

Answering The Call:
The History Of The
Port Washington Volunteer Fire Department

Transcript Of Oral History Interview With

Janet Kimmerly
Protection Engine Company No. 1

conducted in association with the
Port Washington Public Library Local History Center

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pertaining to the subject being discussed

Q: This is an interview with Janet Kimmerly. My name is Sally Olds. The interview is taking place at the Port Washington Public Library. Can you please say your name.

JK: Janet Kimmerly.

Q: Which Company are you a member of?

JK: Protection Engine Company No. 1.

Q: First of all, can you tell me what it was like to grow up in Port Washington?

JK: I had a wonderful childhood. I had a great childhood. Best parents in the world. I never wanted for anything. My father, especially, always had time for me and this is why I ended up the way I ended up, if you will, joining the Fire Department. In one of my earliest memories, he'd come home from work [and say to my brother and me], "Let's go swimming, get your bathing suits." [We had a speedboat. Dad took us swimming, waterskiing and fishing off it]. I just have great parents. My mother was home all the time. I've never been left with a babysitter. Truly, our parents were our best friends and they took an interest in everything we did. They were always there for my ball games, watching me play hockey, basketball, softball, whatever.

Q: So, you were saying what made you end up the way you did joining the Fire Department. What were your childhood feelings about the Fire Department?

JK: Well, my earliest recollections, my father always took me up there. My brother and I would be dropped off at church and then we would walk down the block to the firehouse. My father would be waiting there for us.

Q: Which firehouse?

JK: Protection, of course. You don't join a different fire [company]. So my brother and I, we would go in, play ping-pong, play at the pool table, climb the trucks, of course. Those are my earliest memories. And, fourth of July, Protection always had a great picnic down in Sands Point. My father would take me down there with him early [in the morning], so I'd be working with him, making the hamburgers and stuff. He was the only one who would be allowed to cook the eggs, because he was a good cook. It's a whole different life. If you're not really involved in it, people don't really understand [that the] fire service is a whole different way of life. It really is.

Q: In what way?

JK: It's just very different. People talk about it being a family and it is very family-oriented. It's changed a great deal, I can see, in the 21 years I've been there. My father tells me

when he was a kid, when he got in, he got in in '39, February of '39, and he said that in those days, [members] were pushing each other to get onto the rear step... Our company can take 100 members, and there was a waiting list as long as your arm. But Port Washington has become so crowded. People work three jobs. Everything is so expensive...the taxes. A lot of people can't afford to live here. That's hurt the volunteers for one thing...There were always so many family members in [the Department]. I had my father and my uncle and then myself, several cousins, that kind of thing. Actually, when I was the editor of Firehouse Magazine, I wrote an article, for the sister publication [Chief Fire Executive].. I did an article on Port Washington and, at that time... and this was '89 maybe, 1989, I actually had a count of how many family groups were in the Port Washington Fire Department. It really was a family kind of thing.

Q: Do you remember what it was?

JK: I'm sorry, the number?

Q: Yeah.

JK: I want to say something like 79, but I can get the article and get a copy for you. That's not a problem. But, you know, people would look out for you in the old days. I don't want to paint myself as an old-timer like my parents. My father died at 83. My mom is 88. So that's a long time to live here. You would walk down the street, everybody knew

you, you knew everybody, and it's not that way anymore. Port Washington has changed; not for the better, in my opinion. It's too crowded, there are too many cars. It's just very, very different. I think a lot of those changes have impacted the volunteer fire departments, not just Port Washington but all over, in an adverse way.

Q: Specifically, in what ways have those changes affected the department?

JK: If you want to be a volunteer fireman, I look back on it now... I said I got in in '83. If I was a rookie now, I'd never get off the rookie list because I would not be able to make all the schools because of job obligations and what-not. If you want to do a good job, you have to really devote yourself. It's like having a part-time job, a secondary job. It really is, if you want to do it the right way. If you're just there to go to a barbeque or something, that's not the way I was brought up. I'm not real active now. Since my father died, it took a lot of heart out of me. I have a lot of different responsibilities. I do for my mom what he did. She's got osteoporosis and arthritis. She doesn't drive, so I have to do the shopping, the banking, etc. I'm not complaining. I'm just stating a fact. Plus, my hands are shot now. I've got carpal tunnel and sometimes I can't even lift a plate. So it makes it difficult. I had always been both an active interior structural firefighter, as well as [active] on the administrative side. Now it's just basically administration that I do. I miss the response, but I don't want to hurt myself and I don't want to hurt somebody else. I'm 56 years old now and, let's face it, you don't heal as well at 56 as you did at 26 and you're not as strong.

Q: When you said you wouldn't get off the rookie list, is that because the requirements are so much greater?

JK: Yes, you're required to make every single school... Since OSHA got involved, they've required so many more schools and the different equipment [has become more technical and sophisticated]... When I was a rookie, I had to make every single school also, but I think there are a lot more schools now than what there used to be, a lot more requirements. And again, it's because you have the proliferation of hazardous materials. Now you've got weapons of mass destruction. Terrorism has opened up a whole new ball game.

Q: So then, it's the combination of the change in the community and the change in the requirements that's made the...?

JK: I don't know that that would turn people off, the requirements, what they have to do. If you want to join, you want to join. Although, when I first got in, I was kind of looking at it from what my father did. My father always had fun and when I did get in, I realized that there really is a lot of work to this. But I have to say that I've had far more positive experiences than negative experiences. But it's a lot of work. If you want to do the job right and do it well, you have to really put the time in and devote yourself to it, because it truly is a second job. And, if you're a chief, that's like a full-time job, just because of the

administrative, plus the actual fire duty response and everything. I have no regrets at all. How many people can say they took their avocation and turned it into a paying job, to work for Firehouse Magazine? I was the executive editor for several years and I've been at FDNY now for seven-plus years.

Q: You've been at?

JK: FDNY. To me it's really a marriage made in heaven, in the respect that I am the only person in the field who is an editor by trade and a "vollie" by avocation. So, it's a good marriage that way.

Q: Going back a little bit to your father's involvement and your uncle's. Do you remember any stories that they would tell you?

