

Oral History Interview

with

DR. ALBERT JOSSELSON

May 21, 2008  
Newport Beach, Cal.

By Michael R. Adamson

Adamson: Here we are. It's May 21<sup>st</sup>, and we're at the home of Dr. Albert Josselson, and we'll begin.

Josselson: All right, sir.

Adamson: So I'm told that you knew Charlie Pankow when he was an ensign in the Navy.

Josselson: Yes, sir. He struck a handsome figure at that time, too.

Adamson: This was during World War II or thereabouts?

Josselson: Yes, sir, World War II.

Adamson: I think in an earlier conversation you mentioned that this was in Chicago or thereabouts.

Josselson: This was in the city of Evanston, a suburb of Chicago, and it was specifically at the Evanston Hospital where the two girls were in nursing school.

Adamson: So your wife and Charlie Pankow's wife were classmates in nursing school.

Josselson: Yes. Now, parenthetically, in those days they kept pretty strict control over nurses and their activities, including a strict prohibition of marriage. So when Charlie and Doris eloped, that automatically stimulated her being expelled from the nursing school. But the expelling period apparently was only for a year because Doris returned the next year after their marriage, and Charlie went off to the wars, and she finished her nursing training but was a year behind my wife, or behind my girlfriend, who didn't miss any time. I was too chicken to marry her, and she was too wise to marry someone with an income of thirty dollars a month. So, anyhow, they parted their ways then because when Doris left for the marriage and the elopement that automatically removed her from the training of the nursing training.

Adamson: When did you marry your wife?

Josselson: I married my wife, which is parenthetically another roundabout story, and I don't know that if this has any bearing, really, on what you want to know, but I can tell you briefly—

Adamson: Please do.

Josselson: —that I also went away to the wars then, which were just about at the end. I finished my residency training in 1946, just about two or three months, I guess, after the armistice was signed, or the peace accord was signed, and I was shipped off to Germany where I was placed in charge of the 57<sup>th</sup> field hospital, the chief of medicine there.

Well, I couldn't, according to the army's rules, allow or bring a friend or even a fiancée over, it would be only a family member. So to make a long story short, we arranged to be married by proxy. Incidentally, the doctor that I replaced as the chief of medicine in that hospital went back to—I think it was Nevada.<sup>1</sup> I'm not sure of the state. My girlfriend and her mother traveled there, and he at that time arranged for a justice of the peace to do a proxy marriage between her and me, after which I was able to have her come over and join me because the war was over and I was working in a hospital [in Germany] that was not involved in actual battles.

She joined me there where we stayed in Germany for two years. Then we returned here where—and then I came back, which is of no concern to you, and finished my training, and then moved out here to California because Doris and Charlie had previously settled here in California in the city of—well, I don't remember whether it was Pasadena or Arcadia, one of those towns.<sup>2</sup> So the first people we came to see when we got here, which was about two or three years after their elopement, were Doris and Charlie, and we resumed our friendship when we settled here. And we lived at the beginning in Alhambra, which was just a few miles from where they lived [in Altadena]. So we'd see each other socially then.

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<sup>1</sup> Josselson clarifies that it was Illinois.

<sup>2</sup> Josselson clarifies that it was Altadena.

Adamson: How did Charlie and Doris decide to come to Southern California?

Josselson: I never asked them and they never told me, but they ended up out here. I think Doris's family was somewhere out here in the West. I'm not sure where they were. I know during that years of taking care of Charlie as one of my patients, because I set up my practice out here, his parents became patients of mine, too, and so they all lived in the immediate vicinity. So we simply resumed here where our relationship had been terminated when they got married and she left the nursing school. That's just as an aside and doesn't have much to do with your interest in Charlie, but thought it might be of some interest to you.

Adamson: That's great. So you came out to visit Charlie and Doris and decided to stay, or you actually came out with the intention of staying?

Josselson: We came out with the intention of staying. When we had settled in a place, then we went over to visit them and told them, no, we hadn't come to live with them! We'd found a place to live and I'd found a place to open a practice.

Adamson: So L.A. right after the war was a booming place, just as it had been twenty years earlier?

Josselson: Yes. It was still smaller than it is today, but it was still booming, yes, it was. Charlie, in the meantime, had found a job with Peter Kiewit & Sons, the company that they initially worked for or that he initially worked for in the capacity of a, I guess, building engineer, for lack of a better term that I'm sure they call them, well, a contractor—I don't know what the proper name is.

