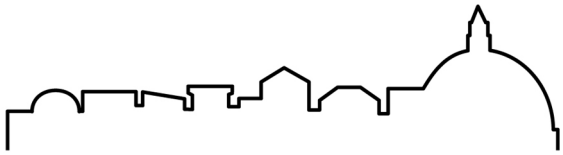

THE RUTH ANN OVERBECK
CAPITOL HILL HISTORY PROJECT

Interview with Inez Jones

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Interviewer: Nancy Martin
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NOTE: Mrs. Jones' son Leland also participated in this interview.

TAPE 1/SIDE 1

MARTIN: …interested in knowing how you came to the Hill and all the stories that you would like to tell about coming to the Hill. But I'm going to prompt you with questions so whenever you want to expand on a story, just keep talking. So, first of all, when did you come to the Hill?

JONES: To Capitol Hill?

MARTIN: To Capitol Hill. Yes.

JONES: I came to Capitol Hill when my husband was administrative assistant to Sen. Richard Neuberger. And when he came, of course, we came ahead of time to try to get things lined up. And I believe that he was started in 1954.

MARTIN: 1954?

JONES: Yes.

MARTIN: And Sen. Neuberger was from Oregon, is that right?

JONES: He was from Oregon. You see Senator Neuberger and his wife were representatives in Oregon. So when they came back here, of course, she was with him, but she didn't do anything at that time. He was the Senator from Oregon. That's how we—so when he was elected, naturally we came back. That was his understanding that he [my husband] was to be his administrative assistant. So that's how we came back here.

MARTIN: So, Mr. Jones had worked for the Senator in his State position in Oregon?

JONES: No, he hadn't worked on the—he hadn't worked for them in the state. Well, I guess you might say in a way that he had. They telephoned to him and asked him to come and be the representative that would help get him elected.

LELAND: His campaign manager.

JONES: Yes, his campaign manager.

MARTIN: And when you heard you were going to Washington, Capitol Hill, what did you say to Mr. Jones?

JONES: Oh, I said, that would be great. That would be fun. I knew we were going to enjoy that.

MARTIN: Did you know anything about Washington before?

JONES: I can't say that I did know very much about Washington before we came. One of the things, the first things I can remember about it, when we drove around it on a Sunday afternoon like this to see what it was like… I couldn't believe the poverty-stricken way the things were right around the Capitol. Four blocks from the Capitol was one of the most uninteresting, dull places you ever saw. We saw a man sitting out in front of his house like this, and you could see that he was just down almost. This was the type of thing that I still can't figure out exactly how that got so that—because we really weren't so much of the movement there, at that time, but it seems like it wasn't very long until all those terrible places out there—this would be about southwest of the Capitol. There were different things. I think the government had an urge to start doing something around like that to get that started. And then I think there were some, like there usually is, some builder that wants to do something you know and so they got hold of some property down there and made a kind of an apartment complex things down in that direction.

MARTIN: This is Southwest?

JONES: Yes, Southwest. Because Southwest was the place where you didn't quite think it was in the movement you know that was on Capitol Hill, but it was where they were trying to restore some of the places down there. And it wasn't too far from the river. And they were working on trying to get some things developed. That sort of caught on to that, I think, in a way. And I think, the government was still kind of beginning to get interested in trying to do something about it, so it would spruce it up a little bit.

MARTIN: Right. Where did—when you first came with Mr. Jones and the Senator, did you move directly to Capitol Hill?

JONES: Oh yes. We were one block from the House Office Building in Southeast. C Street SE.

MARTIN: Do you remember the address?

JONES: I don't remember the name of the place. What was it Leland, do you remember?

LELAND: It's now the second Senate office building.

MARTIN: Oh, I see.

LELAND: I can't remember the number.

MARTIN: There were town houses there?

LELAND: There were sort of small condo complexes and I actually think those very likely, where you were living, had been built during the war. They seemed more—they didn't really seem like Capitol Hill architecture.

MARTIN: And this would be nearby the Longworth…

LELAND: Right near, it was on C street, just down a ways from…

JONES: 2nd and C Street, I think.

LELAND: What was the hotel? The Carroll Arms?

JONES: Yes.

LELAND: The Carroll Arms hotel was right there next to the Senate office building.

JONES: We're talking about the Senate office building,, but when we first came, we were in the Southeast and was not close to the new Senate office building.

LELAND: OK, that was when you first moved. OK, I forgot and I do remember.

JONES: We were in the SE, about a block. I think we could have been at 2nd and C Southeast, could be about there, I think.

MARTIN: And that Carroll Arms Hotel was…

JONES: Carroll Arms is in the north.

MARTIN: Northeast side.

JONES: Carroll Arms was north.

LELAND: It was right across the street from the Senate office building.

MARTIN: Didn't they tear that down for the parking lot and the police station? Sure. What do you remember about your surprises about arriving on Capitol Hill, other than the poverty? When you settled into—it was probably a town house at 2nd and C…

JONES: No, that was an apartment.

MARTIN: It was an apartment.

JONES: It was an apartment building where most—an awful lot of the Senators—the Congressmen lived there.

MARTIN: I see. So, probably the Senator directed you to those housing…

JONES: Well. I don't recall that particularly. I think we just sort of went. Just knew where to go. We had apparently ahead of time, we knew where we were going to go, so we had made arrangements for that at

that particular time. So we got in and drove in and knew right where we were going to be. Nice apartment there.

MARTIN: Right. When you came, the Senator was to serve at least six years. Did you intend to stay when you moved to Capitol Hill?

JONES: Oh yes. I think so. Probably we figured we would stay there some way or other.

MARTIN: Did you stay long?

JONES: He died you know. He died between his first and second time there. When he was supposed to sign up that he was running again and he died.

MARTIN: I did not know that.

JONES: So, his wife, who had been in Oregon—had been one of the representatives in Oregon—signed up to take his place. And signed in that she wanted to run in his place. So…

MARTIN: Did she do that?

JONES: That's sort of how, John didn't run again some of the ways he would have probably run it. But not when he found out that she was going to want to be it. Naturally, he didn't want to get in on that.

