

Port of Los Angeles Centennial Oral History Project  
Jim Trani Oral History  
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Male Speaker: Hard question first, please say your name and spell it.

Jim Trani: Vincent J. Trani, T-R-A-N-I.

MS: Vincent, what year were you born and where?

JT: I was born in 1924. I was born in Keystone, which is now called Carson on Main Street, which is in a house there. I was born in a house there.

MS: Keystone was the new Carson. I never knew that.

JT: Yeah. It was the first.

MS: Talk about your parents. Who were they, and when did they come to the San Pedro area, and what did they do?

JT: Well, actually, my dad, I think my dad, come to this area in about 1916, 1917. That's where we were living, we were living in Keystone at that time. I mean, he moved there with a brother named Jack, an older brother named Jack, that brought him back here from back east. My dad comes from Ischia. My mother's from Naples. My dad was born on 1894, my mother was born 1900. They both migrated here. When my dad met my mother, I have no idea, you know, but he sent for her from Naples, and they got married in this country.

MS: When did they first come to San Pedro? What were they doing when they came here?

JT: Well, my dad, through to (Pietro DeCarlo?), he got him the acquired piece of -- you know, he owned the property on 7th Street, which is 262 West 7th Street. He opened up a billiard pool hall and restaurant there.

MS: What was the name of the restaurant?

JT: 1925, it's called Majestic. Then when we took it over in 1980 when we bought my uncle out, which was [inaudible] to party, which was my uncle and we bought him out in 1990. We put the name trainee on the front of 1950 called Trainees Majestic [spelled phonetically].

MS: So, talk about your father and the Majestic? What kind of place was it? What kind of person was your father?

JT: Well, he was pretty tough, because you had to be tough then. He was a lumberman. He worked in the lumber business, which a lot of Swedes and Norwegians at that time. That's what mostly this port was. It was a lumber port. My dad worked there and on that. Then he opened up a restaurant through Lorenzo Di Carlo, the original Di Carlo Bakery. You know, he was a very good friend with my dad, and got him to open up a restaurant, a pool bar and restaurant on the property on 7th Street.

MS: Can you describe what it was like? What was the Majestic like?

JT: Well, I started there in 1937 as a 13-year-old. It was tough. They were the tough days because downstairs was a hiring hall, a lunchroom, and a hiring hall. We had the hiring hall downstairs, and we had the pay office next door. So, you can imagine when the tough days that were there. All that going through the [19]34 strike, and all that stuff like that, which I remember real, real. Well, of course, though I didn't start there in 1937. Going down on Beacon Street and the waterfront as a 13 year old kid.

MS: We're going to go back and forth. But talk about, you mentioned the [19]34 strike. What do you remember about that?

JT: Well, I don't remember that much about it. You know about what I read because I was pretty young at that time. I was still pretty young. I know my dad. He was pretty much involved in all that stuff like that. Because he had an open kitchen to the longshoreman that worked. He ran a kitchen for them during the strike days and all that stuff like that.

MS: So, what do you mean they could eat for free or what?

JT: Yeah, right.

MS: Tell me how it worked.

JT: Well, when he opened, you know, guys that needed money or needed something like that, because he always loans money. There were always money lenders at that time. We had three of them on the waterfront at that time, which guy named (Jimmy Fisher?), Joe Henry and (Al Gunsley?). They were money lenders. They helped a lot in the lunchroom. Of course, they made a lot of money off of them, because they charged tremendous, you know, 10% or get a chip, or something like that.

MS: So, how did it work with your father? So, he would loan money, then they would pay him?

JT: Pay him back. It was like an honored deal. They pay because they had their pay off in the next store. So, they had to go pick up their paycheck, and they come back and pay him all that. Then he ran a soup kitchen. I think he ran one in [19]34. Then I think there was another one in [19]46 or [19]47. He had another strike there somewhere. I mean, it was tough time, but we supported him in all that.

MS: Tell me about the restaurant. What kind of food was served? What did they look like?