JK: Oh yeah. The two of them, they were basically chauffeurs for most of the time. They lived on Jackson Street. That's where they grew up, on Jackson Street, and a lot of times they used to...cut through the neighbor's and run through Atlantic's to get to Protection. Also, my grandmother, who lived to be 102 years old, was a big booster of the Fire Department. When the whistle would go off, she would get up, run out, open up the garage door and give them a head start, so they could get their vehicles out. But, I remember my father telling me a couple of stories. [Before Lewis Oil, the area was called Berg's Oil. Apparently some guy had fallen into a pit down there. Obviously, that

was hazardous material at that time, the fumes and everything. They wanted somebody to go in and get him. So my father went in, got the guy and ...“Guinea Pete” told him, “You’re crazy to go in there, “Doggie.” But he went in and he got the guy. The guy was dead already, but somebody had to pull him out. “Guinea Pete” is Pete Biscaro, [now deceased]. He used to be a member of Atlantic Hook and Ladder. That’s how [the guys] refer....

Q: But he said, “You’re crazy to go in there Doggie”?

JK: My father’s nickname was Doggie. Nobody ever called him by his Christian name [George]. D-o-g-g-i-e. There was a fire at the Riviera one time I remember him telling me. He went in and pulled out this guy who was a young guy, I guess maybe in his 20s or something. He was all burned and everything. He told me that the guy was pleading with him to leave him there because his girlfriend wouldn’t like him anymore.

Q: So he had some really hard experiences?

JK: ... After that experience, my brother told me one time that, after that, my father was never an interior structural firefighter again. He said to my brother that “Everybody I pull out is dead.” I guess that kind of turned him off. I don’t know. So maybe that’s when he became a chauffeur, but he was a driver most of the time out of the firehouse, as was his brother, Jack.

Q: What exactly is an interior structural firefighter?

JK: It means that you go into a building, a structure, whether on a hose-line or as a “truckie,” as opposed to somebody who stays outside, hits the hydrant, operates the pump or operates the ladder truck. You’re actually inside in a poor environment, with the smoke and the flames.

Q: And what determines who becomes the interior structural firefighter?

JK: I don’t know how it was in my father’s day, because when he was a kid in ’39, when he first got in, they did not have Scott Paks, you know, self-contained breathing apparatus. He did wear... I think what they called a gas mask. I’m sure you’ve seen old photos of something like that. Now, you have to be tested on it. Now, you go through a fit test. You go out to the Academy and you go through different evolutions and you’re tested for that.

Q: And so.....?

JK: It’s really by choice, too. Some people are claustrophobic. There’s so much to do regardless. Not everybody has to go in. You need guys to hump the hose-line, pull it

along [stretch], you need people to pack hose, you need somebody to hit the hydrant, you need somebody to butt a ladder. There's a job for everybody.

Q: But your specific job as a firefighter was?

JK: I was interior. Yeah, I would go in on a hose-line. Yes, and as the secretary, obviously, I was doing administrative also.

Q: When did you first think about joining yourself?

JK: I think it was a seed in the back of my head all my life because, like I said, my father took me there all the time. When I turned 18, I had asked him, "What would you think about me joining the Fire Department?" Bear in mind, he was a "male chauvinist pig" and I don't mean that in a bad sense, because I'll tell you something else that will seem contradictory to that. His remarks were, "If you ever got in, I'd move out of town." But, on the other hand, he was somebody who wanted me to go to school, go to college, get a good education. He said, "Don't be a nurse. Be a doctor." So, he was not a male chauvinist pig that way. So, at the time, Protection had in their bylaws that the age limit was up to 35 years of age. I was approaching 35 and the women started to get into FDNY. They had that big lawsuit – Brenda Berkman, "Rocky" [Rochelle] Jones, etc. There were 20 women and they accepted them because of the court order. So, I remember my father was in Florida... My parents were "snowbirds" right after my dad

retired, six months down there, six months up here. So, I was on the phone and I said, “You know, Dad, I’m getting close to 35. What would you think about me joining the Fire Department now?” “Well, go ahead, but just don’t make an ass out of yourself.” And the thing was, my grandmother was still alive and, at that time, it was my father, Jack and my Aunt Juliette [and the three rotated with her care].... My father was up here for six months out of the year, so he was always taking care of her then. Jack would come down from Vermont because he had retired. So, Jack was here [at the time] and he was still a member, so he became my sponsor. My father, because he was in Florida, couldn’t sponsor me. So, Jack put my application in and I got black-balled on the first go-round, and I got in on the second go-round. I was the first woman and I did not take it personally, but I also know that I got in because I was his kid and the old-timers knew me. I was never a prissy little girl. So, it was his buddies who really voted me in. Then it went on from there.

Q: Did you ever find out who black-balled you or why?

JK: Oh, I know it was the young kids, but it didn’t matter. It wasn’t Janet Kimmerly they were black-balling. It was this “woman,” this first woman kind of thing.

Q: And once you got in, what was it like being the first woman?

JK: Well, see, the other thing is that I was older. I was [34, going on] 35 years old when I got in. I got in in '83. I guess I was 35, born in June '48, so I guess I was 34, going to be 35...It was a lot easier because I was Doggie's kid and the guys knew him and I didn't join to be the first woman or to look for publicity because, in fact, the *Port News* called me and I refused an interview. That's not why I joined. I don't want that hassle. I joined because my father loved it, he enjoyed it, he had a good time. And look, my mother was a housewife. My mother was in the house all day. She didn't have fun. My father had fun. He worked outside the house, he was a volunteer fireman. So, who do you want to be like? And he had fun [all his life]. I enjoyed the guys and [action]and, again, you're looking at it kind of on the periphery. When you get in, you realize that there's a lot of work involved in this. A lot of work. I was ignorant, but I felt like, I'm going to stick this out and do it the right way. And I feel that I did. I don't feel I have anything to be ashamed of. I feel bad because I'm not responding now, but I gave them a good [18] years. I'll have 22 in March. I do miss the response but, like I said, I don't want to hurt myself. I don't want to hurt somebody else. As Clint Eastwood said [in "Dirty Harry"], "You've got to know your limitations." And my life is very different right now, too. A lot happened, like my father dying, my dog, Winnie, dying, but that wouldn't impact the Fire Department. But, when 9/11 came, I was coming home 9, 10, 11 o'clock at night. I was working a lot of hours. I edited two books for the Fire Department. This was all extra work on top of my normal responsibilities. So, FDNY pulled me away in a lot of respects, too. I was very, very busy. I was working a lot of nights, going to a lot of seminars, meetings and [functions].

Q: Can we go back a little bit?

JK: Sure.

Q: Were you hassled at all, once you got into the Department?