MARTIN: Just a little aside. That is similar to my husband's position. When we came, my husband worked for Congressman Begich and then he died with Hale Boggs in the accident. My husband was going to run for that seat, the Congressional seat from Alaska, but Peggy Begich, Congressman Begich's wife, ran. So that's a similar story. Mrs. Neuberger, she was not elected, was she?

LELAND: Yes, she was.

MARTIN: Oh, she was?

JONES: Oh yes, she was elected and, in fact, I think she ran a second time.

MARTIN: Is that right?

JONES: Yes. I believe she ran the second time.

LELAND: What was her first name? Helen?

JONES: No, Maureen.

MARTIN: Is she alive now?

JONES: I don't—I think—we lost such track of the people, and this has been quite a while ago. I don't think she…

LELAND: She remarried.

JONES: She may not be living, but if she is, she is really pretty old.

LELAND: Mom, did she remarry?

JONES: Oh, no. No, she just went back to Oregon and stayed there.

MARTIN: Can you remember all the addresses you lived on, on Capitol Hill?

JONES: I could have…

MARTIN: And a little description of where the houses were and what they looked like at that time?

JONES: Oh yes, I can tell some of those. I'm not so sure about the exact address, but I could… First we had this apartment right there by the Capitol. And then, for some reason or other, I don't know, we went out to the Northwest and we were clear out there in the—quite a ways out in that area that was…

LELAND: Bradley Blvd., Mom.

MARTIN: Chevy Chase?

LELAND: Chevy Chase.

JONES: Yes, out in that general area. We were not out there long because you see, we had a grandson that we were taking care of, and his father was going to teach at Montgomery Blair High School and so we moved out of there. We were there just a little while. Then we came back to Capitol Hill. We lived then—when we came back—we lived on about 2nd and C NE. And there was an apartment. You go up a flight of steps, and had a nice apartment there. Then my daughter-in-law's mother and father, they lived in one of the other apartments there. We've always been real close to them. So, that's where we lived for a while. Then all the time we knew in the back of our minds that we got to watch this thing, because pretty soon this government is going to want to take those places. Sure enough, they did. All of a sudden one day we got a notice that they were taking that for the new Senate office building.

So, we had figured then that we would have to move. So we decided we would be careful not to get too close in because we could see that they were going to try to move here and move there. Pretty soon, we didn't want to get into a place again where they were going to take it out again right away. So we looked around for a while to see about where we thought would be a good place to stay. And this is a little—almost on the verge of being at the edge of the restoration movement at 802 Massachusetts Avenue NE.

That's where we have got all these pictures that he has around here. Beautiful, beautiful place and it was built by—and the man who built it, I think built the rest of them along there in that area. He did several of them up in that area too. But when we bought it and we paid $17,500 for it.

MARTIN: What year was this about?

JONES: $17,500. About 1959, that would be the general idea, I think.

When we bought it, there was a parking area—a place, like a park there and kids played there all the time with football and everything. We could see it all the time. My husband, of course, had been a coach and so he was real interested in it, that the kids would enjoy that area. So, we felt kind of disturbed about it later when finally—it seems like the National Park Service they wanted to take a place down this way and pretty soon they wanted to take place there. And every place they wanted to take they didn't want it. So, they came up to Capitol Hill to where we were, and we didn't want it either. But anyway, by that time, we couldn't do very much about it. But I remember having the Park Service and the other—there was about four of them that were involved and wanting to do something about taking that area where they were doing the playing and having a lot of fun and everything. They wanted to take that over and make a big, beautiful park out of it. So, I said well let's have them come to our house and we'll discuss this. So, I had them come for breakfast and then I said, "Now this is the way we feel about this. You see all those windows along there"—as you can see in those pictures, there were just windows all along there. "As you can see, if they were going to be out there and you're going to put some big, beautiful park there, it's going to be fixed so that if you are not careful you can look in. So, I'm going to have to have a real bunch of gowns and things that I can use…" [laughter]

MARTIN: Is it this little park here?

LELAND: That was all just grass and there were trees and a fence. But if you were to take that down, you see this exposed the whole front.

MARTIN: Exposed to the basement, right. So, go ahead. You had this meeting with the Park Service.

JONES: So we had this meeting, and I said, "This is why were are objecting to this." And I said, "You can see, it's not going to be very personal for us. We're going to be just the place where the people can look in and see us inside, if we aren't real careful." Well, they were going to do it, they tried to be kind of nice about it. But we could see that they didn't intend to do very much about it. They were going to do what they wanted to do. So what they did was build a thing—so right in the middle of this whole thing, they built a fountain. It was a colored fountain where the lights go up like that, you know, different things like that. All around the edges they had seats. Big ones. So that people could sit there. Then back of that

they had beautiful round planters, where they were going to—and they did it too. They changed those about three times a year, to different flowers. We used to get a kick out of it because the people from the Capitol—and as you realize, we were talking about a black area, as you know that. Capitol Hill had an awful lot of black people there. So they would come by and see those pretty flowers there. So they were going to the hospital—the hospital was across the street…

MARTIN: So they would bring flowers.

JONES: They would pick them up and take them up to the hospital for their friends. We thought that was nice. Of course, it was a good thing for them to do.

MARTIN: Now the hospital was it called Casualty or Rogers Memorial? Do you remember what the name of the hospital was?

JONES: Let me see.

LELAND: Casualty.

MARTIN: I think it was Casualty.

JONES: It was Casualty Hospital. And that is where they brought a lot of the accidents.

MARTIN: Do you remember by any chance—and I can't remember his name—a podiatrist, a foot doctor? We bought 707 Massachusetts in 1971 and there was a podiatrist, a foot doctor who lived there and practiced at the hospital. By any chance do you remember him?

JONES: You tell me his name and I'll…

MARTIN: I can't now, but in the 70s… Now the park was built before the 70s? And you were living in that house. Your neighbors were mainly black, is that right, at that time?

JONES: No, not really. It was in general—Capitol Hill still had an awful lot of black people you know.

MARTIN: Right, right.

