one that I delivered a magazine to, which was in the western area. They are one of my customers. I have to reflect on it. Now, yes, they were one of the few Black people in the area. I think they did that because their children – they were just a couple of blocks from the school, which made it convenient. But I was not aware of any restrictions. There may have been. I know later there were some restrictions on Japanese and Chinese owning properties. But other than that –

MS: So, what was the third place you lived?

AB: That was the third. The first was Bandini. The second was Point Fermin. The third was the Leland Street, west end, up on the hill.

MS: Now, what, if any, association did you have with kids who – Japanese kids primarily on Terminal Island? Did you have any association with them outside of school or just during school?

AB: Well, most of the association we had was with the Japanese that I knew within school. That came about in junior high when one of the Japanese farmers' son and I were asked to go to a corrective center. The corrective center was, you had something you had to straighten out, which in my case was a back problem. (Matsutani?) and I would walk down and go to this twice a week. That was my first experience in junior high. I got to know him because my lunch is – we had to carry the lunches then. Some kids bought lunch. Most of us carried lunch. I had peanut butter and whatever. He always had a Japanese mixture of rice and fish and things. We would trade until I got to know a little bit about Japanese food. Then in high school, on our track team, we had two or three excellent Japanese sprinters and the broad jumper that beat me in the finals by a half inch [laughter]. But then we were invited, as we were growing up in high school and a track team, to the Boy's Day at Terminal Island, which was the big day once a year. They had boys' activities. I was invited two or three times to their home on the island.

MS: So, when you went there, what was it like?

AB: Well, it was entirely different. These were more as we would think of it as shacks. They were put up for housing for the employees of the canneries. They were clean and neat. But they were kind of basic, as I remember them always like tarpaper outside. They probably are more than that. But as I recall, they were more like temporary homes, which I think they were.

MS: Now, I think I asked you about when you were a youngster, younger person. Talk about the role of churches in San Pedro, centers for community activities, and that kind of thing and a sense of how it related to the community of San Pedro.

AB: The churches, they are an important part of my life and the community. The first instance was a summer program at a Methodist church which was an old World War 1 barracks actually, which was a block away from me. In the summer, they had summer activities. I was asked by whoever it was. It wasn't the pastor. It was somebody who had the activity to help the littler kids with doing crafts. So, we built a Noah's ark and cut the animals out, et cetera, that summer, as I remember. So, it became a community kind of locale, which was right across from the school, the Leland school. Then the other community activities were that the schools had dances. That one – as a teenager, that was a pretty inviting process there. Since I was raised in the Presbyterian Church as a teenager, we didn't seem to have as many activities there as the Episcopal Church across the street. They had the dances and the girls. I remember that was my first introduction to girls and what they were, things in a semi-serious way. I didn't have a lot of use for them because we were active in mainly the sport, activities of sports, and programs that we developed ourselves. Girls weren't invited in those days. So, we didn't know them. I didn't know a lot about them until the awakening age in high school. [laughter]

MS: So, your denominational choice was based on who had the best dances, I guess, then?

AB: Yes, or the best activities, even though we attended revival meetings and did all kinds of activities other than a local church. But yeah, I would say it was more social.

MS: Now, would you call yourself a spiritual kid, or were you just –

AB: I don't think I would call myself a spiritual kid. I hadn't dealt with any of that. Was I a religious kid? Probably so. Family was – father and mother always say grace at the table before meals, Sunday singalongs. Was I a spiritual person? Probably not, more religious person.

MS: How would you define those two terms?

AB: Well, a religious person, in my term, would be the one that adheres to a denomination to church and attends. A spiritual person is one that inculcates in their life a spiritual growth and an outreach that is more than a religious attendee and sort of activity.

MS: How would you call yourself now?

AB: I'm a spiritual person. Yes. Probably, I would call myself a spiritual person and a religious

person too as well, a combination of both. But my spiritual life is in another dimension, which includes, obviously, the prayer life, a sacramental life. [laughter] I'm laughing this morning, maybe the ten commandments [laughter] of road. Have you read that this morning yet?

MS: No.

AB: [laughter] Oh, the Pope came out with the ten commandments on what to do on the road. [laughter]

MS: The original ten or is there –

AB: No. These didn't come out of the Vatican this morning.

MS: Oh.

AB: Rather interesting. Thou shalt not kill on the road.

MS: On the road. A lot of those follow, right? [laughter]

AB: All of that –

MS: That is covered other person's cars and things like that.