JK: If I was hassled, it was behind my back and I wasn't aware of it. Because, I have to tell you, the guys have treated me with nothing but respect. And, again, I know that a lot of this is because I'm his kid. It made a difference -- if it had been Mary Jane off the street coming in. [I was more of a "known" quantity as opposed to an unknown quantity.] But again, a woman came in after me, I don't know, six, eight years after me, and her whole attitude was so diametrically opposed to the way I felt. See, my whole viewpoint is, I asked to join. They didn't ask me to join. It's up to me to acclimate myself to that firehouse. Now, this other woman who came in, [said] "Oh, Janet, we should change the uniforms. What do you think?" Hey, don't get me involved in that. I mean, this was her attitude. And she was not accepted. She was not respected. I had so many other things going on, I never really hung out in the firehouse. In fact, some of the guys [asked], "Why don't you hang around?" But, at that time, I was playing in a [women's] softball league. I mean, I always made my points -- I was in the top 10 in points for the first 10 years that I got in, but I was still young enough to play softball.

Q: For the Department?

JK: No, no. Women's league. Plus, I worked in the City when I got in. I had other interests besides the Fire Department and other responsibilities. It was never a hangout for me. I've got a TV at home, why do I have to go up there? A lot of them are young kids. See, I was always kind of like an oddball, because half of the guys were old enough to be my father; the other half were young enough to be my sons, if you will. I've been treated well. I have no complaints.

Q: What kind of work were you doing at the time you joined?

JK: I worked for NCCI, the National Council on Compensation Insurance. I've done the same kind of work all my life. I'm an editor. So I edited, wrote annual reports, newsletters, etc.

Q: And that was a full-time job?

JK: Oh yeah, yeah.

Q: So, how did you integrate your Fire Department involvement with your job?

JK: You've got to remember, this is a volunteer department, so I'd go to work all day. I'd come home, I'd go to my [fire] schools, I'd go to my meetings, because they're always scheduled at night and you make your fires when you're available. So, basically, I responded to everything, unless I was in the shower. Hey, there are some guys who do run out of the shower. I was not one of them. Unless I was in the shower or sick, or out of town [I responded]. Whether it was 2 o'clock in the morning, whatever, I would get up and I would go, I would respond.

Q: How did you prepare yourself to go at the last minute?

JK: You mean like, from bed?

Q: Yeah, like did you keep clothes handy, or what?

JK: Yeah, I always did. Actually, this is kind of a funny story. I had always been a chronic stomach sleeper, all my life. But when I got in, I started sleeping on my back because I felt I could get out of bed quicker. Also, Billy Zwerlein told me, "You gotta back your car in, Janet. Don't pull your car into the garage or the driveway." I started backing in all the time. ...In the summertime, I'd lay out a pair of blue jeans, and I'd sleep in a tee-shirt and a pair of drawers. ... Wintertime, I'd lay out a pair of pants and a sweatshirt and respond like that. ...The whistle goes off. I had a Plectron in the room, or a pager, because in the wintertime, the windows aren't open. So, typically, unless you're a very

light sleeper, you're not going to hear the horns or the sirens, but the Plectron or the pager will wake you up. I just pop up, put my pants on, sweatshirt and run out the door. And, I had my keys laid out.

Q: And the Plectron, can you explain?

JK: It's a fire radio. You just plug it in and it tells you everything going on in Port Washington. Ambulance calls, fire calls, announcements, you know, time check, that kind of thing.

Q: So, it's quiet until there's a call?

JK: Yes. You could keep in on monitor and then you get all of Nassau County, whatever Fire Comm handles, but I don't need that. Port Washington is enough.

Q: Yeah. What do you remember about your training?

JK: Let's see. ...At the Fire Service Academy?

Q: Either one.

[Note added after interview: “Actually, because of my job at FDNY, I train every day. I am the Editor of WNYF, the official training publication of the FDNY. Additionally, I attend various schools, drills and seminars, both as a member of FDNY and PECO/PWFD.”]

JK: Well, I know the first time I had to wear a Scott Pak was unnerving. The engineer at the time thought maybe I was a little bit claustrophobic. I have middle-age spread now, but I was thinner when I first got in. I guess I had a very narrow face, so I had a hard time getting a seal. And I do remember the first time.

Q: What were the feelings you had when you were wearing it?

JK: I would hyperventilate some, so maybe I was claustrophobic. But, I know that the first time that I went through an evolution out at the [Academy] wearing that, I didn't feel comfortable because I didn't have a proper seal and I walked out. That was the only time I ever did that. I never did that in a fire or anything else. But then I think I got a better hang of getting a better seal. When we got the 4.5's, they were very comfortable and I loved wearing those. I felt very comfortable in them. It was a newer model, whatever. I don't care who you are, if you don't have some fear in you for the fire, you're out of your mind or you're a liar.

[Q: Do you remember the night you got in?]

JK: I was tickled pink. I can still remember the night I got in. My uncle called me up, “Come on up, get sworn in.” I was so excited, I ran downstairs, I ran right into the coffee table and I really banged my leg. And I remember just sitting there after I got sworn in, [thinking], “I’m a volunteer fireman, I’m a volunteer fireman.” I was really excited about it. It was neat. But then the reality sets in of all the training, what is really involved with it. It’s a dirty, hard job. You have to get your hands dirty. I remember my father always taught me about different [members]. He would disparage them to me. “He doesn’t get his hands dirty.” To him, that was not a good fireman. If there’s a physical [problem] or something, that’s one thing. But, he didn’t like freeloaders. It’s a job, it really is.

Q: You said you went through an evolution in training. What is that?

JK: [Simply put, the tasks performed to extinguish the fire.] Well, an evolution is, for example, a fire would be set out at the... Nassau County Fire Service Academy. Maybe they’d put you into a private dwelling. So, it’s set up like a house and ...[the] evolution [would start with you] responding on the apparatus. The people out there would tell you, “You have a working fire in a private dwelling. Hook up to the hydrant, advance the line.” Probably for a private dwelling, it would be an inch and three-quarter [hose-line]. If it was a different structure, like a library or something, you’d want to bring a two-and-a-half-inch [hose-line]. Then they’d tell the [firefighters on the ladder truck] to go through their evolution. The [tasks/procedures to extinguish] the fire, [perform a search, venting operations]; that would all be [part of] an evolution.

Q: Do you remember the first actual fire you went to?