JT: Well, my dad was a cook. My uncle was a cook. So, [inaudible] was a very good cook. They cooked. I remember something. Just trying to cross some of the things that I still had some and when we closed some of the place down. Like whiskey, and that's when prohibition was over and we got to sell the whiskey and all that. A shot of whiskey was 15 cents, a beer was 5 cents. A beef sandwich was 15 cents. Spaghetti meatballs were 30 and 35 cents, stuff like that. I remember that real well. I remember we took in \$300 a day. That was a tremendous day. That was a big, big day. Nowadays, the guy spent \$300 for lunch, and thinks nothing of it. Here

we go, a whole day and eighteen hours and taking \$300 and think it's a tremendous day.

MS: Well, during depression, it must have been hard. But I bet there were ways was around it in those days.

JT: There was. Well, of course, I don't remember the depression that much, but it was tough. My dad was a hard worker. When he come to this country, he was 13, 14 years old because we ran a thing through him on an Ellis Island. My daughter-in-law [inaudible] on him and Ellis Island, when he come there in Ellis Island. He's a self-taught man. When he was 13, 14 years old, he left Ischia and come to this country. He was just a young kid all on his own.

MS: I started saying, during the prohibition days in the [19]20s, was there anything you got a little on the side? Or, how did they make things work like that?

JT: No. Of course, I don't remember too much about because the real prohibition, I was like , what, 7, 8 years old. I don't remember that much about that. But my uncle had a winery. We grew grapes in Keystone at that time. We had a couple acres of property, it was called a musket. We had the purple grapes and a muscatel grapes, and we used to make our own wine and all that. I think I lived through the best years it was, was the [19]30s, the [19]40s and the [19]50s in this area. Because when I remember when I was a kid, you'd think of San Pedro having twelve and thirteen auto agencies in this town, stuff like that.

MS: Tell me more about what was it like in San Pedro in the [19]30s?

JT: Oh, it was great. It was great. We walked all over. I don't care. I remember as a kid, if you had to go to the beach, we'd walk from 13th street way out to Cabrillo Beach. Anything you did, you walked. We had a Montgomery Ward. We had a JCPenney. We had all the (crest stores?) and [inaudible] stores. Cecil Thomas started an agency in San Pedro with their Cadillac. It was just unbelievable. When you think about it today, we don't have one auto agency. We had twelve or thirteen at one time. That was when we were kids. I'm talking about in the [19]30s and the [19]40s.

MS: As a kid growing up here, what did you do for fun? What did you enjoy doing?

JT: Well, we played sports at Daniels field. We played touch football. We go out to the beach and play volleyball, go swimming, and did a lot of things like that. Of course, I worked. I started working as a 13-year-old. That was it for me. After schools, every morning, go to work and come home. Go to school and go back to work in the afternoon and stuff like that.

MS: What were you doing? What was your job when you were 13?

JT: Well, mostly to clean up, wash dishes, clean dishes, and stuff like that. My uncle was there. A great guy, he did most of the cooking. My dad did most of the business work and all that.

MS: So, give me a sense of what it was like, and there was a kind of a family. Was it all business or what?

JT: I know a lot of longshoremen, you know, Bridges and Bill Lawrence. I can go back in some of them guys. You talk about tough days, they were tough. Guys were tough, but they laid off of us. They never bothered us on the waterfront. Everybody (Corky Wilson?), Jimmy Jones, I can remember a lot of old timers.

MS: Well, tell me about those guys. Give me some of the sense of those characters. What kind of guys they were.

JT: Great guys. They never bothered anybody. Their word was good as anything. Everything was honor. They had a fight on the waterfront, they settled it among themselves. The next day, they were friends again. And of course, then there were no containers and everything was bulk. Break your back, cotton jobs and all that stuff.