JONES: Our neighbors were not really so much that way. Our neighbor next door to us was two ladies who were teachers. So they bought the place next door. The next one to that one, had been kind of a nice looking house. Pretty and all that, but I don't think at that particular time there were just somebody living there you know. Beside that there were two more nice places in fairly good shape. Now you see when you came into that 802 Massachusetts Ave. NE, you're really getting almost out of the restoration area.

MARTIN: This was about 1960. What would have been considered the boundaries of Capitol Hill at that time?

JONES: Well, that kept moving. We would go a certain—then pretty soon people would go ahead and buy a house here and buy a house there and pretty soon enough people would have bought the houses that they would say well we have to move this restoration movement. We have got to move it out a little bit further.

LELAND: You had borders at that time, as I recall, at about 11th Street, Lincoln Park. Lincoln Park was very shabby at that time. Very tacky; now it's beautiful. That would have been the early '60s.

JONES: Yes, that's right.

LELAND: Then that was kind of the border. Then it began to move towards Pennsylvania Avenue.

JONES: Actually, ours was just barely—I think we probably helped spruce it up so it became moving it out a little further. Because our house was very nice, and so were the others along there, but—two houses away, they were either going to sell it to somebody. We didn't want to get started with that type of thing, so my partner, who wasn't really exactly our partner, but was associated with me in real estate, you know across the street.

He said, "Inez, what are we going to do? Says "They are going to try to buy that—she says she's going to say try to build that thing up—whatever she is going to do, we don't want it. So what'll we do?" I said, "Well, let's buy it."

MARTIN: Was that the start of Congressional Realty?

JONES: Well, not exactly the start of it then. Anyway, I did get into that pursuit. But anyway, so we wrote out a contract and went over to the lady—an elderly lady at 806 that owned it. It looked like it was money there for her, so she was glad enough to sell it to us. So that's how we got started on 806. This was 802, then the teachers, then 806 and then there are two more of them. And then on the corner there was the fellow who worked at the Library. Wonderful guy. His wife had lived there with him. She died and he stayed on.

MARTIN: The Library of Congress or the public library?

JONES: Oh, no it was the one up on the Capitol, you know—[prompted by Leland] the Library of Congress.

MARTIN: Did many people from the Congress then live on Capitol Hill in the early '60s?

JONES: No, not very many.

MARTIN: Tell me about that.

JONES: There were not very many. You see the thing of it is to start with, there were a few that lived up close around the Capitol, but after you get past kind of like about the 3rd Street, then it begin to get a little, not so many, not so many that wanted to live there. Nobody wanted to really to live if it wasn't in the restoration area, they didn't want to live there very much. You would have to persuade them that this restoration movement was moving in order to get them to buy something. Then that would get 4th Street and there would be a few more, one here and one there. That's the way that kind of started. Then pretty soon, it would be 6th Street. 6th Street was kind of the outlying area, and wasn't moving very fast there. But pretty soon, it was 7th Street and the pretty soon we bought that place on 8th Street and it was that area. 8th and Constitution—Constitution was at our back door, and Massachusetts Avenue was our front door. But that was a big place. You will see on those pictures, that that was a big place. A lot of places there loved to have—well almost all of them had a basement apartment. with the windows and things. They made—restoration made movements and apartments for people to live in and everything. Then they would have maybe the main floor. With ours, we had one of the basement apartments and then we had a lovely apartment for ourselves on the main floor. Then you go to this side of the steps and there was my daughter-in-law's mother and father lived in that place. So we lived there for years like that.

MARTIN: When did you leave 802 Massachusetts?

JONES: We lived in 802 Massachusetts Avenue for a long time. Then finally, we had the gals who lived in the apartment on the second floor.

LELAND: When did you go to Hendersonville [?]…

JONES: Well we had already sold and gone out into Rockville. That's when we went down there.

MARTIN: So that would be in the early '70s?

LELAND: It was after Dad had his…heart…

JONES: Yes. My husband had a very bad heart problem. Finally it got so that he was better enough… He said "I don't want to live here any more. So much responsibility and everything. I think we ought to move." We moved out to…

MARTIN: Because of the big house?

JONES: The house was so big. It just seemed like it was a lot of…

MARTIN: It's beautiful. I was just there…

LELAND: Did Joseph [ed: Steven Hall, current resident of 802 Massachusetts Avenue] mention a little piece of the history of the house? A friend of mine who was an electrician —ship's electrician, theater electrician—he and I rewired 802 for the folks, when they moved in. So we rewired the house. And as we were rewiring it, we found little trip bells on the steps that would set off a trigger; you know, a sound or alert. Then we found a whole batch of telephone jacks in the basement, a big bank. That was kind of surprising because we kind of thought, well, this is kind of funny. Either this was a bookie joint at one time, or maybe possibly a house of ill-repute, with all the bells. We never could quite figure it out. And one day, my Dad was talking to a gentleman who had been in the OSS. He happened to mention where he lived, 802. And he said, "802? 802 Massachusetts? That was our safe house. We did training there." That explains the phone jacks and that explains the trips on the stairs.

MARTIN: Mr. Hall did mention that.

LELAND: Did he?

MARTIN: Yes, and that it was a safe house particularly for journalists and Japanese people.

LELAND: Well, it was OSS training,—was what it was. That was where they trained.

MARTIN: Have you been able to confirm that?

LELAND: Yes, that was confirmed to Dad. I couldn't tell you who the man was, but the man was in the OSS. When Dad said 802, he said "Oh!"

MARTIN: And that's messages then were then relayed safely from that house.

LELAND: Well, I suppose…

JONES: And there were telephone, whole big bunches of telephone things down in the basement.

LELAND: Yeah, our first thought was a bookie joint. Someone was running wire on race horses and stuff. But the guy confirmd to Dad that it was an OSS safe house. They were probably running people, interrogating people, or training people.

MARTIN: I think Mr. Hall's going to be interviewed. He's got some wonderful stories, being a historian. Maybe I'll get a chance to interview him too.

Tell me, when you lived on the Hill, where did you shop? Do you remember?

JONES: Yes. I'll tell you something else sort of interesting about that. When we lived at 802 Massachusetts NE, you remember now that it wasn't really restored yet, that general area, but across the street was an apartment house. And in back of that was an old run-down… storage and garage, all kinds of things.