Adamson: Was Charlie someone who talked about business and his dreams and hopes in business at that time?

Josselson: Well, he did a good bit when we would get together. I remember on one occasion he and I had lunch in the Brown Derby restaurant. How I remember that, I don't know because that was about sixty years ago, I guess. He told me about his work. He and a group of his fellow workers—and I think he was in charge of a crew—would set up their arrangement to analyze and then plan a building program, and they, Peter Kiewit, did primarily, I think, roads and bridges initially.

But he was doing, I think, either business or some domestic [commercial] structures, and they would get all of the details of where and how and when they would put these projects together. Then it would come to a crescendo at the end, and he and his three or four fellow workers would sit down with their various equipment and type out, write out, all the things that needed to be done and then place an estimate on those costs for the building materials and the time and the location and so on. Then they would submit that program and various estimates to the project owner, who had hired Peter Kiewit and for whom they were doing this sort of work.

It was impressive and interesting, because the crescendo of the terminal part of the work generally would occur in Charlie and his partners', his fellow workers', hotel rooms when they would finish finally in sort of a crisis event in the middle of the night. They'd usually worked most or all of the night putting these figures together, and that would be their offer, their estimate, to the customer of Peter Kiewit, and that would be given to them. And because Charlie was a good manager in this little group and because his men knew their business well, many if not all, of their projects came to fruition. Peter Kiewit would get the job, and then they'd proceed with the building process.

But that was hard work, and I listened to Charlie explaining to me the hours and the effort that they put in, and they were working for—he had been doing this for, I guess, a year or two before we even arrived. He would tell me about his work, and I'd sit and listen. After I heard this story a few times we were having lunch, I said, "Well, Charlie, you're doing a good job for Peter Kiewit."

[Discussion held: Dr. Josselson's wife entered the room.]

Josselson: This is Bonnie, the girl who's Doris's friend.

Incidentally, we see Doris from time to time now after Charlie's death, but she's sort of sad because she's really very lonely in spite of the fact they had, I think, three sons and a daughter and a number of grandchildren. But she is a lonely person, and she has developed early definite stages of Alzheimer's, and so we go up and visit her maybe once every month or so and take her out to dinner and then take advantage of her hospitality and spend the night with her.

Have you been in their home?

Adamson: No, I haven't.

Josselson: It's a palace, a beautiful home, up in—well, my Alzheimer's is hitting me now. I can't tell you the name of the little town immediately north.

Adamson: Altadena.

Josselson: Altadena, yes. So their home is there, and it's a lovely home.

So we'll have dinner with her [Doris] and we'll rehash old times, but it's getting harder and harder because she's been prohibited from driving now and she is not as conversant as she was, but is still a dear friend and a close friend of Bonnie's. So we'll call her in-between times just to be reassured she's getting along all right. But with her daughter and her three sons and all the grandchildren, she has, I think, a very healthful group of people who are looking in on her, too.

So, to get back to where we were, when Charlie described these long hours and the crisis sort of crescendo termination of their preparations for providing an offer or an estimate for these structures, and it was a lot of work obviously even to someone as poorly indoctrinated in their work as I, I said, "Charlie, you're making a lot of money for Peter Kiewit. I think you ought to consider, since you're doing all the work—Peter Kiewit doesn't tell you what to do or how to do it—you make those decisions, that you

should”—this was in June of that year—“That you should pick yourself some key people and continue what you’re doing, but do it as Charlie Pankow Company.”

About three months later, he called me and said, “I’ve opened my company.”

Adamson: Is that right?

Josselson: “We’re starting that,” and that’s how he started it, just really on a shoestring at that time. But he [Charlie] was wise enough to surround himself with some effective and efficient bright co-workers, and they put together a great company, and it grew from nothing to one of the most prominent and successful commercial building companies. He didn’t do any domestic or housing building, as I recall, but built lots of high-rise buildings up and down the West Coast of the United States, all of which I’m sure you’ve received [heard] from other people and [so] you know what I’m telling you. Except I was there when it was starting, and I think most of the people you talked to came along during the course of Charlie’s growth. So I watched him start out from the beginning. He did do the job and he did it well, and his success speaks for itself.

Adamson: So he was busy from day one?