MS: What about Beacon Street? Did you –

JT: Go down there a lot? Never bothered anybody. Tough days. Beacon Street, every other building was a bar. I don't care. They have about forty, fifty bars down there. The Goodfellas, the Bank Café, Red Eisenberg and the Shanghai Red, things like that. I'm going back in the late [19]30s. And, of course, I remember that more than anything. Then in 1941, I was just a kid. I was still in high school. In summer vacation, I worked in a restaurant and a guy named (Tex Clark?). He was from Texas. He was a retired Texas ranger. He come in and a guy named Joe Hernandez said something to him. The Mexicans never got along. It was a racial issue. This Tex Clark got up off the stool. I remember right in front of me, got up, took one of his Texas ranger revolver, and took a couple of shots at him and hit him and killed him. He went in the alley, and the guy stumbled all the way in the alley. He shot over him and finished him off that way there. I remember, I was just a kid in 1941 when that happened.

MS: That's an interesting story. Tell me that story again. Pretend you didn't tell it to me before. Start from the beginning.

JR: Well, the thing I remember more than anything, every summer, when the three months off, none of us could play. My brother Louie and I, we had to work down at the restaurant. Well, I would go down early in the morning and open up and I would cook breakfast. We had small breakfast, but we usually open up at 6:00 a.m. in them days. We worked from 6:00 a.m. until 10:00, 11:00 p.m. because you had to get what you could. When this one particular time happened, this Tex Clark, which I knew real well lived across the street in the (La Salle Hotel?), the (Mission La Salle Hotel?), which was owned by the Papadakis'. They did a good job. He's a good, great guy. This Tex Clark, a big guy from Texas, retired Texas ranger. He was from Texas. He retired. Evidently, he must have gotten some problem with the guy by the name of Joe Hernandez on the waterfront. It had to be like a racial issue at that time, because Tex was from Texas and Joe was from around this area. He got up off the stool. Because with a payday was like on a Friday. He gets his check next door, and they come around. We would cash the checks. My dad would cash their checks for them and all that. Well, he got up on this stool and took out his big revolver. It was a pistol. Took a couple of shots at him and he hit Joe for the first time. Joe scrambled, he tried to get away. We had an old man named Mr. Hubert. He

owned Hubert's Candies. It was a candy store next door, which eventually became Helen Grace. He bought Helen Grace out and became Helen Grace Candies. Mr. Hubert was sitting in his chair. He always took his nap. Joe was trying to hide behind him and Tex hit him, and then he hit him in the groin. He got outside, went outside, got away from Tex, and got in the alley and fell in. Tex got over, hit him, shot him twice in the chest and killed him. The funny thing about it is the investigating officer was a guy by the name of (Jerry Gannon?), who was a good friend of mine. We ran around with his son. Jerry Gannon was one of my best friends, and he was the investigating officer at that time. Then through the later years, Tex got something like twenty years of life. When we were in the restaurant in the later years, he got out. But Tex never come in the restaurant. He moved across the street when he got out of prison. I think he served for like fifteen years. He always sat, come out, but never come in the restaurant again. But I say hello to him and never talk to him.

MS: Did he have any reason why he shot him?

JT: No, I never knew. I knew it was over a personal feud or something. Because that happened a lot on the waterfront in them days. Guys insulted one another and end up fist fighting and stuff like that. Of course, Texas was pretty old. He was an old man then, and Joe was a pretty young kid. I guess he threatened him, and then I guess he got him.

MS: Okay. This is typical. This story is so good. I want you to tell it to me again and tell it to me like you never told it to me before. Start with who Tex is and where you were and what you saw. Just tell me as if you never told me the story before.

JT: Well, every summer, in the summer months we work, you had to be down at the restaurant. I came down early in the morning. It was a lunchtime. This is after lunch, I guess when Tex Clark – he usually has a bowl of stew or bean or beef, whatever he had. He had his lunch. Just Joe Hernandez – it was a Friday. It was a payday. Joe got his paycheck, and my dad usually cashed their checks. We take in quite a bit of money. We always have a lot of money to cash all our checks. Because we you get like, 5 or 10 percent of cash in their checks. You make money off it. If their check was 60 or \$70 you made 30 or 40 cents. That was a lot of money them days if you made 30 or 40 cents clean. Tex got up, and, I mean, Joe come in and Mr. Hubert, who owned Hubert Candies, was behind us, our store. He sold out to Helen Grace, Bill Grace, which became Helen Grace Candies at that time, which is a big, big chain of candy stores today.