AB: Yes. No road rage and all of that and be courteous and say the rosary on the road and pray a lot while you're driving, et cetera. It's interesting. They set up ten of them.

MS: So –

AB: So, yes, I do that as a matter of fact, at stop signs, basically. Then at the end of a freeway, I'd say, "Thank God, I made it." [laughter]

MS: Tell me other circumstances of you becoming involved and ordained and joining in a professional way in a spiritual and religious life. Was it a kind of a St. Paul at the crossroads, or what happened?

AB: No. My religious life began as a child, obviously, and as an attendee. That's how religious life was. You attended church, and you did some of the things that were normally expected of. Our family was a very moral family. I can never ever hear my father ever swear, ever, didn't even say, "Damn." As a child growing up, we never used – somehow that was never a part of our language, or my brothers either. So, probably, my religious life was – mainly, after asking myself, after four years in the service, how I survived. There must have been a purpose for my surviving four years in the Air Force. Then my mother died in [19]43, coming home. I flew home and was married with my current wife, who died two months ago. So, I asked the question, "What am I here for? What am I doing? How did I ever survive all this when others, friends who we grew up with, were dying or had died? I must have survived for a reason." Then coming back and marrying, then finding a church to go to. Since Fran was an Episcopalian, we

became part of the Episcopal Church. In that growth process of a new church and a new pastor or building one, we were all part of that whole process of building it physically and with money to build a new parish church, which is one of the classic churches in town now. Then as that came along, then the bishop one day asked if I would do a survey of the needs in the harbor. That was in the [19]50s. It was growing after the Second War. Then I did a survey to find the needs of the seafaring people. I said, "Never done them, but I would try," and did that.

MS: What did you find out?

AB: Then found out there was a whole changing process of going on in the [19]50s of ships being very much larger and the needs of the seafarer changing radically because many of the seafarers are married, gone to sea. So, they have family ashore. It wasn't the wildlife of a seaman who traveled the world at every port anymore. All that was changing. Requirements were changing. Some of the people who couldn't keep up with the requirements for upgrading themselves, there was a need for assistance coming into being. So, we ended up with building a new building, mainly for counseling, a place to come and gather, come and talk, kind of find out the local information, what was going on in the community. Information center is what it became, as well as a spiritual center where we had all the needs, from baptisms to marriages to burials. All that revolved around the seamen's church institute in its new building.

MS: So, tell me about some of the things that you, as a pastor, would be dealing with seamen that might be different than other situations with other people.

AB: The biggest challenge in ministry to the seafaring people is sometimes you only have a few minutes, particularly a shipboard visiting. They would only have a certain amount of time, which is eclipsed nowadays. They're almost computerized now, from second to second. They don't have a lot of free time. So, there was time to talk aboard the ship about their families and what they were missing and what was happening aboard ships, some of the skippers who were not as generous as others, or their understanding of what was happening. Then there was a communication problem. I had mixed crews aboard. They couldn't get along. So, it was a whole different community of things aboard ship that began to change in the [19]50s and early [19]60s. Ships are larger, smaller crews, foreign crews who couldn't speak the language, and so all these tensions that were going on. So, I only had a few minutes. Whereas ashore, you would have time to, "Okay, you come back next week." Or "make an appointment." Or "we'll see you." Or "we'll talk with your family. We'll make up time to do that." So, there was quick onboard – we had a few minutes to counsel them, share with them whatever the necessary things were. Then of course, the counseling in the religious center ashore was limited to those who were ashore.

MS: Is there any particular person or situation when you counseled that remains in your mind more than others or you either had an effect or you had some issue that really got you really engaged?

AB: I remember being engaged in a ship that had a murderer aboard, and the Filipino seamen were worried. They asked me to come and exorcise the ship. So, I went aboard. We went up the bridge. We did that. Then we had followed it with a mass down in there. I've heard from

these people saying it was one of the better journeys after that that they had since they've been sailing. They felt that it was free of whatever spirits were worrying them. I hear from a couple of them still. I had a call the other day from one of them that lives in Arizona and two or three of them that I have still retained a relationship with. Eric, he lives in Palm Springs, calls me periodically. I had a wedding for him and his wife. Now, there's still a number that call. I still keep track of them.

MS: Tell me story more to tell. I mean, how often do you exorcise a ship? I mean, what did you do? I mean –

AB: That was the first and last time.

MS: Okay. Explain. You come onboard, what happens?

AB: All right. We –

MS: Go to the story again. I mean –

AB: We go aboard ship and we –

MS: I am sorry. I was talking. Your turn.