JK: Yeah, but I was kind of in on the tail end. I had just come off the train. In those days, we didn't have all this bunker gear. When OSHA stepped in, it became a whole new ball game. It cost the Department a lot of money and we had to get all this equipment. I'm not saying it's a bad thing. I'm just saying that it changed a lot of things. I used to be able to come right off the train wearing a skirt. Put your bunker coat on, the helmet, pull up your boots and you could still hit a hydrant. I mean, you're not going to go inside in a skirt, but you could still hump hose. But, I remember, I guess it was March or April of that year that I got in, in 1983, and I was coming in on the train. I could hear the fire whistle approaching [the station]. So, I ran across to Flower Hill. I think I was on a fourth-due engine. It was down in Manorhaven and, basically, the fire was out. They had knocked it out already and it had to be April, I guess, because Charlie Lang was Chief. No, Charlie Lang wasn't Chief then. Tommy Murray would have just gotten out in March, I think. Maybe Donald [DeBari] was out of town. Charlie, I guess he was the First Assistant at that time and he was the Incident Commander at that particular fire. He told Bobby Dunbar to take me in to show me around. Bobby was a member of Flower Hill. I'd gone to school with him. He [recently] moved down to Florida. So, he took me in and showed me the damage. But the reason this one does stick out in my mind, and I believe it was the first one, [is] because this homeowner had a python. He had a couple of real odd kinds of reptiles in there. That's why I remember that one.

Q: So what happened with the python?

JK: I don't think anything was killed, but it was just unnerving to me, ...because I don't like reptiles. But that's neither here nor there. I think that was the first one. First working fire where I actually did anything? You have to bear in mind, Port Washington does not get a lot of working fires.

Q: What, specifically, is a working fire?

JK: A working fire is when you [actually] have flames and smoke. There really is a fire as opposed to these recorded alarms that are triggered by -- sometimes wind motions, ...[or a power surge]. But also, bear in mind, that Bobby Dayton's fire, that rang out as a recorded alarm, too. So, that turned out to be a working fire. I'm trying to think. I've been to several. I guess I've been to ten to twelve working fires since I've been in. I know that one early one was ...[on] that little island of stores across the street from King Kullen, Manhasset Avenue. Now, I don't know whether that was the stationery store then or what. There was a gas leak. I remember that ...[it] was in the middle of the night. I worked at that fire. Probably the longest one I was ever at was when the Sands Point Bath Club burned down. I was between jobs then so I happened to be home. It was four o'clock in the afternoon. ... I think I left there about two o'clock in the morning. It was in March. It was one of those queer days in March where it was 70 degrees and just [a]

hint of spring. The only way you could really approach the fire, because [of] the way the wind was blowing, you had to get around it because it was blowing in off the water. I guess it was an arson; I don't remember the details at this point. Yeah. That was a long, long day. I remember talking to my parents; they were still in Florida. ...My mother [asked], "How did you hold your water all that time?" My mother and I [can] go at the drop of a hat. I said "Ma, the first thing I did as soon as I got home, I took a leak." [Then], I took a shower, because you're all sooty and smoky and stinky. And I had a meatloaf sandwich, because I hadn't eaten all day either. ...I went to bed after that and the whistle went off again for a rekindle. I said, "I ain't getting up." That's one time that I was home that I did not respond. I said, "Let some of the guys who never show up go." I said, "I was there long enough. I'm a little tired right now."

Q: So what did you do all the time that you were there? What specifically?

JK: That particular fire? The Sands Point fire? I was on a hose-line. I guess, basically, I was on a hose-line and then ...packing hose all night afterward. I'm in an engine company, so I'm usually on a hose-line.

Q: You know, what you just said is something that I never thought about. The fact that if you're busy fighting the fire, you can't go to the bathroom.

JK: And the thing is, it's very difficult for a woman. A guy can just go against a tree discreetly somewhere. A girl can't do that. But I think what overrides it is that's the last thing on your mind. The adrenaline is pumping, you're excited and the bunker gear is so hot, it keeps all the heat and sweat in. The water that you would pee, I think just comes out in sweat, so it's not that much of a concern. But then, you've got to worry about [becoming] dehydrated, so they always bring water or soda down...when we have any kind of an extended operation. This was another good fire over here at Johnny Shields. I was at that fire. That was a Tuesday night as I recall. It went off around seven, seven-thirty. I just ran around the block because I live on Jackson Street. I think there was a school or something going on, so there were plenty of trucks on the road and they got there and I just geared up off the truck. I was on a hose line-for that. We were doing a foam evolution. They determined that the fire had started in the basement, so I was on the hose-line for the foam and we were dumping the foam in. I could see that there was fire running up the wall and [across] the ceiling [overhead], but I wasn't concerned because, first of all, we were only a couple of feet in from the sidewalk and, secondly, we had a charged line right next to us. But I was at the Bobby Dayton fire, too. This was after the Bobby Dayton fire, but I think that after Bobby died, everybody was going to go on the side of caution, no matter what. So, I guess the officers saw the fire going up the wall and [over our heads] and, all of a sudden, somebody grabbed me from behind. I'm out on the sidewalk along with the guy I was on the hose-line with. I can honestly tell you I was not afraid. We had a hose-line, a charged line right there, so I don't know why we just didn't [open it up]. I'll never know. So, after that it became an exterior

operation. It was never an interior operation after that. ...Then I remember they put me on [another] hose-line. I was off on the side of the building and we're fighting it, and it got so black. With a hardware store, you ...have all kinds of hazardous materials, fertilizers. So, even outside, we were wearing our Scott Paks, and my [alarm] started to go off, so I knew I needed air. Funny thing, that was scarier to me, that particular incident, because it was so black outside with the smoke coming down, you couldn't see anything. I never quite experienced that inside [with] a fire as I did that night, at that particular fire, outside. I remember kind of feeling along the hose-line to get out [to the street] to ...get another bottle. That was a busy night. Then later on, I was sitting in the middle of the street on a play pipe, because, like I said, it was an exterior operation at that time. You're sitting on it because you have to keep the pressure down, so the line doesn't go crazy on you. By the time I left there, because I had to go to work the next day, I was soaking wet, I was cold, because [I] got wet from... sitting in the street. I said, "This is not fun anymore." I'm cold, I'm wet, I'm tired. It was like 2 o'clock, so I went to the Chief. I said, "Look, I've got to go to work tomorrow." So, I was dismissed and I went home. I went to work the next day and I remember coming home and [PWFD] was still working there. I guess there were some hot spots. So that was interesting.

Q: Did you say that you sat on a play pipe?

JK: Well, I sat on the hose. It's a large-caliber stream device. It would be taken off of one of the [engines]. It has a big thrust of water, [heavy volume].

Q: What is a charged line?

JK: Water is running through, as opposed to an uncharged line where you don't have the nozzle open to expend the water.

Q: Were there any other fires or emergencies that would stand out in your mind?