MS: Can you describe the whole scene, which you saw?

JT: Okay. Well, Tex got up off the stool. When he saw Joe come in the restaurant and go at the counter to cash his check, Tex got up. It was about 30 or 40 yards from one end of bars to the other end. He leveled his gun and tried to shoot him. Joe, at that time, was trying to get behind Mr. Hubert, who owned Hubert's Candies, the candy store behind us. I remember the old man trying to scramble out of the way. Joe kept scrambling, and Joe shot him again. I think he hit him in the groin. That's when he hit him in the groin. First time I think he grazed him, but then he hit him in the groin. Well, that's when Joe got up and ran. He fell in the alley, and he was with a couple of doors down. Tex went outside, and just shot him two more times. Everybody was scrambling and getting out of his way. He got over him and shot him. He hit him, shot him

twice in the chest.

MS: That's a pretty memorable experience for you.

JT: I told the story two or three times because I've been asked that story a couple of times.

MS: What are some of the other memorable stories you remember from the restaurant?

JT: From the restaurant? Well, we had a bartender named Jumbo. His name was Phil Bernard. He was our bartender. He was an ex-fighter in the army during World War I. He was [inaudible] in World War I, and he was our bartender at that time. I'll never forget we had stools that that you rotated. They were permanent, but you could pick them up and try to hit them a couple of times. A guy would come in drunk, and we feed him a drink. I was a kid, you take [19]38, [19]39, [19]40. In the afternoons or something like that. It was nothing for a fist fight. We had fist fights all the time. Jumbo was pretty good. He was a great guy. Jumbo, Phillip Bernard his name was. We call him Jumbo.

MS: Give me an example of what jumbo would do when these fights started out.

JT: Well, he turned right around a bar and grab him and run him up, pound him and run him out of the restaurant. Then it was all over. If he ran a guy out of the restaurant after having a fist fight, there was no grudge or nothing like that. They never come back in and like nothing happened. That's where everything was them days. Taking a waterfront like that. Everything was like that in them days.

MS: What do you do with the stools?

JT: Well, they rotate. They have wooden stools. In our bar, I think we had fifteen seats. They were oak wooden stools. They swirl. You could pick them right up and take them right off. Just to throw them and all that if you get mad just throw them and all that. It was nothing for that to happen. My uncle [inaudible], he was a big man. I mean, we still had cue sticks because we also have pool tables and all before. We shut everything down before [19]34. I wasn't there. We shut everything down, and we still had a lot of that stuff left.

MS: So, for a young guy growing up there, you're growing up fast.

JT: Oh, yeah. I was a big boy. I was a 14, 15-year-old kid. I was pretty big. I was like, 180, 190 pounds, which was big for them days. I was a big boy. We had to be able to defend yourself. That was it.

MS: So, who would come to the restaurant? Who was the clientele?

JT: Longshoremen. We never had no women. We never had a woman come in. I'll never forget that. When I come out of the service in [19]45, when I come out of the service, I don't think it was a couple years before any women come in our restaurant. We never had women come in our restaurant. It was strictly guys. We had the Marine Firemen's Union up the street.

We dealt with a lot of semen and longshoremen. It was tough. I never forget like Corky Wilson, (Chindo Chavez?).

MS: Who was Corky Wilson?

JT: He was one of the best guys in the waterfront. He may have passed away by now, but he was one of the toughest guys in the waterfront. We had this (Chindo Sanchez?) and (Leo Sanchez?), brothers. I can remember a lot of tough guys.

MS: How'd you know they were tough? What were their stories about?

JT: The fights from before on the waterfront, stuff like that. You hear about a fight and it was over. [inaudible], Corky Wilson, I can't remember some of the guys.

MS: From your point of view, do you have a favorite customer that you look forward to seeing?