AB: Yes. All right. We go aboard the ship to exorcise it. We go up to the bridge, which is the key place to go. The captain says, "There was a murderer aboard, and my crew is having a problem with some of the spirits who still remained from this murder. Can we bless the ship and exorcise it?" I said, "Yes, we can." So, we go do a ceremony. We sprinkled the bridge with the holy water. We had prayers of exorcism. I leave them a new figure of Christ crucified for the bridge. Then we go down into the mess hall. We have mass. We sing. We take communion. We have a whole community of things going on. Now, I have not done that before and not done it ever again, one time.

MS: But how did you get the ceremony of exorcism? Did you look it up? Were there scriptures for that or what?

AB: We have scripture. We also have prayers of right.

MS: Do you remember any of that and what the ceremony was?

AB: No. I really don't, no.

MS: Since you only did it once, I cannot expect –

AB: I only did it one time. That's true.

MS: Okay. Any other individual situations that stick in mind that people that you counseled that had some effect that really you felt you have done your job?

AB: Well, I don't know anybody that's living today yet. No, no. We're talking thirty-some years ago.

MS: Right. But people who just – you met, and there was a particular case or –

AB: Oh, well, there are a number of people. One of them was Broken Nose Burns. He and I used to fight at the YMCA. We didn't fight fight. We weren't part of the Beacon Street brawling that went on. Broken Nose Burns became Broken Nose Burns later, as well as (Canvasback Jacobson?). These were a couple of characters that were living in the area, also a Russian that I helped. Alex Popoff was in grammar school with me. Alex, with the Russian family, a rough and tumble group, I remember him coming to school in the fourth grade without shoes. The teacher bought him a pair of shoes. Alex was forever grateful but developed a drinking problem at a young age. Alex went to Kings Point and graduated within Second War. Charge of a couple of ships came out and learned how to drink again. I found him on Beacon Street one day. He said, "I have to go to court in the morning. Will you come with me?" I did. That's when Judge Ben said to him, "I've seen you here so many times. I'm only going to give you twenty-nine days and thirty instead of the thirty days normal." Alex couldn't understand it and asked me, "Why did he give me twenty-nine instead of thirty?" I said, "Alex, because I think he believes you're going to make it this time." Sure enough, he did. As a matter of fact, I hired him later at the institute to teach navigation classes.

MS: What about Broken Nose Burns?

AB: Broken Nose Burns was from the East Coast, from Boston. Of course, shipped out for a number of years, the Second War began, as many of them did, demanding the ships that were built, ended up out here. He came in and needed a place to stay. He said, "I'm new to the area." So, I helped him find a place. Then we went to the stories of how he got his broken nose. Okay. I said, "I used to be in battle." We never broke his nose fighting. It was during the [19]34 strike. When they had a strike, the unions heard that he was in a fight or somebody hit him with a bat or something, and it broke his nose. So, I often thought, I said, "Gee, I thought you got this fighting, (George?)." He said, "No." He said, "No, no, I got it broken in the [19]34 strike." So, he was known then, of course, as Broken Nose Burns. He and I got to know each other. Yes.

MS: You said you would spar at the YWCA?

AB: Well, no, it was later that I knew Broken Nose. At the YMCA was a trainer who trained young people for boxing. He trained a number of people. Eddie Brooks was one. Big, tall, lanky, Black guy named (Ivan Lane?). Jack Jacobson, me, and they were there any number that T-Bone O'Malley – not O'Malley, (Lomeli?). T-Bone Lomeli was the trainer. We would box regularly. Then some of us – and I was not one of them – would box at the Wilmington Bowl before the prelims. They get a bunch of kids out there and battle each other before they get there. They're really excited [laughter] before the main event would come along.

MS: You also mentioned another name, Canvasback Jacobson.

AB: That was Jacobson, yes.

MS: Tell me about him.

AB: Well, when he and I would box, he ended up sometimes on the canvas on his back. So, we began to call Jack Jacobson, Canvasback Jacobson [laughter].

MS: Tell us about ministering at Beacon Street. What was that like? Who were you talking with? What were you doing? What was the situation then?