Josselson: Absolutely. Did a good job, and from time to time we’d get together. I think most of the time when we got together after that, if it weren’t at his house, which was a modest house then, and then our house, which was really an apartment at that beginning, we’d still meet together in the parking lot of one of the chain grocery stores, and we’d sit



there and talk. Because I played golf, I had a good source for—ready source for—nice new jokes. So I would tell jokes and Charlie would tell jokes, and we'd either do that before or after we went to dinner and a movie or a play or something like that.

I can remember Charlie's favorite joke, which was, I think, one of two that he told me and that may be of some interest to you. Charlie said, "Joss, did you hear the one about the two [Polish guys] who decided that they'd make their own spaceship, and instead of going out into the space where we're sending our spaceships, they'd go and investigate the sun?"

I said, "Charlie, those guys could burn to a crisp if they did something like that."

He says, "Oh, no, they always decided to go at night." [laughs] That was his favorite joke. I'll stop there and give you a chance to ask me something.

Adamson: You obviously saw in him a drive to do his own work. Were there other qualities you saw in Charlie that prompted you to suggest that he set out on his own?

Josselson: Because he was working so hard, and because he was very successful in his efforts and because the lion's share of the results of those efforts obviously went to his employers, Peter Kiewit & Sons. So he started on his own and he grew slowly, but steadily, and very successfully.

I'm sure you know now he has structures beginning up in Seattle and going all the way to San Diego.

Adamson: Yes, and Hawaii.

Josselson: And Hawaii. From time to time, we've spent—my son has spent primarily some time in one of his nice structures, generally, I think, a condo or an apartment building, as his guest even though they [the Pankows] weren't there, and we just enjoyed a vacation on his underwriting it, but it was no problem to him because the structure was already there.

Adamson: Just to back up in time, you said when Charlie eloped, he was still in the navy.

Josselson: Yes, he was.

Adamson: Did he stay in the navy after the war? Did he get out?

Josselson: No, after the war was over, he came home and, of course, he was home and working for Peter Kiewit & Sons. I think from the time that he was released from the Navy when the war terminated [he may have had prior jobs], but we weren't out here then because we were [still] in Germany. So I really don't know at what time he left the Navy and became a civilian or when he started working for Peter Kiewit.

Adamson: So he worked quite a while before he—his company started in 1963, so he must have worked quite a while for—

Josselson: Well, see, if his company started in '63—

Adamson: That's what I'm told.

Josselson: I wouldn't know that because when we got here, he still had not, his company had not, come into existence because we got here in '52, which was eleven years then before his company began. So I guess he'd worked for at least a decade before he made that change.<sup>3</sup>

Adamson: Okay. I just wanted to make sure I knew the timing of this.

Josselson: Right.

Adamson: You mentioned golf. Did Charlie play golf with you?

Josselson: No.

Adamson: What were his—I know he traveled a lot and had—

Josselson: He didn't have any hobbies that I know of. The only hobby was work or looking at other structures or defining ways and means he could improve the quality or the innovations in his own work. He did have a number of innovations, including high-rise structures that had certain types of corners or connections or whatever they're called

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<sup>3</sup> Josselson adds that Charlie Pankow was already employed at Kiewit when he and his wife arrived in California.

in building so that they were not earthquake proof, but they were certainly earthquake resistant. He never patented anything like that, but simply invited other builders, other construction people, to see what they were doing and to see how much safer they rendered these buildings.

He sent me some copies of the work in the publications that he had described it in, but I'm too stupid to understand that, so I just told him I thought it was great as long as he was doing it and as long as it was successful.<sup>4</sup>

Adamson: That's what friends are for.

Josselson: Of course. Of course, along the way he developed an assortment of physical problems, which I took care of [managed] as his doctor as well, so we had that sort of close relationship.

Adamson: Are these conditions that ever forced him to take a break from his work?

Josselson: No, except some minor things that you and I might have.<sup>5</sup> But he had no major problems until he developed an aortic valve disease called atherosclerosis or simply sclerosis of the aortic valve with an aortic stenosis, which is in and of itself [usually] not a problem [initially] for the patient who has it, but it [may be] dangerous because, for reasons we still don't understand, that affliction in the heart is the basis for occasional cardiac attacks, heart attacks, which as often as not are lethal.

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<sup>4</sup> Josselson adds: "They were impressive and I was pleased to congratulate him."

<sup>5</sup> Josselson adds: "He also had renal damage from childhood."