JT: Well, they were all favorites of mine. All the tough guys are all favorite of mine. Because I was just a kid then. In 1941, we started a football team from the boys' club with a bunch of these guys, and we got to play football through (Nick Raney?). He was a boys' club director. No, I don't think he was a [inaudible], and he was a boys' club director at that time. So, we played a little bit of football because we had to work. So, everything you did, you had to play on Saturday nights or Sundays. You worked out on weekdays to play football with a bunch of us guys and all. That was [19]41, [19]42. We went undefeated the two years we played football, all of us guys coming around. Then 1947, [19]46, we thought, "Well, let's start this up again," through this guy by the name of (Joe Wallace and Donald Walker?). My dad was a great sportsman. I remember going to Angel games when I was a kid watching the old Los Angeles Angels and the Hollywood stars and all that. My dad would take us, all of us guys, up wherever he wanted to go. He's a big baseball fan.

MS: What was your favorite sport?

JT: I would say all of a football. Football probably was my favorite. Baseball was my favorite, one of my favorites.

MS: Later on, the restaurant became a big place –

JT: Right. We played football [inaudible], of course, at that time. We started in 1946. We started a semipro league, football league, which was LA. They had the LA Bulldogs, the Spoilers, the Watch, Cardinals. There were about six or seven teams, the Eagle Rock team and all that. We went undefeated, [19]46, [19]47, we were undefeated. We won city champs. It was just great. My dad supported all of us, of course. We worked during the day, and played football at night. We had to work out three or four nights a week. I think it was in [19]45, [19]46 when Nick took over the boys' club. He became our coach and we had some great years, [19]46. We played in college teams. We even played football in Chino against the prisoners. We played in the prison walls there at Chino. We even went to Terminal Island at that time was, of course, we got to visit Terminal Island when they had Al Capone there. I think it was [19]46, [19]47.



MS: Did you see him?

JT: No, not Al Capone. No, we didn't see him.

MS: What position did you play?

JT: I was a guard. My brother Louie was a tackle. We had some great years, and that's from them days, we played. We made national recognition. I think, we had three, six straight wins. We were undefeated. We were on a radio on some – I forget who the sportscaster was, but we made the radio, all of us guys from Pedro. That's the big thing we did. Most of us guys worked during the day. We worked on the waterfront. Most of the guys like Donald Bark and (Ed Abney?) and (Mitchell Vladimir and Hank Duran?). I could remember, pick out the whole team.

MS: What was the name of the team again?

JT: San Pedro Athletic Club. We became well known. We built a big, big reputation. Of course, we got older, we had no insurance. Everybody was on his own with insurance wise and stuff like that. I got hurt a couple of times, but whenever I did, I had to go to work the next day. My dad sees you on Monday morning and gets up and go to work again. That's the way it was.

MS: So, how did your job change? You started basically just cleaning up and washing dishes?

JT: Start cooking in the mornings. I was a good cook. I make poached eggs, boiled eggs, scrambled eggs. I used to cook all that stuff, bacon. Everything was simple. It's hard to believe, but we served spaghetti, stew, beans, roast beef. Then we had the different sandwiches. Those were our main dishes. I used to cook a big pot of stew every day and get rid of it every day. We cook a couple of roasts a day. We'd be about 35 to 40 pounds of roast a day and make sandwiches [inaudible] with beans and stuff like that. We sold out, that was it. We sold out. Every day, everything we sold.

MS: What was the most popular dish?

JT: I would say, our roast beef, our beef sandwiches.

MS: So, here we are on the fishing port. You don't sell any fish.

JT: Fish was tough then. We never sold no fish then. Never did. Of course, other places had fish in San Pedro. We never sold no fish. Until we opened up. Then when we bought my uncle out in 1950. We bought him out. We bought the property. Of course, we were renting the property from the labor union, which was [inaudible]. He was our landlord that ran the labor union. When we bought them out, we had about five years. Then we bought the whole property. In 1965, we remodeled our restaurant. Then we went in more into the fishes and stuff like that.

