

## Don Randel Interview Clip Transcript

Don Randel: The insurance agency itself is somewhat interesting story, because it was opened by an aunt and uncle of his in the construction days of the Canal. Henry Seymour and his wife, Sally Seymour, went down there during the construction days at the invitation of the Canal Company to write workman's compensation insurance for Canal Company employees. And they set up a 3-person shop for the purpose. The uncle died, and Aunt Sally continued it for a number of years, living in the Canal Zone in the Tivoli Hotel, which was a grand old place. And there came a moment, it must have been in [19]44 [19]45, that she decided she wanted to retire and return to the United States. And so, she told my father that if he wanted to take over this little business, he could have it, otherwise, she was just going to close it and leave. So, he agreed to take this two-person business and moved it into the city of Panama. She had formally run it out of the Canal Zone itself. He moved it into Panama City. Over time it grew to be about, I don't know eight or ten people, and that's what he did for 30 years.

Betsy Bemis: Wow. That's extraordinary. So, do you know where her office was? Where the business was in the Canal Zone before she—

Don Randel: No, I don't. I don't. I remember visiting her at the Tivoli Hotel which was, I mean, she was a very well-known figure there, and had a big social life with Canal people and military people, and so forth. My parents were not interested in that kind of social life, so my father had to reassure himself that he was not going to have to cultivate all of her former friends. She lived in the Tivoli with her cocker spaniel named Chica, and Chica would come down with her to the dining room where she would have a cocktail of some kind, I guess scotch on the rocks is what it must have been, and she would let Chica lick the ice cubes after she had finished.

Betsy Bemis: How fabulous, I love this story.