AB: Ministry of Beacon Street was rather interesting because it was a locale that was surrounded by businesses. It was condensed from the way back in the 1800s to a locale for seafaring people with the normal things, restaurants, bars, houses of prostitution, gambling. All that was confined to an area on Beacon Street, which was from 7th to 5th – 4th or 5th or even 3rd. 3rd, you begin to get into the Happy Valley area. Happy Valley was an area where there were bars and mainly wine, for whatever reason. Maybe it was because of licensing maybe. People made wine there and sold it. There was always singing and laughing and dancing. That's why it became Happy Valley on 3rd Street. So, the ministry to that area was you had to know people. You began to know the people who operated the hotels and the bars, who would call and say, "We've got some so-and-so. I need some help. Can you come in?" Then in between times, I would go in and drink with them. I became familiar with the whole process that went on and became a part of the Beacon Street area, much to my problem sometime when I overindulged [laughter]. But nevertheless, you got to know people. Once you know people, then they would call me. I would call them if I needed help and if somebody needed help for whatever reason. Morning in court, which was Monday morning, usually to round up all the people who had gotten picked up for various charges. They would say, "Could you come down? Joe is going to be down there this morning, just give him some moral support by being there." So, I became a fixture down on Beacon Street. This was after. The early Beacon Street, I knew it as a youngster because one of my friends in the east or west end of the Leland Street area, his father was Bigfoot Hacky who patrolled Beacon Street. He was the terror of Beacon Street. Big, 6' and 14 size foot. It was a big boot. So, I was familiar with that area when I was 10, 12, or 13 in that area. We'd go down with (Herb?) and his son. We would go down and – just to go down and see what was happening later. Yes.

MS: Well, tell me one of the characters that is a famous one, Shanghai Red. Tell me who that is and describe what you know about him.

AB: Shanghai Red is open as a safe place. People were treated well there. It was part of the waterfront community as well as the rest of the community. Lots of people knew him. I didn't know him personally. I knew the place. The people I knew personally, gee, I can't even remember the names of some of the people I knew in the log cabin.

MS: Well, tell me about the ministry.

AB: Well, I'll put down the names.

MS: So, you would go with them when they are arranged for being picked up or whatever. But I asked you before, talk about the jail and where the jail was and how it got its nickname and give me a sense of the –

AB: Yes. I would attend the – not every Monday morning, obviously, but many Monday mornings, just sometimes to see who was there. Other times, I was invited by the family or by a seaman who would say, "Would you come in?" Then I never got to know Judge Ben well enough. I know that once in a while, he would say, "Well, let me turn you over to Father Art and see if we can work this out," et cetera. But the housing was in the municipal building, which is now the John S. Gibson building. He was a councilman. Seven-story building, the third, or even the fourth city hall. One, two, three, four – the fourth city hall in San Pedro. It was seven stories. The jail itself was on the seventh floor. It had the best view of the harbor. So, the people who were in there always thought it was a heavenly place to go. You had to go to jail. You got the view side of the jail, which was the harbor side. So, some of the old timers are saying, "If I'm going to go to jail, would you put me in one of the cells that face the water, and so I can see ships going by," et cetera, et cetera. That seventh heaven became then the seventh floor of the city hall, which was the first floor was the fire department. The seventh floor was the police department.

MS: Now, a lot of what you are dealing with was alcoholism problems, alcohol-related problems. I mean –

AB: Basically, then it was alcohol problems. Yes. They –

MS: Tell me about that. What made it particularly difficult for you to minister to folks who were really caught in that?

AB: My ministry to the alcoholic became a real positive part of my life later. I remember those days of marijuana. That was easy to get out of Mexico. It was sort of a common thing. That wasn't a problem, while the other drugs weren't then. Basically, with seamen that had been at sea for a long time, they came back and would drink themselves through a stupor. Most of the bars were very good about taking care of them. Sometimes they would end up in fights. They had no problem. Police would come in and shut the whole thing down, et cetera. I began to wonder, there must be a way in which to help these people. There was nothing in this part of San Pedro that was helping seamen at all other than counseling. That didn't work too well. Because once you're sober, it's bye-bye. It's back at it again. It was not the answer. So, I began to develop a relationship with a recovery house in Long Beach. Until then, I began to say to people, "Oh, there is a place you can go. There's an opportunity if you want to." The first one, of course, is you want to. You need help. You've got to admit you need help. Okay. That was the first step. If they did, then I would help them. Far away is Los Angeles. It was nothing local. Then locally, we began to say, "Well, what can we do locally to help these people?" That's when I founded Beacon House which is the recovery house. It's the prime house in town today that is doing the program. But my start was trying to find places where they could go to receive the help they needed if they had decided, "Yes, I need help." First words are, "You need help. Do I need help? Yes, I do." Then I will do what I need to do.