JK: Well, Bobby Dayton's, obviously. ...I was sleeping down at my parents' place; they were in Florida. The whistle went off. Actually, I didn't have a pager or anything with me, so I had no idea what I was going to, but I knew that it was a still alarm. So, I responded to our annex, Protection's annex, down on Channel Drive. [As] I was pulling up, our first engine was pulling out and, as I got to the fire[house], a couple of guys came up and [said], "Janet, we've got a working fire." We went in a van, so when I got there, I was put on a hose-line in the back of the building. God, I don't think I was there[but] fifteen minutes, when the *mayday* came over and Scotty Wood came diving out the window and, obviously, Bobby was brought out by Tommy Murray. So that was pretty much an all-day thing. I think we wrapped up there around 2 or 3 o'clock. But that was pretty distressing. I mean, it was really our first line-of-duty [death]. Certainly the first one I had ever experienced. You know the guy, it makes a difference. In fact, I wrote an editorial about it. I was the editor of Firehouse Magazine at the time. What I said then

stands kind of true now. You just don't think it's going to happen to you and it does.

You never know.

Q: Did it make you think about leaving the Department?

JK: No, but I was so sure that my mother was going to [coerce my father]. "Georgie, you've got to make her quit." And she didn't. I was very, very surprised. Because it's not like Bobby was some young kid or something. He was a professional fireman also. It's not like you're talking about an irresponsible youngster who had absolutely no experience with this. But no, no, she never put any pressure or anything on; I was very surprised. I was sure....

Q: Did they ever find out exactly what it was that caused his death?

JK: Bobby Dayton's? Well, he ran out of air. He ran out of air. His Scott Pak was drained.

Q: Did they think the Scott Pak was faulty?

JK: Not from what I understand. This [building is called] a "tax-ayer"; apartments on top and a commercial establishment on the first floor. It was an antique shop. There were lots of popping noises and those were aerosol cans going off and paint thinners and that kind of stuff. From what I understand, the apartments upstairs were all cut up and [maze-like]. I

guess if you didn't live there or really know the [building], I guess he just twisted around and got lost in there and Woody was lucky he found a window. What I had heard was that his tank was [expended].

Q: So, he was a New York City fireman?

JK: Yes.

Q: And you have worked with the New York City Department?

JK: As an editor, not as a fireman.

Q: Right, but you've worked closely with the people there?

JK: I even go to fires with the guys.

Q: You go to fires?

JK: Yeah. I ride with a lot of the guys. I could ride every day, except I have work to do. I rode a lot with [Charlie Blaich]... the 15th Division [Commander]. He'd take me out a lot. ... Very friendly with a lot of the guys in Special Operations Command. Third

Division, I used to go up there every month but, as I used to tell [Deputy Chief] Vinnie [Dunn, before he retired], “You’re as bad as we are, stopping on the ramp and that’s it.”

Q: What do you mean?

JK: A lot of times, you get a call here which is a garbage call. Inadvertently, the alarm is set off or something and you’re told, “Everything’s okay, no need to respond, it was triggered inadvertently.” [Perhaps a service man is working on the alarm system] so you don’t get off the ramp because you’re still waiting for people to respond, but in the meantime, you’ve already found out or maybe the Chief has already gotten there. Maybe it’s across the street from him for all you know. No problem. “Signal 13, return to quarters.” So you don’t get off the ramp; you just back on in. A couple of times, this one [Deputy] Chief I used to ride with a lot, Vinnie Dunn - probably the most famous person in the fire service - he’d get a call, we’d get in [his] car, [his driver would] get [us] as far as the ramp and that’s as far as we went. I said, “God, you’re just like Port Washington. We don’t go anywhere.”

Q: But in terms of the techniques, the equipment, the way they respond to fires, how would you compare the Port Washington [Fire] Department with the New York City [Fire] Department?

JK: You can’t really compare a paid to a “vollie” for the simple...

Q: Just hold that a second while I turn over the tape.....

JK: You know, on any given day, unless you're on a standby, you don't know who's going to show up in your volunteer department. So you don't know who's going to be on the nozzle that night. You don't know who's going to hit the hydrant. You don't know who your MPO [Motor Pump Operator] is going to be. Whereas in the City, you're working such-and-such tour, so everybody is assigned. You've got the tools, you've got the nozzle, you've got this, you've got that. You're my chauffeur for the night. You're my MPO. It's different that way. I don't know if I'm answering your question well enough.

Q: But, in terms of the dedication, the commitment, how would you compare them?

JK: You're asking at a very bad time because right now, the morale in the City is very, very bad. ...People have not gotten over 9/11 [and never will]. There [are] a lot of problems with the Police Department right now. It's just a lot of politics. I mean, there's politics here, too. Let's face it, you get more than two people together and you're going to have political problems. Again, I don't know if I'm answering your question [properly, if this is] what you're looking for.

Q: How were you affected by 9/11?

JK: Twenty of those guys wrote for me. When my father died, some of those guys were here at my firehouse for him. One of the FDNY chaplains came out here and [performed] the Mass and [memorial ceremony] for him. It's been devastating. Everything's just very, very different. I remember it like it was yesterday.

Q: Where were you?

JK: I was at work. Ironically, I was pulling together WNYF (*With New York Firefighters* magazine). That's the training publication [I edit]. It's a quarterly called *With New York Firefighters*. I was getting it ready to send around on approval to my editorial board. I'm in my office and I have an FDNY beeper that alerts me on any multiple alarms and [unusual incidents]. I got beeped and I read it, but I took it that it was a ...little commuter plane. That's what I thought it was. ... Just ran in error and bumped into the [building]. I never dreamed it was a 747 or whatever. A couple of people came running by me. "Janet, Janet, you can see out the window." I worked on the fourth floor at headquarters at the time in Brooklyn. So I went to the windows and I could see the smoke coming up. I wanted to finish what I was doing ... I was sending [an] article to [one of my writers for this issue], Ray Downey. You might have heard his name. He was the Chief of Special Operations Command [and a good friend. He was there for me when I lost my father]. I wrote him a note. I [wrote], "I know you're there. I hope you're okay." Put it through the bag, which is our internal mail system. Then I ran upstairs to the 7th floor to catch Jerry Barbara, to ride over with him because I knew he was on

Admin that day. [Another dear friend, who also was there for me when my father died]. He had [responded] already. He had already left the building, [concerned because his daughter worked in the area]. So I went upstairs to the eighth floor to the Press Office. We have TVs up there, so I was watching it on TV. One tower came down and then the next. I sat there crying. I knew a lot of the guys were dead. Actually, my cousin had called me while I was still in my office, before I had gone upstairs. She knew more about what was going on because I wasn't listening to the radio. I was working. And she said, "You'd better get the heck out of there. We're under attack, blah-blah-blah." So, like I said, I was up in the Press Office then, watching on TV everything that was going on and I knew that I didn't want to go home. I was afraid to go home because I didn't know how I'd get to the train station because you heard that everything was shut down. So I worked through the night. I stayed in the Press Office all night. I called my mother to let her know I was okay. My cousin went in to feed my dog and take care of him. As I'm working through the night in the Press Office, we were starting to get lists and I'm going [through] them.... and I knew so many people. And you know, a lot of these people have become friends. They weren't just co-workers. I went home the next day and I guess I caught an eight o'clock train out of Penn Station. So I stayed home. I think that was Wednesday and Thursday, and I went back to work on Friday. It's just never been the same. It's not as much fun, everything is very different. The job is very, very young.... What people don't understand....