MARTIN: Right. On Constitution and 8th…

JONES: 8th and Constitution. See, our back door was Constitution, our front door was Mass. So, I don't know; we didn't think about that so much, but it was an awful ugly thing to look at and everything. And all of a sudden, the hospital, bought that place across so they could use it for their nurses to live in, and back of it was this whole mess of buildings. And so they sold those to the Capitol, to the Congress—no, to the hospital. And then pretty soon, they tore those things down, and all of a sudden made that into a really lovely parking area. Then they could put the Capitol people came along and filled it up full of little flowers and things and made it real attractive. I remember how we objected to some of the things they were doing. One thing in particular, we discovered they would build up—made a light out there in that place over there across the street. Those lights shot right straight into our bedroom windows. So, we called the people—uptown, you know—that could explain it.

MARTIN: DC government?

JONES: Yes, the people that could have some control over it. And [?] said, "Well, we don't want you to make that like that so that the people can't enjoy that thing," because they had control of a lot of that area at that time. So, we objected to it, and the next day we looked out there and the people who had been handling that thing were out there and took those things down.

MARTIN: That's your DC government at work. [laughter]

JONES: Then I can't remember all the things we did. But I remember, I think I got the reputation of being kind of a—well they didn't know for sure what they wanted to do, so if they asked me, they didn't know for sure what they needed to do. So I remember one time we were standing out in the middle of the street and they were talking about it and everything. I said, "I don't want this" and they said, "Well, we'll see about that then." So, they went to the hospital and told them that anything that they wanted to do that had to do with anything close to that they couldn't do it unless they talked to Mrs. Jones about it.

MARTIN: Yes, I've heard about that.

JONES: If Mrs. Jones doesn't want it, we are not going to do it.

MARTIN: Tell me about starting Congressional Realty.

JONES: Oh, how I got started?

MARTIN: How you got started, because I know you have stories to tell about that.

JONES: Oh yes. When we got started with that they were just beginning to get some things on Capitol Hill, you know. A few people that were thinking that maybe they might make a restoration thing out of it—they would have somebody who would sort of like to be the representative for them, you know. So, that's the way I decided. I saw a thing where this guy said that he would have a….

TAPE 1/SIDE 2

JONES: …doing interior decorating at that time. I thought that this would be a good thing to do. I guess I'll just take those courses. I took those courses about real estate. He was really trying to find the ones that he thought would be good for the House of Representatives, you know, to sell his property for him and the things he was doing.

MARTIN: Who was this?

JONES: What was his name? Started with "D". It was a short name too. He was the one that got us interested in making a history of it. So, then I became one of his representatives to sell the property that he had. We had to go list the property ourselves. You know how it is. When you are in the real estate business, you handle the best places you can get. Then if you happen to be the one that got to sell it, well you would get a certain commission out of it for doing that.

MARTIN: Was Congressional Realty already established and then you joined it?

JONES: No, I established the whole thing.

MARTIN: OK. That's fascinating. That's what I want to know.

JONES: I established the whole thing. It was from nothing, it was nothing. It wasn't anything at all, except that I took those lessons. See what he thought. Then I thought well I'll sign up and maybe I'll sell some things like that. There were two or three other people and once a week he'd have us meet. Then he'd say, "Now this is what we've listed this week and this is what we have here." Then I begin to find out that some of them were complaining that I was listing the properties too high. They didn't want them that high. So I said, "Well, OK. The way to do it then is for you to bring them in." I said, "Look at here what I've got. Look at the listings I have here. So why don't you get the listings? What don't you get some listings? Then, list them anywhere you want to." But I said that I think we need to have these properties come up like that, and not just something that would be easy to sell. Let's make it so that people want to buy them. So, I stayed with that him for a while.

MARTIN: This is in the '50s, is that right?

JONES: I believe this would have been the '60s, the start of the '60s. So…

LELAND: Did you work for any other real estate people on the Hill? I mean before Congressional?

JONES:. Well, there were some others that—when I started calling myself Congressional Realty, there were some of them. Barbara Held was across the street from the 7th Street market. And next to that was—I can't think of her name right now, but she was right next to that. Then on the corner was kind of a thing where they sold second hand furniture and things. But there weren't a lot of people there. So then…

LELAND: Let me ask you a question, because it is kind of unbelievable that nobody had registered that name before. How did you come up with "Congressional Real Estate" and discover that there wasn't anything registered?

JONES: Well, anyway. First I started calling myself "Congressional Realty" and then I got to thinking about it, you know, and I thought I believe I am going to take out my own license. I believe I'm going to do it myself. So, I called up and told them I'm going to come down and talk to you, because I think I want to go out on my own—as a real estate broker on my own. So I went down and talked to them, down at where they handle things like that. I said now, "Has anybody got the name of"—did we call it Congressional at that time?—"Congressional Realty, has anybody got that name?" And they said, "No, nobody has got that name." Well, I said, "Then I want it." I said, "I've got to wake up at night and thinking about what I wanted to do and I don't want to be called Inez Jones, I want to be called something." They said, "OK." So he made the register—they put that in my name. That's how I became Congressional Realty.

MARTIN: And you practiced out of 802 Massachusetts?

JONES: And that's the thing. You would be surprised that that that was a beautiful, beautiful place there on that hill. The way it was, you came in the front door—there's a nice entrance thing. Then there was another entrance where you could go—like I could go upstairs, or you could go down this a little further down and you could go into the dining room, the living room, and then another great, big room that was the first one that you would go into. It was a perfect set-up for real-estate office, because you could come in there, and there was sliding doors so that you could do all your work and interview the people and everything, and nobody would even know what there was beyond that.

MARTIN: But it also sells the house, because that house is so gorgeous. And it tells newcomers, "Would you like to live like this? Well, I have houses listed like this."

LELAND: Those pocket doors. Basically, that front room would have been the parlor or the drawing room, more or less.

JONES: Well, the drawing room and then the living room and then the dining room.

LELAND: You had the dining room beyond that. A perfect office set up.