MS: Any particular success stories that came out of Beacon Street that you remember?

AB: Oh, yes, lots of them. Yes.

MS: Share it.

AB: One that's in particular is Mike Dowling, an Irishman who was from New York. I met him because he loved to read. I would save special books for him when he was in port. He would take them, bring them back, and trade them in for others. Mike and I became very good friends. But he, like the others, when he was in port, he would get with his friends in a bar. The next thing you know, they were having problems. He developed a drinking problem. I think he always had it. But we think it was really developed here in San Pedro when he was in port. So, I took Mike in and gave him a job at the Seamen's Institute. That began the process of deciding, "What to do now, Mike? You've got some time left to go to sea to get a pension. Do you really want to do that? Or do you want to go through the process you've been going through, get a job, get the money, get drunk, and back in jail or confined somewhere to a recovery house?" He decided that it was time to stop. So, when I hired him that time, we decided that maybe he could do something about this. So, he and I started Beacon House together. He became then the leading live-in person in Beacon House for the counseling of people coming in. Everybody has been there. Everybody going through now knows, when you say Mike Dowling. Everybody knows Mike Dowling today, even though he died from – one of the things he couldn't do was stop smoking. He had a bad heart from drinking and smoking. He finally died from a heart attack, coronary.

MS: Have you –

AB: But he reconciled himself to his family, to his church, and did a major, major reconciliation to the community here in San Pedro.

MS: It must have been a fairly emotional moment when he decided to make that course change in his life. Can you describe what went on there?

AB: Oh. When Mike made his decision, the first thing was emotional tears. He finally said, "It was the first time I could cry for a long time when I admitted I needed help." That was the emotion that just came pouring out. Then the reoccurring of father that beat him and mother and the whole family thing came pouring out. So, all of the personal things that happened and had happened to him all came pouring out. It was the moment in time when I knew that he was ready to do something, and he was. Yes.

MS: That is a great story.

AB: He died the same way. We were dedicating a new building that happened to be the old Episcopal church rectory and rec room. We were there at a meeting. He was sitting next to me. We were telling people who were there, recovering people – some of them people have been in recovery for years – about what to do and what you need. He just slipped out of the chair onto the stage and was dead, just that quick. There was a nurse there, an old friend of ours. She

rushed up and said by the time he slipped out of the chair, he was dead. Yes.

MS: But not –

AB: So, it was an emotional one that began, and it was a really emotional one when he left.

MS: But not a bad way to die.

AB: No. In the midst of a great joy of him leading a sober life in the last – it was ten years, eight years and telling his story. The people who were there, they helped. So, it was really a time for both of us.

MS: Any other instances or individuals that you remember particularly?

AB: That was probably the prime one. There were many numbers of people. They'll call me and tell me, "Thank you for your help."

MS: Now, is this a battle that never goes away? I mean, how has your ministry changed now? I mean, obviously, you do not have the military in the port or any of that kind of thing. How has your ministry changed over the years?

AB: Well, my ministry now has been retired, what, twenty-three years from the maritime industry. Now, I work in the parish of St. Peter's as a volunteer. I'm on the [inaudible]. So, now I do hospital visiting and home visiting. Matter of fact, I just had a call this morning from a longtime friend who was in Kaiser. She had pneumonia and left, went to a care setting. I called over there this morning and said, "I'm coming over later this afternoon." They said, "She's back in the hospital. She had pneumonia again." So, she's back at Kaiser with pneumonia again. So, I don't know. Anyway, that sort of ministry is still going on. My ministry now is to the maritime world through my counseling and my appearances at various occasions. I do invocations and weddings and burials still in the community. Yesterday, I was at the Council of American Master Mariners, where I've been a chaplain for [19]34, [19]35 years. Through the invocation, we talk about personal problems, if people want to talk about it, et cetera, et cetera. So, I'm still as busy, but not as busy.

MS: Obviously, you must feel this has been a very rewarding life. I mean, what –

AB: This ministry has kept me young. It's kept me moving. I often tell people, "Put one foot in front of the other. If you don't have something you do in life, you can't put one foot in front of the other."

MS: Do you have a special feeling for San Pedro as a place where you have ministered all those years, this community?