Q: The job is very?

JK: Young.

Q: Young?

JK: What people don't understand or recognize and what they're not told, not only did you lose these 340 firemen and their experience, but just prior to that, there was a whole wave of guys like the Vinnie Dunns, the Jimmy Murtaghs, the Eddie Butlers, who had retired under normal circumstances. They had their 40 years in, whatever, and they go out. So you lost that whole wave to normal retirement. Then right after 9/11, you had [yet another] wave of people leaving. They'd had enough mentally, emotionally, physically. A lot of them had to get out because of physical problems. I think it's, I don't know.... I forget what the [exact] percentages are, but the guys have fewer than five years on the job. The mentorship is not there, the experience is not there. Which is not to say that these guys aren't going to become good firemen, but now you don't have the guys who had the experience to teach them, to train them, to share their expertise. It's a scary situation. It really is and the Mayor doesn't tell the public that kind of thing. I'm not denigrating the younger kids. I don't mean it that way at all, but call a spade a spade. We lost more than just these 340 guys. We lost the other retirements. I mean there was a whole wave of guys [who] had their 40 years and then you lost all these people afterward. This [incident] is going to turn out to be worse than the Telephone Company fire, I think, as far as the cancers and all the respiratory ailments that are going to come up afterward.

You're just starting to see a little bit of it in the paper now; the cancers, the respiratory problems. So, morale is not good.

Q: How do think the Port Washington Fire Department was affected by 9/11?

JK: Well, I know that they sent some apparatus in and some guys. Actually, I was going to go in one day, but my boss told me not to. ... My boss told me not to go in. He didn't want me to. See, there was just so much confusion. I was down there within a week. I spent an afternoon down there. I had gone to see where some of the guys I knew had died. I was up in a bucket [on] a crane with a fire marshal who was taking a lot of photos that day. But, I don't know, it's like it was yesterday. ... It changed everything. Emotionally. I mean, all you think about is the towers. You're just assaulted with it everyday. I know a lot of guys quit on account of that. I know one aide to [Assistant Chief] Joe Callan. He lost his brother. [This Aide and Chief were some of the first on the scene. The Aide hurt his shoulder and it has never been the same.] He told me, "Janet, I just can't take it anymore." He says, "You know, every single day. I walk into your office." (I've got a poster of the guys. I've got pictures of the two guys I was particularly close to, Ray Downey and Jerry Barbara hanging in my office.) It's very difficult. It really is, because you know these people.

Q: How about your working up here in Port Washington? You're continuing as secretary?

JK: I'm Secretary of Protection.

Q: You find you're able to do that? Is that kind of a relief from being in the City and being so [distressed] all the time?

JK: No, 9/11 has no impact on [Protection Engine Company for me]. I go to my meetings. I try to go to some schools. I parade on Memorial Day, obviously. I do grave duty. I [go to] work nights, especially around Memorial Day. I'm participating in this.

Q: What do you think the value of this is? This project?

JK: Of this history?

Q: Oral history.

JK: I think it's a good idea. I had said to Frank [Pavlak], a Trustee in Protection, "Make sure you tell them that I want to edit this book." Well, because I did two for FDNY, so I've got the experience doing that and the books turned out really nicely for the [Department]. That's what I do for a living. I write and I edit and, if you've got somebody like that, why not take advantage of it and make [the project] as good as it can be? At least the grammar will be correct. Maybe it won't be factually correct, but it will be grammatically correct. Because if we're lying on here, you never know, right? [laughs]

Q: What are your responsibilities as Secretary?

JK: Basically, I take the minutes for the monthly meeting. Type them up, have them ready, posted. [For] new members, I send information over for insurance to the Town of North Hempstead. Correspondence, that kind of thing. [Read off prior month's minutes, correspondence, bills.]

Q: Do you get involved with any kind of any bureaucratic red tape?

JK: Here?

Q: Yes.

JK: As Secretary?

Q: Well, in any administrative position.

JK: Not Secretary of Protection. No. It's fairly simple and straightforward. It's correspondence, taking the minutes, that kind of thing.

Q: Have you been involved in any kind of controversial issues here in Port Washington?

JK: As a member of the Fire Department?

Q: Yes.

JK: Not that I recall. What did you have in mind? Could you be more specific what you're thinking of?

Q: Well, I want you to come up with what might occur to you. Well, like one kind of thing that would have been before you joined in the '70s, when some of the men wanted to wear long hair and that was an issue that was voted on as [inaudible] restrictions there.

JK: Actually, my cousin was a member of Protection. I think they told him he had to get rid of the beard because you couldn't wear your Scott Pak. You couldn't get the seal tight, so he quit and joined Atlantic's. But now he's retired and lives in Florida.

Q: So, in Atlantic's he was able to get the Scott Pak on?

JK: I guess, or he [became] an exterior firefighter. Perhaps that's what the deal was. I don't know. First of all, I've always worn my hair short. Maybe that's what you're thinking; that I had to get my hair cut. I used to do a lot of swimming. I'm just not a prissy little

girl. Wash and wear, that's me. So that was never an issue or anything like that. I can't think of anything. Watch, I'll think of something when I get home.

Q: You can always call me if you think of something, and we can add that.

JK: Basically, I have been treated well and I cannot complain. Like I said, my experiences have been positive.

Q: You received an award at some point. What was that?