JONES: I didn't think people liked that very well. There were certain people who weren't crazy about having—they were kind of envious, really. What it amounted to was that they realized I had that place there and they were kind of envious that they didn't have a place like that. They thought well maybe they don't allow the rest of us to have a place like that. But anyway, I just went ahead with it and ignored them completely and just went ahead and did what I wanted to do.

MARTIN: Who were your typical buyers then? Would you have a description of who were the families then eager to move to Capitol Hill from other areas?

JONES: Well, yes, we did that, but we found the houses that we thought they might like to have and run an ad on it. Then, people began to see that there is a sign that said "Congressional Realty" there. Then they began to call up and ask about it. So that was one of the ways we got started at it. The people themselves were beginning—but at that time, then you see by that time when I went into the Congressional Realty, it was getting pretty active in real estate on Capitol Hill then. I was real lucky because I got—some of them said, "Well anyway it doesn't make any difference, Mrs. Jones has got all the good houses."

[ed: Mrs. Jones added later that Congressional Realty succeeded because her clients wer Congressmen and Senators moving to the Hill, along with their staff members.]

MARTIN: Now who…? There was Arline Roback and Barbara Held and Austin Beall.

JONES: Austin, of course, was just an associate with me. He wasn't in any way involved in it, except that he was a salesman for me. I don't know whether Arline Roback was—I think she was with Barbara Held. I think she was with Barbara Held. There were just a few of them. I can't think of the guy's name, but he was the one that everybody knew. He probably was one of the boys, you know. So he was pretty active. One day, we rounded up a bunch of people who didn't like what he's doing, we thought it was illegal what he was doing. So we were objecting to that.

MARTIN: What was that? What was he doing? What's your best real estate story on that score? What was he doing?

JONES: Probably listing properties that we felt were not properly done—different types of things like that, but I can't think of the particular thing that he was objecting to, but there were several things that we were saying we didn't like. So we signed—they all… I went ahead and I thought, well, some of the things that he had done about that time had begun to irk me and so I signed that thing too. So pretty soon one day he came over to see me and he said "Mrs. Jones, I feel bad about this. You know it didn't make one bit of difference to me what anybody else did, but when you're name got on that, I got real upset about that. The rest of them, I didn't care. But I sure did once your name went on it."

MARTIN: That's what I've heard. That's terrific. What…Can you describe what a typical day would be living on Capitol Hill, not necessarily in real estate but if you took a Monday, say in February, what would your day be like?

JONES: Well, of course, pretty soon I was so involved in the real estate that it was hard for me to separate it.

MARTIN: Don't separate it.

JONES: I would be up and out—I would go to my office—right there—be in my office by 8:00. I usually had a few things that I was doing and the things that we were working out on the people that had already put in contracts and things. Different ones that we would have appointments for them to show them different places, like that. So we would [indistinguishable] in my office, and then maybe by 10 o'clock I would have had an appointment or two. Then, well, it wasn't very long until I was having settlements in the afternoon. So we would go to the place where they had the settlements and we would have the settlement in the afternoon. Then we would come back and have dinner, a nice dinner in the evening,, and go to something that either the Congress was doing or some of the other things would be doing. That's kind of the way my day…

But I remember, definitely, they started about 8 o'clock in the morning. Lots of times I would see someone right after 8 o'clock. I would go down some place and show them some places right after 8 o'clock. Then let them off up at the Capitol. So that there was a lot of activity going on after we got started with that.

MARTIN: Because you were connected with—not only your professional life with Congressional Realty—but also with Congress, with the Senator, you probably had many social…

JONES: Of yes, I had a lot of social functions. There were a lot of things going on like that. I gave a lot of parties myself to different organizations too and things.

MARTIN: Do you remember your favorite restaurants at that time?

JONES: The restaurants at that time would have to be —there weren't much on Capitol Hill. They did start making little—up on Massachusetts Avenue, they started making kind of outside places, in summertime, especially.

MARTIN: Cafes outside.

JONES: We were kind of used to doing that. But I am trying to think of…

LELAND: Did the Monocle develop around that time? That was down near the Union Station.

MARTIN: Yes, 2nd and D. The Monocle Restaurant.

LELAND: That became quite a popular place. I don't remember if it was the Monocle at that time.

MARTIN: I remember the Carroll Arms being torn down.

JONES: The Carroll Arms that was back up at the Capitol Hill. That was right up at the old Senate Office Building. Then, eventually they built a new Senate Office Building there. Of course, we got kicked out because the new Senate Office Building they were moving—that's why we moved out to 802 Mass. But Carroll Arms was there on the corner of—it would be just beyond C Street, right across from the Senate Office Building there. I was trying to think of the fellow in the Northwest that still has a program—in the Northwest at that time… What's his?…. Even now..

LELAND: It was a piano bar and then he ended up with his own show.

MARTIN: Oh, Mark…

LELAND: Mark Russell.

JONES: Mark Russell. And so we…

MARTIN: He was on Capitol Hill?

LELAND: Of sure, that's where he started.

JONES: They had a nice restaurant there.

LELAND: That wasn't his restaurant, Mom. He just played piano there.

JONES: Yeah, but they did have a restaurant there, though.

LELAND: But that wasn't Mark Russell's.

JONES: No, he just played.

LELAND: Political satire. Because we used to go…

JONES: We used to go there all the time.

LELAND: So we'd sit there and bounce jokes off him. Back and forth and he would incorporate them.

MARTIN: I remember during Watergate when he said "It was just rip and read."

JONES: And he still has them. Every little bit. You know, every few weeks, he has them. He was coming out of Northwest there someplace.

LELAND: He went up to Buffalo.

JONES: Buffalo, that was it.

MARTIN: Buffalo, NY?

LELAND: You know you kind of pick a spot and somebody decides, OK, they'll sponsor you in different cities. For what reason—I don't know how—but he ended up his PBS program was generated out of Buffalo, NY. He lived in DC and would just fly up to do the show and then come back. And then he played the hotel, on Connecticut Avenue.

JONES: People came all the time to listen to him in the evenings you know.

MARTIN: Where did you shop for groceries? Was there a Safeway?