AB: Oh, well, I have a special place for San Pedro because I know so many of the people who are still here. I had a call from a family that – a young couple I had married. He's a Navy SEAL. He's in San Diego. Between times he'd been in over in Iraq, did most of his work in Afghanistan

as a Navy SEAL. You know what the SEALs do. They're prime people. Anyway, he has two children. I had a call from his mother saying, "(Michael?) and (Becky?) are in San Diego now. They're going to be coming up. Can we have a baptism with the kids? Would you do that?" I said, "Absolutely." I had married the mother and the father, now, both sons and the daughter. So, that whole family I've been involved with. We're going to be involved with on the 19th, the next month, with baptisms and a renewal of marriage vows [laughter]. So, yes, I keep busy. I have an affinity for the community because I know so many people. So many people know me as the [inaudible] for whatever reason. It's because I've been around a while. When you're around eighty-some years – and I've been around now eighty-eight years and most of it in San Pedro, except for the four years in seminary, the four years in World War 2, and my world travels periodically. I've been here all my life.

MS: It has been, what?

AB: So, it's been a good community, a changing community, and a community that we can't figure out what to do with at the moment in terms of the waterfront development. [laughter]

MS: Well, I have heard stories about that. What should we do about it? [laughter]

AB: Well, I think what we should do about the waterfront community is to, number one, I think we need to listen to the port, what its needs are, number one. Because this is a port city. People forget that this is a port city. They come with all kinds of complaints. Like the other day when some woman called in and said, "I want you to do something about these cranes that are in the harbor because they're obstructing my view." Or the person who called in from Pier 40 saying, "I wish they had turned the lights down over on Pier 40 because they're lighting up my front yard," the signs and all that. I have to remind people; this is a working port. So, first of all, it's a working port. Being a harbor commissioner, formerly, it's a working port. I was part of that whole change in the computerization and the containerization. All of that went on. To remind people, it's a working port. First of all, it needs to be a working port. Second of all, it needs to be a place where people can come and have fun, secondarily, in my mind. So, the big tension is the people who have money here want that, make the money first, and then forget about the port even when they're wanting to move the terminals for the cruise ships to another location because it would be more advantageous for everything. People are saying, "If they do it, then we lose money." On and on it goes. So, it is a money thing against a community thing. It's against a port development thing, which supplies the port produce for the world, biggest producer and getting bigger. By 2020, it'll be so big and all of its problems that attendant with that, ships that make smog and ship – trucks and buses and trains and all that, they go on. So, we're dealing with people who don't want big, rapid growth, which is understandable, and the inevitability of a port that's going to have to be big because it's supplying the whole country and the world.

MS: Sounds like you have another ministry, a mediating ministry, here. [laughter]

AB: I do that periodically between the people who want it not to be a port. They want recreation. They want to attract people. They want to put shops and things that make money, et cetera, et cetera. I can understand that. If you get a developer coming in here to develop a port, obviously he needs to make money. But it's hard to do that in combination with a port that's

growing and is a working port. Yes. It's an interesting time to be on the commission. The former commissioner and I meet periodically and say, "My God, I'm glad I'm not on the commission now." [laughter] They always attended to problems with pollution, environmental impacts, and all the thousands of things that go on in the port. It didn't go on in our time.

MS: Anything else you want to talk about?

AB: Oh, I could talk about a lot of things, I guess. I'm hopeful. I like to talk about the development of this area. I would hope that there is some development which is going on in the downtown area, a high-rises. My concern is whether you can sell a loft to somebody who is going to be living here and be a part of the community. Right now, San Pedro is more of a bedroom community than a working community though. People who live here work outside, except if they work in the maritime world or longshoreman or attended activities in the port. Other than that, people who live here stream out of the city in the morning. So, to a certain extent, it's lost its community feeling to a large – to my feeling that it has. We used to be able to walk down as youngsters. We know everybody on the street to say hi to them. Now, we don't know very many people on the street, at least I don't. Some people, I'm sure, do. But I don't know as many people. They do have activities that try to attract people. Shakespeare in the park that's going on this summer is interesting, the Warner Grand that attracts people with special events. The port now, I guess, Saturday is going to be having its open house for the green port thing. So, there are things. But it doesn't have the same smallness that it did have when I was growing up. Then they have transportation. One of the things that we loved to hear was the streetcars and the buses that get you from place to place and get you downtown and get you into Long Beach and L.A. without any problems. We are the older group. One of them comes and talks with you. I know Fran Giacalonei. [laughter] She and I go over this every morning in the pool [laughter].

MS: I am fine that you do that. You are swimming. This is an issue that I – that is a little difficult, but I want to talk to you about it. You probably would know best. There were some tensions in this town in the [19]70s between the former Yugoslav community and what is known as the Croatian-Dalmatian community.