MS: This is one of the oldest and best restaurants in San Pedro. There are others. Who were your competitors and where are the old restaurants in town?

JT: We had Ante's and Seagulls. I would say they were our two biggest competitors, Ante's and Seagulls. Seagulls was a great restaurant. Tony Perkov at Ante's, he was our big competitor. I'm talking about in the [19]50s and the [19]60s and all that. Then in the [19]60s, later on when we open up the other restaurant, there were more restaurants coming to Pedro. In fact, most of these restaurants that that opened up were guys that worked for us. They opened up their own restaurants.

MS: why don't you go in the restaurant business full time?

JT: I've always been in the restaurant full time. I started in 1946 when they come out of the service. We really got involved. We got involved with sports. In fact, one of our first big name guys at that time was a fellow by the name of Johnny Lindell. He was great baseball player with Hollywood stars at the time, and Angels. We got to know Johnny Lindell pretty good in the [19]50s. Then in the [19]60s, of course, I was lucky that when I was in the service, one of my first sergeant was a fellow by the name of (Frank Court?). He was like general manager of the Bears. I remember leaving him. I was a pretty good baseball player in the service. I made the all-service team in Augusta Georgia, which was Camp Gordon Augusta Georgia, and Frank court was my first sergeant. So, when I left him and we were getting ready to go overseas. He said, "Look, when you come back, I want you to look me up." He was a gentleman. He was a Bear. I looked him up in [19]46. Every time the Bears would come out to LA, I would go up there. I'd meet him, and I think it was at the Biltmore Hotel. He would take me up in a press box and take me down, where I met George Halas. All the bears, Luckman, Turner, Sprinkles, you name all the old timers. Every other year they would come out, I think it was [19]46 and he'd come out in [19]48. Then in 1950, they came out. I brought up with me a judge, (Judge Lawler?). He was our municipal court judge law and I brought his court clerk by name of (Vic Berridge?). We went up to the coliseum. We all ended up together. Frank took us. We went down on a playing field. We were on the field. We met Bill George. We met Clark Shaughnessy, who was a quarterback coach at that time. He was the father of the T formation. We met Bill George when he was a rookie with the Chicago Bears. But when Bill George got traded to the Rams in 1965. I got a hold of Bill and remember the incident and all that. We became real, real good friends. Then at that time, every Thursday, we would have the Rams come down at the restaurant. A bunch of them, be ten or fifteen of them, they'd sit in the middle of the restaurant and autograph everybody. We have a wonderful time. There was Bill George. There was Tom Mack, like I just talked to Tom Mack. He remembered them days. (Merrel Nelson?), Claude Crabb, you name them all. All of them guys stuff which is great. It was a lot different than with the pros.

MS: So, what was that scene like?

JT: Oh, it's unbelievable. Every Thursday night, the place was packed because people come in, you get autographs, take pictures with them, and all that. Then Mondays was their off day. Mondays, they would come down, Bill George would come down. They bartend for us on Mondays. It would be Ken Iman, Bill George, whoever was a bartender on Mondays. That was another great day. We have (Barbara Crawford?) come down quite a bit, and that's at the time when they were running that highway patrol moves at that time. I'll tell you what (Robert

Cross?) is the greatest drinker or ever. She could take a glass of 18 ounce glass of water. I mean, a full of vodka and just goes [inaudible] all drink. Greatest drinker ever seen.

MS: I worked with him once.

JT: Great, great drinker.

MS: What were some of your other favorites?

JT: Well, one time we had an incident happen. I'm trying to think of the guy. There were so many good days with the Rams. It was a great time with all them guys. We have parties. then we had the whole [19]60, I think it was a [19]65 UCLA football team down the restaurant. The whole thing, we had their dinner. Then we closed that restaurant in [19]75. Then we got involved with the Raiders and through [inaudible]. Of course, then on Mondays, we have the Dodgers two or three times on a Monday. Monday, we call it linguini and baseball. Lasorda and Massimino, bring down Tom Lasorda and always bring a speaker. We had a candy store next door. We owned a candy store and Hershisier was a chocolate nut or chocoholic. He loves chocolates. Used to give them all the chocolate he wanted and stuff. So, on Mondays, we had to call it linguine and baseball. We'd raise money and give it to Chuck Stevens. Whatever money we would have, we'd give it to Chuck Stevens because they need the money for the old time baseball player. They had no pension fund or no money, anything like that. So, we should turn the money over to Chuck Stevens.