JONES: There was a Safeway on 7th Street right across from that Market. Then, they quit that one and went out a little further to 13th Street. So there was a grocery store, a Safeway store out on 13th Street.

MARTIN: Did you mainly shop at Eastern Market?

JONES: Oh yes. We shopped at Eastern Market of course. Everybody shopped at Eastern Market if you were on Capitol Hill. That's about what you had to do!

MARTIN: Tell me about the issue of schools. [to Leland] Did you live on Capitol Hill?

LELAND: No. I was out of the area.

MARTIN: That's what I thought. You were gone by then.

LELAND: My wife and I came back to New York first. That was before Mom and Dad came back. I came back from Korea. Then Carol and I immediately went back to New York. I had been in New York before. And then Dad had run for Congress while I was in Korea.

JONES: Oh yes, that's right. I forgot about that.

MARTIN: Tell me about this—wait a minute!

LELAND: Dad ran for Congress in 1952 was it, when Eisenhower ran, and Dad lost by a very small margin. He had rolled up probably the largest…

JONES: And that was the year that everybody vote Republican. Don't anybody vote Democratic! Everywhere you went it was vote Republican!

LELAND: …they brought in to campaign against him and he strictly kind of went out of his own pocket to run. They brought in Knowland and Knight and Nixon to campaign against Dad. And yet Dad still rolled up the largest Democratic plurality in that district. But he lost by a little margin.

JONES: I think is was just a few votes. It was a very, very small…

LELAND: In 1952, well, Eisenhower…I was overseas, so I don't… But as Dad said, "In that year, Jesus Christ couldn't have gotten elected on the Democratic ticket."

MARTIN: But he went for it?

LELAND: Yes. And it was then after that that he later became the campaign manager for Senator Neuberger.

JONES: If he had won that one, boy, I'm telling you they never would have gotten him out 'til he got ready to quit. He was so popular. Terrifically popular man. Any time. Any place. He was just terrific.

MARTIN: And the issue of schools never came up.

JONES: I wanted to mention that. I probably did the other night. The school situation was very bad. But they had a place on 9th I believe, and East Capitol Street – in that general area. That was almost all black. There were hardly any people, but one or two.

MARTIN: 9th and East Capitol. Let's see.

LELAND: It was further up than that.

MARTIN: Eastern High School.

JONES: I believe it was Eastern.

MARTIN: Yes, that's about 17th Street.

JONES: Oh, that's further out.

LELAND: No, this one is close.

JONES: This would be up close.

LELAND: You went by it heading towards the Capitol. It was much closer to the Capitol.

JONES: It wouldn't be that 17th one at all.

LELAND: It wasn't on Constitution. What was the next? Was it East Capitol Street? I think it was East Capitol.

JONES: It was East Capitol and 9th.

LELAND: There was a little kind of a—you went around a little park area. Once again, you know how those little round areas are everywhere because Kevin and Gary…

JONES: 7th Street—across the street from 7th Street. So this side of the street would be… this side of the street…

LELAND: Remember in 1959, when I went to Cuba. There was Cuban-American baseball. Fidel had just taken over. Carol was staying with you. And Kevin and Gary went to the school there.

JONES: They did?

LELAND: Yeah, they started the school there.

JONES: I didn't know that. I had forgotten that.

LELAND: Yeah. They were staying with you and Thelma. And then Carol came down and joined me.

JONES: Now the other school there was—and I was trying to remember exactly the address—a lot of these things, I could get in the car and drive right to them, but I can't always remember the address. I used to have such a terrific memory, but things happen. But it was in the south, it would be on about 6th and South Carolina or down in that general area. The different people who wanted to have a good school for their children up til about the 8th grade. And they hired people to be teachers there. And they developed that school there. And I bet you didn't hear much about it, did you?

MARTIN: There's a school on 4th, the Brent school…

JONES: Grade school.

MARTIN: Yes, right—which is a very highly successful school now. Then—was Hine Junior High. You remember Hine Junior High? Across from Eastern High?

What exactly do you remember about race relations on Capitol Hill at that time?

JONES: You know I don't think those race relations were bad at all. I don't think that people felt so bad about that part that they wanted to live here. They didn't really want to get mixed up with them enough, so they were living too close to them but they didn't have bad relations really I don't believe. I don't remember that they…

LELAND: May I make a comment about that? Because when you first moved there, and it was when you were living over on C Street You had the experience of supposedly of a peeping Tom.

JONES: Oh yes.

LELAND: And somebody managed to round up whoever they found and brought them over for us to identify. I found—I was quite shocked at that time, because I found the DC Police reminded me for all the world of Birmingham or you name it. The attitude seemed to be like Bull Connor.

MARTIN: Really?

JONES: That's right. We did have a peeping Tom there at that apartment there.

LELAND: Well, it wasn't that. It was who they just brought up and hoping that [inaudible] the guy's head… I said "I don't recognize anybody, and…" [inaudible] he was.swearing and threatening [inaudible].

Now you've got to remember I just came back from Korea. Totally integrated army. My combat engineer outfit was probably 70% black. And we all were getting along fine and then to come back and walk into this. This deep southern attitude. And that really shook me, because I was doing summer stock when I got back and—like I went to Memphis, TN. I was in Birmingham, AL. You could smell it in the air. You knew that it wasn't going to be too long before we were going to have an explosion.

MARTIN: So this is before '68? This is back—you came back in the late '50s.

LELAND: I came back in 1953.

MARTIN: 1953. Right.

LELAND: You could feel it in the air.

MARTIN: It's a beautiful place to live now. In the '70s when we came, I couldn't imagine living anywhere else.

LELAND: Oh, I know it. Just stroll now down to the Library of Congress, go sit on the steps and look at the Capitol.

MARTIN: What is your fondest memory of living on Capitol Hill?

JONES: Well, that's hard to say because all of it was so good. I was fond of everything about living on Capitol Hill. I can't think of one particular thing that I was—of course, I was always interested in going to the Capitol because they had—went to the different things where they would have…

LELAND: We went to Mr. Henry's to the debut of Roberta Flack. But not only that, you sold a lot of property to Mr. Henry.