AB: Yes.

MS: Often spoken, "We all get together. We are different," blah, blah, blah. But this is a pretty tense time. Did you get engaged in that at all? What was going on? There was some violence, bombings, and things like that.

AB: That's correct. No, I didn't get involved with that tension. As a matter of fact, when we were growing up, they were all Slavs. Everybody was Slav, Croatian, or Dalmatian. The Slav Hall that was built was, for all purposes, a ceremonial hall. It was only the tensions that went on over in Yugoslavia and with Tito. It still goes on today, Montenegro and et cetera, et cetera. That still goes on and divided people. So, when that division came in the [19]70s, the ethnic groups decided to divide themselves. I was not aware of that in any form. Oh, I did know, but I'm not sure of the details of that. We knew the bombing went on. I know one of the people that got a bomb thrown on their porch. We know about a couple of guys that were caught with a VW

loaded with material in them, that sort of thing. But we didn't know about that inner tension between the two, which didn't come about, I think, until much later. Then they decided to become two little units. Croatian built their own building and sat around. The Yugoslav now is the Dalmatian.

MS: Was that a crisis for the community? I mean, because –

AB: I didn't feel it was a crisis community when that happened, no. It was only amongst the ethnic groups. That may have been more of a crisis between us who were part of it. No, I didn't feel that at all. No.

MS: Now, increasingly, this –

AB: Or we had the Portuguese and the Italian and all of that. That was never ever attention – even though they lived apart, they lived in different communities. But they all interacted together. We didn't seem to be – even with Second War, there were parts of the country who were German that were really ostracized in the Second War, and Italians were, et cetera, but not here.

MS: The Japanese.

AB: The Japanese was a good example when they were excluded from – still having a problem getting retribution. Some of them doing it paid.

MS: Increasingly, like most of our city, the larger city, San Pedro is becoming increasingly Latino, is it not? If so, what effect does that have?

AB: I think the community is not becoming that end. Though it's increased, according to my understanding, about 60 percent now of the city schools have Latino names. They may not be Latinos, but they have the names, about 60 percent now. Certainly, we have that percentage here. They are in business in town. They work in the area. As far as I can tell, it's not an ethnic problem in this city. It's always been a metropolitan sort of feeling about San Pedro, like San Francisco, about the same, a very mixed community, always has been. People accept people. We find out where they're from. We never ask where they're from. But we learn to live together. Then the intermarriage has been going on for a number of years, lots of intermarriage going on. So, now you find someone who kept their Latino name and then add to it a Yugoslav name. [laughter] So, we have a lot of those. Or an Italian name and they keep their maiden names.

MS: Now, for the last six, eight, maybe even more years, there has been a kind of evangelical movement or kind of a politically conservative, the so-called religious right and all that. Where do you see the role of religion? How has it changed? What role do you see it playing and particularly here in San Pedro, as the city continues to evolve?

AB: I've been a part of the ecumenical movement in San Pedro for a lot of years. We've met denomination for any number of years. We established some years ago an international group of

people here, which is still going on today. We meet regularly. I've not noticed that at all. Obviously, there are the evangelical groups in town. They're Lutherans. They're divided to different factions or the Lutheran Church and the Baptist churches in town.

MS: But has the role of religion changed in San Pedro from the day –

AB: I don't think the role of religion has changed in San Pedro. No, I don't think so. There's always been more Roman Catholics in San Pedro than any other denomination. So, even with that, people have gotten along well. We do interfaith activities here. Thanksgiving, we can include the rabbi. He includes himself in many of the activities going on. I have not noticed any of the tensions that are in other parts of the world.

MS: Okay. Well, actually, I think we can pretty much wrap it up here too. We will do this and the other thing.

AB: Yes.

MS: Sir, tell me about the beaches.