MS: So, what about Lasorda? Any stories about him?

JT: Oh, yeah. On the Mondays, Lasorda always have all kind of stories for this guy. One of my best friends come down and he brought up Massimino. Trying to think of Massimino first name. He had just won the NCAA basketball with Villanova. Massimino was a basketball coach. We became a really close friend. He come out and went to order a couple times for lunch. So, one of my best friends was Tom Morgan as a baseball pitcher. He became a baseball pitching coach with the Dodgers, I mean, with the Angels, with the Yankees. I think he was in charge of the minor league pitchers for The Atlanta Braves at that time. We became good friends. When he passed away. I was a [inaudible] at his funeral when he passed away with (Nolan Ryan?). So, that was one of my big days.

MS: So, when you move restaurants, did your clientele move with you?

JT: Oh, yes. They all moved with us. When we moved from 7th Street to 6th Street. Then we move in a much bigger place with a bigger restaurant and all that.

MS: So, some of the other people that came that I see from a list here, Will Chamberlain, Mark Spitz, you said there was a cook off. What was that?

JT: Let me see.

MS: Because 1988, it says, with Lasorda –

JT: In the back, we always just have cook out. In fact, in a magazine, we served the fresh clams, all right? He loved fresh clams. One of our biggest main dishes was clams, fresh clams. We always perched them ourselves, ran them out. We served clams and all that. That was one of Lasorda's favorite dishes. When he came in the restaurant, he said a couple of dozen clams with all that linguini. That's how we started linguini and baseball and raised money and all that for the [inaudible].

MS: Tell me again, what is linguini and baseball?

JT: Well, linguini is a flat spaghetti.

MS: But what is the event linguini in baseball?

JT: Well, it was just a fundraiser. It was just a fundraiser that we did where everybody met on one another. I mean, we'd have like [inaudible] is down there. He'd always show up. One time we had the baseball coaches [inaudible], (Fregosi?), McNamara, Lasorda, one more, there's five. I can't take the fifth one.

MS: So, this was the place for sports people to come.

JT: Right. Then we got involved with the Raiders. Chuck Knox was with the Rams at that time. We had the AFC, all the football coaches and the AFC had their big dinner down at the restaurant when they had their meeting and all that, which was really good. I can't remember, none of the football coaches were at that time.

MS: That's quite an honor. Because right in the middle of downtown Los Angeles, near Dodger stadium's Little Tony's, there's a big, big restaurant. But they would all come down here.

JT: Yes. Well, we knew Little Joe. You're talking about Little Joe? We knew them real well, Little Joes and all that. In fact, their bartender come down and stayed. I can't even think of the name of the bartender. But he used to come down with them guys, with Lasorda and all that. Of course, we got involved with Joe Amalfitano. He was one of the first players to play with the Giant from San Pedro. Then I was one of the guys that started the sports walk with John Gibson, which is a big event now. Joey was our first recipient of the award in the sidewalk.

MS: For somebody who has never been there, how would you describe your restaurant today? How old is the tradition?

JT: When we opened up this restaurant in 1990. When we broke up and we opened up this restaurant in 1990, we got away from sports. Of course, I'm still involved in a sports walk. I think we still sponsored guys in a sports walk. We got away from all the sports because the guys are different, the players are different. They didn't sign autographs like they did in the [19]50s and the [19]60s. Everybody's got an agent now and that's a big thing. You talk to the ball players them days and it wasn't the same. It's not the same today as it was then. They're not as friendlier. The players today are nothing like they were in the [19]60s, nothing in the [19]60s

and in the [19]70s. So, we got away from that, and we strictly went into the cooking business. We feature stuff. I would say that today, we get fresh fish from the fish market as fresh as you could possible get. I don't think anybody could beat that way we got our fish. We still have all this stuff.