JONES: Oh yes, I sold a lot of property to Mr. Henry. He would come in in the evening and with a sign-up thing and just—before Christmas—and we would go up there for Christmas, up to your place in New York. And we'd have to sit around and work up some things for him before we could leave. We wouldn't get out of there until about 9 or 10 o'clock at night. He would be buying things.

LELAND: I was talking to Mr. Henry and he was talking about you and how much you taught him about how to turn over property and make a small fortune.

MARTIN: Tell us about that.

LELAND: That's what Mr. Henry said. As you said, he would drop over to the office and sit there and try to work out deals for you.

MARTIN: He would give listings to you. Is that what kept you busy?

LELAND: No, he would come over to buy properties.

MARTIN: Buy the properties.

JONES: He would buy them you know and just…They'd list one one day and I'd buy it the next day.

MARTIN: You'd call him and—right, that's—tell me more about that.

JONES: Well, it was just the way—it became very easy to list a property. It was sort of a fever. Capitol Hill. Restoration movement became sort of a fever.

MARTIN: This is the late '60s now, the early '70s probably.

LELAND: Yea.

JONES: I expect about in that area. It was—everybody wanted to buy a place on Capitol Hill. They wanted someplace they could restore. They would restore it. They'd like to have it be so they could live in it or keep it for an investment. So, everybody wanted to get in the act.

MARTIN: Do you remember, you probably don't, about what the prices were in the late '60s, early '70s?

JONES: Well here's an example. The place that we bought at 802 Mass. was $17,500 for that nice big place there. Then there was one at 431 5th Street SE. That was one where, of course one of our listings, and three fellas decided they wanted to buy that place at 431 5th Street SE. And there was a nice lady there, but she seemed to be having an awful hard time, making things meet. So, she wanted to go on and sell it. So these fellas decided they would go together and they'd buy that. So they did. And they tried to buy it and they made a contract on it. Then they found out she was in such bad shape that they could get it for a lot less than that. So that she could get out of it. So they said well we are just going to change this all around now and we're not going to do that at all and we're going to give her this. My husband found out about it and he got on the phone and "I have never been anything so irked about anything in my life. This house is worth this amount of money. She is not overcharging on this place. I don't want to have one more thing to do with you fellas. I don't want anybody who would be willing to yank down a contract like that and start over again. I don't want to have a thing to do with you. Don't ever give me another listing about anything you've done, because I don't want to have anything to do with you." So, we bought it, and we bought it for the full price. She was so glad that we could do that, you know.

But then we had to figure out, we had to do something with her. I never went to—I didn't go to anything else except hunt for a place for her. I went to Northwest, went to Northeast went a lot of different places. I said, "No, I don't think you should take that." People would listen to me a lot in those days. I said, "I don't think you should take that because… Now you can see this would be the thing, no, you shouldn't be here, because…" Finally we found a place in Northwest. A doctor had owned it and he and his wife and his sister-in-law or something lived in it. He wanted to move someplace else. So I said—I took her out and showed her this. The thing would have been just perfect for her because it had—you could have several apartments, sleeping rooms you know. One of her friends was in the Northeast, was such a good friend of hers that he was going to go—wherever she went, he was going to rent a room from there. Well, anyway, they signed that thing and got that thing. They were absolutely so thrilled that they did that, but at the same time they were doing that, there was a lady upstairs at 431 5th Street. So that woman's dying. Do you realize, she's almost dead, she's dying. There were four or five people standing around her bed you know. This upsets me because they don't know that she's that sick, I don't believe. But anyway, she died. Then she said to me "I don't know what I am going to do because these people are from North Carolina and they're coming down—the relatives—and they're coming down, they're on their way now.

They're going to be here and they're going to be hungry and they're not going to have enough money to buy food for them. I don't know what I am going to do." I said, "Well, I know what you're going to do. You're going to feed them that's what you're going to do." I said, "I'm going to be gone just a little while and I'll be back. And when I come back there'll be enough of everything that you can… You set up a nice table for them. And when I come back, I'll have food ready for them, everything that they need. Now then tomorrow morning, you see, they'll have to be there for breakfast in the morning and maybe the next breakfast. So that we'll have breakfast for them there in the morning. So they''ll be there for a lovely luncheon. Then they'll be there for dinner that night."

MARTIN: That's a good Capitol Hill story.

JONES: "It'll all be set up. Don't you worry about it one bit because we'll get this thing all set up." I remember her telling somebody "you know what. Never in my whole life has any white woman ever been so nice to me. I didn't know white people would do me this way."

TAPE 2/SIDE 1

MARTIN: ...on 5th street?

JONES: Yes.

MARTIN: And she had never had a white woman be kind to her.

JONES: Oh yes. Well, she moved away from that and we took over. That was one of the places we lived in, that we used for...

LELAND: Would you like some orange juice Mom?

JONES: Would be all right.

MARTIN: Were there any scandals going on on Capitol Hill at that time?

JONES: I think there were quite a few to tell you the truth.

MARTIN: Tell me any one of them. Was Eastern Market in controversy at that time? Was Eastern Market, was that in any sort of controversy?

JONES: Eastern Market had begun to build up. When I think about those—I lived through so much of that stuff that I can think about—but anyway they'd started one at a time, they started. They started a meat market, then the cheese place and then a something... Pretty soon—the inside of these things—all the way round on the inside... Then they made a little restaurant in one place where you could...

MARTIN: What was it? Is it Boone's Lunch? Eastern Market Lunch?

JONES: Yes, right.

MARTIN: Was it Boone's at one time?

LELAND: It expanded. Eastern Market went from—well it was big in the Depression days because it was the farmers' market and that's where you could get your product. But it really became very upscale.

JONES: Oh, everybody had to go to Eastern Market.

LELAND: ...expanded and the artists and the flea markets and the antiques shops that began to...

MARTIN: Remember when there was no flea market outside? It was just the pottery from upstairs, the Eastern Market Pottery. And now, have been back on a Saturday morning?

LELAND: Oh yeah.

MARTIN: Weren't you shocked?