AB: Beaches, yes. The beaches in San Pedro were very limited to where you could – matter of fact, depending on the tide, there's only one beach. That was the Brighton Beach on Terminal Island. Cabrillo Beach area of today's beaches was all rocky. The water came up to the clip on both sides. It's a rocky area. The BAB was a little in cold, where there are a little bit of sand once in a while, depending on the tide. So, most of the people who couldn't go over to the island would go to the BAB. It was basically boys, not girls. But I remember any girls going there. Mainly, it was the local kids, local – everybody that knew would go in the summertime, obviously. Then those of us who could make it over to the island, we'd go over to Brighton Beach. Brighton Beach was a really interesting resort area with homes of people who lived in L.A. They spent the summers. It was a long, long sloping beach. It was a wonderful place to go. Then in 1927, they began to dredge the port, the channel. They had to put the dredge material somewhere, and that made Cabrillo Beach. I brought her a picture – Nancy, a picture of the Cabrillo Beach area that was made by the port. There's not a date on it, but it is 1927, [19]28. As a youngster, we lived at Kerckhoff, which was only a couple of blocks away. We spent time down there as they were dredging the material. There were big mounds of material. In between the mounds, the water would collect. We would have little warm water pools until they flattened out the beach and made the beach. Both sides of the beach are man-made beaches. So, then we begin to have a beach to go to, and everybody then, of course. Then when people were afraid of the stingrays over at Brighton Beach during certain times of the year, nobody wanted to go there. So, we ended up in 1927, [19]28, [19]29, [19]30, and [19]32, with this marvelous Cabrillo Beach and a bathhouse, which was rededicated the last couple of years ago. It's a marvelous beach, except [laughter] the inside beach is polluted. They're tearing out all the sand and putting in new stuff.

MS: God knows what were in those hot water pools. But you were swimming too, right?

AB: Bottom of the channel stuff.

MS: Whatever was there.

AB: Bottom of the channel was all up there, yes.

MS: But tell us about BAB and tell us what facts are here.

AB: Well, the facts are that that was a place –

MS: You have to say BAB.

AB: Oh. The facts to the Bare Ass Beach, BAB, was a place where we could go nude. For those days, not many of us could afford a bathing suit anyway. Matter of fact, I don't remember having a bathing suit, except you'll see a picture that I have given Nancy with me in a bathing suit in England on the beach and then the beach in Redondo, which I don't think I've given her that one. But I didn't have a suit. A lot of kids today don't have little kids run around bare. Well, we didn't have suits in those days. We boys would run down in the hot summer months, down to where the cruise terminal is today, jump in the water with no clothes [laughter]. The trestle for the PE train going to L.A. would go right by it. As John had mentioned, people would all watch. I don't know what the conductor would say. [laughter] "You're going by this – this is the beach where they're all bare. If you look to the side and then look at these kids all in this water [laughter] –"

MS: He would probably say, "Look the other way. Everyone should look to the left as you –"

AB: [laughter]

MS: So –

AB: No, going into L.A., it was look to the right [laughter].

MS: So, you were chosen as Man of the Year. What year was that?

AB: 1982, I was chosen Man of the Year by the Maritime Trades Department. They had a big, big event. It was big, invited the bishop down. They did it up well. The port was obviously a part of this because I was a commissioner. So, one of the port personnel, data man, this is your life thing, did a script and did slides, which I mentioned I still have, from the day I was born to the day I retired from the port.

MS: That must have been a pretty moving event for you, huh?

AB: It was. The event was really moving. The fact that they invited all my family was one of the first times we had all the family together for a picture. It was amazing, the extended family as well. Everybody was there then, of course, all the people I know in the port. There were thousands of pictures. I couldn't believe it. So, the next day, the photographer presented me with this book [laughter] album like that, with every picture they had taken of all the tables and

all. It really was an event.

MS: I know we can continue talking, but I am going around backward. Did you find yourself occasionally – when you were going down into the port – find yourself butting heads with the higher-ups in the church in trying to get things down? Or were they pretty cooperative and supportive?

AB: The church was very cooperative, number one, because it was an institution of this diocese of L.A. We were funded by the diocese. So, I was accountable to them. So, each month, there was accountability, once a year report, which I made at convention. So, they were much aware of it. Only when the finances were a little desperate did we have a problem getting money from the diocese. The only thing that I faulted them for was that they didn't really recognize, and many of the people in the city, that there is a port here. That San Pedro is a port city of L.A. and people still don't know and recognize the connection between the two. Sometimes the parishes downtown or in the area and the diocese itself, which is downtown, don't know there's a port and what its function is. It's my job periodically to beat them over the head about this port and what it means to this area. Somebody says, "How many baptisms did you have?" I said, "Are you counting baptisms as a part of it?" More than that. So, yeah, it's still a problem the city to recognize I got a big, marvelous port down there. We've always sort of been on the high neighbors for whatever reasons. Still, today, they still are.

MS: I think we got it now.

AB: They need to change that. Hopefully, the centennial will let them know [laughter].

MS: Right. People will know. [laughter] Wait a second. I think we are done.

MS: Okay.

[end of transcript]