MS: You have a slogan for what the restaurant is, what you serve.

JT: No, we don't have a slogan. It's been family oriented in my side. Because up until [19]65, I did 100 percent of the cooking up until [19]65 myself. My other brothers come in. But they were never involved in that part. They were little bit, but not like I was, because I was involved in baseball. We were picked one year as Man of the Year one year.

MS: So, what was your best dish when you were cooking?

JT: My dish was roast beef sandwiches, whether it was wet with the beans or just plain roast beef. They were our best. I would cook the chili beans 100 pound sack at a time. Probably last us about a month, or something like that, couple of weeks. You take 100 pounds of beans a cook at a time with a lot of beans.

MS: When you look back at all your years in San Pedro, what does the town mean to you? What does San Pedro mean to you?

JT: Like I said before I lived through the greatest year San Pedro has ever seen, the [19]30s, the [19]40s, and the [19]50s. After the [19]50s, I would say the Vietnam War and everything went downhill. I would say it's never gotten the same since. Like you could go up and down 6th Street with six abreast or something like that. You take the [inaudible] and the crest stores and the stores that were open when we were kids in the [19]30s. You take Montgomery Ward and JCPenney's, and they were big stores at that time in a little town like San Pedro.

MS: So, altogether, how long has your family been in the restaurant business?

JT: 1925.

MS: So, how many years is that?

JT: Well, my family's been in the restaurant business for what, eighty, eighty-two years right now. I've been involved myself for seventy years. I'm 83 years old now. I've been involved for seventy years myself. I have a grandson that's a great cook. I think he's taken over. He's young. He's very good. I think he'll be a real cook right now.

MS: So, there's a future.

JT: Oh, very good. The future looks good for us.

MS: Terrific, great. Anything else you want to tell me that you didn't have a chance or I didn't ask about?

JT: I don't know what else you could talk about.

MS: Any other stories.

JT: There's a lot of story I could tell you. Well, one of my greatest moments was on Saturdays, Robert Goulet had a yacht down here with a senator or a congressman that was from down here, one of those areas out there. They had a yacht, and they would come in. He would be half drunk. Can I say that? He'd be drinking. People be packed to sit up, to sit down on a Saturday evening, and he would sit them down and serenade them, singing down. I know some of these people would take pictures with him. I have never done that. I like to have one of them pictures if anybody's still alive out there. Robert Goulet was unbelievable. He was right in his prime at that time. That was in the [19]60s. It was unbelievable. That was one of my greatest moments of having him come in on Saturdays. Of course, Lee J. Cobb used to come in a lot. Then we had another actor, that they all had boats down here at that time. That's about it.

MS: Tell me more about Lee J. Cobb.

JT: Lee J. Cobb was married to a Pedro girl, a San Pedro girl. He would sign autographs. He would do anything. But he would come in on Saturdays and have his, you know, his dinner, his lunch, whatever it was, and stuff like that. He would come in on Saturday. He's going to have his dinner, his lunch, whatever it was and stuff like that. He would come in on Saturdays, Lee J. Cobb.

MS: Were there any other famous movie stars that came in?

JT: I'm thinking of another one that played the part as a passenger. I can't think of any other movie.

MS: Anyway, you know the town family, Robert Towne who was the writer and his father had a store downtown called Towne's. He wrote the movie Chinatown.

JT: I wish I brought up one of our menu covers. We had an autograph menu of all the guys that come in, all the sports celebrities that come in our restaurant, O.J. Simpson, and all that. I wish I brought that. Then we could go from that. We could go from there.

MS: Maybe we'll come back and we'll talk some more. But we have to stop now.

JT: Okay.

MS: Maybe we'll come back and you'll bring the thing.

JT: I'll bring the menu with us. I'll give you one, all right?

MS: Yes.

[end of transcript]