JONES: If you didn't go to Eastern Market on a Saturday morning, you were really going to miss it because everything…

LELAND: Carol's mother and father lived on 5th Street. Right across from the Methodist Church there. That's one block up from Eastern Market and one block from Mr. Henry's. Thelma got to know everybody in the Eastern Market. She would shop there and she was everybody's buddy. It was like the old days. "Here, have an extra apple. Give you a little more meat." And it was great fun to go up there shopping because it got to be very personal. Like a small town.

MARTIN: It still is very personal. Did that remind you of any scandals that you want to tell me? Your best Capitol Hill story.

LELAND: One or two I wouldn't tell.

MARTIN: Oh, no, go ahead. You can edit it later.

JONES: I won't tell them about you [joking]. I'm thinking about one that—let's see. Can't think of the guy's name. They lived in the next county over [from] us when we were living in the area. He got in love with this secretary and they lived in one of those places just out of, across the river. They had a nice place—an awful lot of houses in that area. You know that one morning—they were very close friends of ours. They were the next county over when we lived in Eastern Oregon or way out there some place. We knew them real well. One morning, she—it was about 7:00 in the morning. He was one of these elegant

guys you know. He goes out like that. He told her he was leaving. He came down with seven big suitcases full of things and left. He told her that he wasn't in love with her and that he was in love with this gal and so that he was leaving. And he left.

LELAND: Who was that?

JONES: That's what I am trying to think.

LELAND: Was he a Congressman?

JONES: Yes, he was a Congressman.

LELAND: Was he from Oregon?

JONES: From Oregon. A Congressman from Oregon.

LELAND: Was he head of the Ways and Means Committee at that time?

JONES: He might have been. He had a good position. And his wife told me that she said that she was so upset that she couldn't believe it that he'd walk out. She was busy getting a wedding ready for one of her daughters. She couldn't believe he could have done such a thing. But he just walked out.

MARTIN: That story has been repeated probably many times. Now tell me, just for a wind up. What sort of questions do you think the interviewer should ask other people about Capitol Hill? What did I miss?

JONES: So much has changed since I lived there you know. I'm 94 years old.

MARTIN: I know. Let the record show that Mrs. Jones whispered to me that she is 94 years old and she has some absolutely fabulous stories to tell. And I appreciate it so much. Would you ever move back to Capitol Hill, do you think?

JONES: Oh yes, I'm sorry I ever left there.

MARTIN: What do you miss most about it?

JONES: Everything. I miss going to hear the different debates about things they were doing.

MARTIN: The political issues on the Hill?

JONES: Everything you know. We took people all the time to listen to the different things on the Hill because I just thought that Capitol Hill was wonderful. If I had it to over again, I would never had left there. But it was an awful bad mistake that I ever left there.

MARTIN: You left to go Rockville?

JONES: Yes. I guess Mr. Hall told you that I sold that place to him, you know. It wasn't too long, he did some things to it, but there was a lot of things that he did that were nice. But not extravagant or anything. But he hadn't been there too long 'til someone came along and offered him $1 million. We paid $17,500 for that place. And he was offered $1 million. He turned it down.

MARTIN: I know, $1million. He's very happy there.

JONES: Yes. He says "I'd never leave here."

LELAND: There is such an explosion of real estate value that everybody experienced between say the late '50s–early '60s to what the values suddenly became by the time you were in the '70s to '80s. Quadrupling. And that was everywhere. I bought an old Victorian home, it used to be an estate. It was a Craftsman Home in Westwood, New Jersey. It had 8 bedrooms, wainscotting, oak beams, captains' staircases and an acre of land. I bought it for $23,000.

MARTIN: In the '50s?

LELAND: In 1961. I sold it in '85. I'm sure whoever bought it even sold it for more, because it was one large piece of land. I sold it for $300,000.

MARTIN: And now?

LELAND: What do you buy? I don't think anybody would ever quite see that magnificent...change.

MARTIN: ...exponential change...

JONES: And do you know what? Real estate now is—this is the time to go into real estate.

LELAND: Yes, you are quite right. Have you noticed what the market is? People are taking low interest rate, they are remortgaging, buying second homes. When you get down to 6%...

MARTIN: More money is chasing after fewer pieces of property. You are lucky you live at the shore also.

That's another part. Before I close, and I am going to leave right now, tell me about selling your property in Dewey Beach to John Weintraub.

JONES: Oh, that was a sale. Not only there, but all over Capitol Hill and every place that we—I'm going to tell you in just a second. That 431 5th Street, we bought that one because we wanted to cheat those kids out of getting to cheat up somebody. OK, then 636 Constitution Avenue came up. Of course, we knew what these different houses were coming for. So, we bought that one and restored that one. So then, I told you about 806, we bought that one. Then at 902 East Capitol, that was up there close to the park there.

We bought that and we lived—I mean we didn't live in it, we rented it for quite a while. Then we bought 1222 or something like that, still on the park. A big house. It had a basement apartment that you could rent, and then the uppers that you could—it was a terrific thing. Then we bought 1308 or something like that on Massachusetts Avenue SE. When we'd just see a house we liked, we'd just go put a contract on it. We didn't do it to try to cheat anybody—we never once did we ever offer anything that we bought for less than the price that they listed it for in the first place. Never once. We didn't offer—say like a lot of them, say $5000 less.

MARTIN: Whatever you listed it at, you gave the owner.

JONES: We never did that. That was the thing. That was one of the things about being honest—that it really doesn't pay to do, because the Capitol...

MARTIN: The network knows.

JONES: We had these parties you know and they had these parties. They would talk about real estate all the time. It got to be like a fever. For instance, when the restoration society and they got through with the rotunda, that was painted by Italian painters and artists. They worked a long time on that. They had those houses across the street there from that military thing down on 8th Street. They started selling those and boy those just went like clockwork. So easy to sell, it was so easy to sell things at that time. It was easy. You didn't have to work hard at anything you wanted to do.

MARTIN: I'm sure you were fantastic on it. Well, listen, thank you so very much. I really appreciate that. And you may discover that you want to add something at some point. I'm going to leave my address. If there is another story, you may want to….

LELAND: [Inaudible]

MARTIN: That would be great. Did I? Yes, you know some stories after this might have...

END OF TAPE