JK: You said to bring pictures and I don't know if this is what you would be interested in but... I brought you a couple of copies of [*With New York Firefighters*]. I was brought in to rejuvenate this magazine. ... I think I've had an impact in the fire service if you listen to these guys. This [*With New York Firefighters*] is like a bible to the guys on the job. Like I said, I was brought in seven years ago to bring it back and what I might do is make some Xerox copies of some of the notes people sent, people I don't even know, how happy they are with it that it's back. This, that and the other thing. A lot of people have written me notes; what an impact I've made on the fire service, from what I did, at *Firehouse*, as well as at the Fire Department, City of New York, which is very gratifying. The woman who used to do this, who I knew from *Firehouse Magazine*, Gloria Sturzenacker... She used to work at Randall's Island and then they wanted her to come into Brooklyn to work and she did not want to do that. I don't know whether she was

kind of forced out or she kind of quit, but whatever.... The day she walked out, Larry Hatton, who is a member of Flower Hill, called Protection. "What's Janet's work number?" [he] called me up, "You call this person, you do this, that and the other thing." So, Larry Hatton, who was a Safety Battalion Chief in the City; Vinnie Dunn, who you heard me mention, who's the most famous fireman in the world because of his knowledge and as the most published individual, he's written three books, numerous magazine articles; and Jack Lerch, who's the biggest buff in the world. The three of them worked behind the scenes to get me in there. It took two and a half years, but I finally got hired. My point of bringing this all up is, if you spoke to Larry, he absolutely loves this magazine. I feel honored that somebody like Larry and Vinnie thought so highly of me, that they wanted to entrust [it to me]. This has been in publication for more than 60 years. And they so wanted me to be in charge of this and they entrusted it to me. I find that very flattering. But to hear it from those three gentlemen... I love them. They have a personal interest in seeing me do well. But when you have Chiefs and Captains and firemen calling and they don't know you from Adam and they're saying nice things to you: "You know, you brought this back, thank you very much." It means even more because they have no axes to grind. You mean nothing to them. Larry's reputation, Vinnie's reputation is on the line for having recommended me. To these other guys, I mean nothing, so it means even more to hear that. I get a lot of that. That's what really keeps you going, because morale is horrible down there. That's the only thing that is sustaining.

Q: So the exact award that you got, what is that?

JK: Can we read it on here? I think I wrote it on the edit, didn't I? I even brought a copy of it. Fire Commissioners Award for Meritorious Service. That's what it was.

Q: Is there a comparable magazine for volunteer firefighters?

JK: No. There's a newspaper, *Fire News*, but I think that's mostly photos from around the Island of fires, new apparatus, that kind of thing.

Q: Do you think there would be value in starting one, a comparable magazine?

JK: You know, again, this is something that's very expensive. The fire service is a limited group and it's shrinking all the time.

Q: You mean the volunteer firemen?

JK: So are the paid guys. They shut down those houses, right? Because it's always a numbers crunch. There are more volunteers than paid men, but there are several paid magazines in the general population; *Firehouse Magazine*, *Fire Engineering*, *Fire Chief*. But again, it's a limited circulation you're talking about. Maybe, 100,000, something like that, who subscribe. *Fire Engineering* is probably the most technical of all. *Firehouse*

since I left it, since they canned me, let's put it that way, it's just like a mish-mosh. You open it up and you can't tell the ads from the articles anymore. It doesn't seem to have a defining line. This *With New York Firefighters* is by our guys, for our guys. [No advertising.] A lot of people, other Fire Departments, buy this. I get calls [that] they want to use it for a training tool in their Fire Departments.

Q: What about the humor that goes on in the firehouses in the Fire Department, again, back here in Port Washington? Can you remember any pranks or any jokes that would liven up either the meetings or the relationships between the firefighters?

JK: Maybe because I [was] the only girl, I wasn't privy and I didn't hang around, but I do remember our current Chief, Chris -- Chubby Bollerman apparently put some ketchup packets underneath the toilet seat one time, and one of the guys from our company sat on it. Of course they exploded. [The guy wasn't] too happy about that, but it was kind of funny.

Q: Did you have a nickname in the Department?

JK: No, just Doggie's kid, but that was not a nickname.

Q: What would you consider your best day as a firefighter?

JK: My best day? In what regard?

Q: Maybe the [inaudible]....

JK: Probably the day I got voted in. That night was probably my happiest. It was a big deal to me. It was something I wanted to do all my life, ever since I'd been exposed to the firehouse by my father.

Q: Can you tell me a little bit more about that night? You had already been voted down once. And how long after that?

JK: A month.

Q: And so?

JK: I continued to go to the work nights. It was four work nights in between and then I got voted on the next month.

Q: First of all, when you were going to the work nights, would you look around and say, "I wonder who black-balled me?"

JK: No. Because I pretty much knew. You could tell who was comfortable talking to you and who was not comfortable talking to you. You can kind of read some people, backstabbers or whatever, but that did not bother me in that regard. I was hurt, but I knew that it wasn't against me as a person, it was me as a female. That's how I took it. That's how I took it.

Q: And so that night, when you were voted in, was that a regular work night?

JK: There's a work night before the meeting all the time. ... I guess I went to the work night and then I went home. Then Jack called me around 9:30, 10 o'clock ... "Come on up" and I got sworn in that night. The funny thing was, the officers gave me all my equipment and everything. So I hooked up the Plectron that night in my bedroom and, apparently, there was a general alarm that night and I never heard it. I guess I really zonked out, but whatever...

Q: What's the swearing-in ceremony like?

JK: You raise your right hand, [state that] you will obey the rules of Protection Engine Company, the Fire Department, the State of New York. That sort of thing.

Q: What about the social aspects of being in the Fire Department? You talked about the picnics you used to go to with your father. ...[He was a member until his dying day – 61 years.]

JK: My father was always a member. Just because you die, he's still a member. He was still a member when he died.

Q: So you would go to them. Do you still go to the picnics?

JK: It's funny. Now that I can go to anything and everything, I don't. I just don't have the time. To tell you the truth, I'm really a loner, which may seem kind of odd, joining [an organization like this]. I was in sorority and all that stuff as a kid, but I was always more comfortable with one or two close girlfriends and that was it. I've always been kind of a loner, really. I go to my own kind of drum. ...Maybe this will give you a good insight into my personality. In college, there was a psych class and I had missed this particular class. So, my first day back, the instructor was drawing circles on the blackboard and he's going around the classroom "What do you see up there?" Everybody's saying "square." So they're trying to peer-pressure me. I had no way of knowing this was going to happen, right? So he calls on me. "What do you see up there?" "Circles." He goes to a few more people... "Squares." He comes back to me. So now I'm getting ticked off. So I said, "Look, I don't know what these people are looking at." I said, "I see circles. I don't care what you say." So he just threw his [hands up]. "Well this one isn't gonna

work” and then I knew they were trying to “dupe” me. I’m known for speaking my mind and pretty much I do what I want to do.

Q: So you didn’t join then for the social aspects?

JK: No.

Q: What made you decide to join?

JK: My father had fun. [The action.] It’s as simple as that. He enjoyed it. I liked his friends and stuff. I just always liked fire trucks. I’m strange, what can I tell you?

Q: Did you make friends within the Department, though?

JK: I’d like to think I did. I think I’m respected.

Q: But are there people that you see socially outside of Fire Department business?

JK: More so at FDNY than here. Like I said, half the guys are old enough to be my father; half are young enough to be my sons. I used to go on the casino [trips with the Exempts]. ... A bus ride over [to Atlantic City or Mohegan Sun.] But again, I’m really not a social animal. I don’t drink, I’m really a loner. [I bowled for years with the Eighth Battalion

League with PWFD members.] I don't know what to tell you, Sally. I'm my own best friend. Got my dog. My time constraints are different; my mother, my dog, the job.

Q: What would you say you're proudest of?

JK: In regard to?

Q: In regard to your Fire Department, your volunteer activities, throughout your firefighting career?

JK: I guess I was proudest that I was the first woman. I think that's an accomplishment. I think that I held my own. I don't think I've hurt the Company or the Department in any way. In fact, I've brought a lot of publicity to the Department when I was working at *Firehouse Magazine*. I used to be able to throw some things in there, plus the article which, let me write that down so I can get that article for you.

Very important, as a result of positions I've held at *Firehouse Magazine* and FDNY, I've been able to enhance training at PWFD. I've had some of the very best speakers, who are experts in their field, come to PWFD and address members of this department. Some of these people include Deputy Chief Vincent Dunn and Battalion Chiefs John Salka and Frank Montagna. They speak all over the country at various seminars, but they come here, as a personal favor to me.

Q: I'd be interested in seeing any articles that mention Port Washington. I think they'd be important to have in the archives.

JK: I think I would probably take it further than just PWFD or Protection. Like I said, I was the first woman. I'm very proud of that. I think I've served PECO [Protection Engine Company] and the Department well. If I had gotten in when I was younger, I feel like I could have done more, but you've got to take what you can. But I think it propelled me to something else within the fire service... What I've been able to do at FDNY. I'm only telling you what Chiefs and [others] say to me, that they really appreciate what I've done there for them, whether it's the annual reports, the Medal Day books, [but] especially WNYF. They find my services to have been very, very valuable. Unfortunately, the guys who appreciate me down there and love me are not the ones who are in any position to do anything for me, but that's the way it goes.

Q: Everybody who has mentioned your name here in Port Washington has done so with a great deal of respect and admiration.

JK: Well, thank you. Why would my name even come up?

Q: Well, in talking about this project and who we should interview.

JK: ...Chubby once said to me, “You’re very, very respected within this Department.” I don’t even know what prompted him to say that. I was sitting on the bumper of one of our engines. I guess we were waiting for a truck to come back or something and I guess both he and I missed the apparatus. We were just sitting there talking, which I appreciated. Again, he’s one young enough to be my son. To me, you’re talking about the social aspect. I feel this way at work, too. I don’t care whether you like me, but I want to earn the respect for what I do and what I bring to the job. That is more important to me. Look, we all have our quirks, we all have our idiosyncrasies. You may not like my personality, I may not like yours, but I want respect for the job that I do and what I bring to the table.

Q: From what I hear, you have that. Were you ever injured?

JK: No, no. One thing, though, I broke my ankle. It’s kind of a funny story. I got Winnie. She was born January 13, 1990. ... I had always wanted a dog to jog with. The doctor said, “Wait ...until she’s a year old and her bones are fully formed.” So, January 13, 1991, to the day, I’m walking down Jackson Street to pick up the Sunday paper and I slip on a patch of ice. I knew as soon as I went down. It just hurt for that instant, but then I guess because I’m sitting on the ice, it didn’t [hurt]. I broke my ankle. Number 1, I can’t jog. Number 2, I was out of service for three or four months until it healed. The [guys] were kidding me, “Too bad you weren’t responding to a fire.” The only thing that it affected... I remember when I was back in service and I [responded to] some kind of

working fire. ...I had the boots on. The stupid ankle swelled up. I thought I was going to have to cut the boot off. ... It kept swelling right through the summer, but I never got hurt on the job.

Q: And so, since you had hurt yourself off the job, there was never a question of compensation even though the boots aggravated it?

JK: No, because I didn't have to go back to the doctor or anything after that. But it was just kind of ironic I thought, because it would delay Winnie's jogging experience too.

Q: Do you still jog?

JK: No, no. I hurt my heel and Dr. Kelly down at FDNY said, "Don't jog."

Q: Did you take part in any of the Fire Department drills or competitions, the racing teams?

JK: No, I was too old to be jumping off a truck. Actually, my father used to be on the racing team. His career ended quickly, too. He took a flyer off and he broke his ankle, so that ended his racing career. But Jack was very involved in it. He was a driver. If I had been young enough, I would like to have played softball because I was a good pitcher. I did get to play in one game with them. ...We were up in Vermont at a parade. [There was]

some kind of a tournament. They let me pitch because [they were better fielders than I. I bowled for many, many years with the Department.

Q: Oh you did. Is there a league?

JK: Yeah. There still is, but I dropped out, I guess around 9/11, because I was working so many nights [and there were frequently work conflicts on bowling nights.] I bowled in the league a good ten years with the Department.

Q: Okay. Well, I think we will have to get together again. I'm sure that there's a lot more that you can tell us.

JK: You said to bring pictures. I'd like some kind of portrait each of my father and my uncle.

Q: And yourself?

JK: Yeah.

Q: I'm not sure how it's going to be.

JK: I know you mentioned the portraits we have at the firehouse. If we could take those three portraits, that would be fine. This is my favorite shot of [Dad] in uniform really. That is

the night he was going to the wake for [one of his closest] friends, who was a fireman, Ray Driscoll. That was my very first dog. This is also a nice shot I brought up. This is my brother. This is how far it goes back. That was before Protection was renovated.

Q: Did your brother become a firefighter too?

JK: No. Those are the apparatus that my old man drove.

Q: Why didn't he? Do you know?

JK: Because my mother asked him not to. But he did everything else my father did. He became an operating engineer in heavy construction, cranes, [forklifts], cherry pickers.

Q: OK, thank you. It's wonderful.