Of course, I'm not a cardiologist. I was an internal medicine man, with a specialty in arthritis. So I sent him first to UCLA and then because they did not give him the service that he thought he required, and which I told him he should demand, he ended up with some very good doctors in a cardiology group at the university, California University in San Francisco (UCSF), and where he made some friends and where he found some good cardiologists and where the surgery was done. The surgery was corrected [successful], and he was doing fine until just a few days or maybe it was a week or two, I can't remember now, it was a several years ago, he developed some sort of cardiac disorder, I presume, an arrhythmia, which is a rhythm disturbance, and Doris found him dead in bed the next morning, which was a shock, of course, to all of us, because these men do great work. I know their work from before, and I told him I felt perfectly satisfied with his proceeding with his work up there, particularly since the cardiac group at UCLA gave him short shrift, which upset us both.

That jumped a long period of time, because I went from his work and his beginning his company to his final lethal event, which was just how long ago now, about three years ago?

Adamson: Four.

Josselson: Four years, five years maybe?

Adamson: 2004.

Josselson: Four or five years, yeah.

Adamson: He liked collecting art.

Josselson: Oh, yes. He had his house now, the one he had in—well, he had two houses in San Francisco, and one of them was almost like a museum—had beautiful artwork that even I in my ignorance could recognize some of it, had it beautifully mounted in his house, and had a number of Russian icons. And that collection of icons has been on display and traveled through a number of the museums in the United States. I can't tell you which ones, because I wasn't involved in any of that, other than his telling me about it, but he was very proud of that.

Both houses in San Francisco were sold after his demise, so how the disposition of that artwork occurred, I don't know, but I don't think the family has it now, though they do have a lot of nice artwork in the home in which Doris lives now and in which they both lived here, except he didn't live in it very much. He was gone just about five days a week, week in and week out over the years, attending to his business activities in any number of the cities up and down the West Coast.

Adamson: You've then traveled to San Francisco to see his houses when he had them?

Josselson: I?

Adamson: Yes, you and your wife?

Josselson: We traveled to see them because we were his guests at those houses from time to time, so we saw them, slept in them, enjoyed them, and enjoyed Doris's and Charlie's generosity in having us there and taking us to dinner and enjoying some times that were somewhat of a contrast to the ones at the beginning of our relationship, because he was the friend out here that I'd had for the longest time, starting in the mid-forties, and we didn't get out here until in 1952, but then we remained friends until his death. So we had known him since the time that he and Doris got married, and they got married a year before we did, and we've been married now for sixty-one years, so it was a sixty-plus-year relationship.

Adamson: Yes. I've been told that Charlie traveled a lot for business and collecting art. Was there any occasion where the four of you took vacation for pleasure together?

Josselson: No, we never did that because we couldn't afford the kind of vacations he took. We traveled often tourist class or at best business class, and he always traveled first, class and we would have been a burden on him. So we traveled locally with him, but not on any great distances.

Now, we did meet them once in Russia in St. Petersburg where Doris wanted to go for some event that was occurring there. He [Charlie] didn't want to go. So Doris called me and said, "Joss, if you'll go on a trip there, I'll finance it."

I said, "Doris, you don't have to do that. We can go to St. Petersburg."

“And if you’ll do that and meet us there, and if I tell him that you and Bonnie will be there, he’ll come.” We did, and he did.

However, Charlie didn’t get the kind of service from the places and the events that occurred in St. Petersburg, so they didn’t stay. We stayed for whatever it was we were doing there. He had been there several times, and I can’t remember now whether it was to attend a school for visitors and travelers and people who were interested in art at the big museums that were there or what it was. It doesn’t matter. But he decided that he wasn’t getting the service that he required, and so they stayed for just a day or two and then they left and went on with the rest of their trip.

Adamson: Tell me more about Doris. What was she like?

Josselson: Well, Doris was Bonnie’s dearest friend and was her oldest friend here, and I know her to be a delightful person, a thoughtful and gracious lady, who supervised, if she didn’t reign supreme, at the wonderful Christmas parties that occurred at the house here annually. But these parties were primarily devoted to guests who happened to be business associates of Charlie. As a result, a lot of these people were strangers to her, but she managed the events extremely competently and made everyone happy and did a great job as a hostess for Christmas parties or other comparable events that might have involved, oh, anywhere from fifty to a hundred and fifty couples.

One of the two houses—and they were side by side in San Francisco—had a basement ballroom and a platform at one end of it for an orchestra that could easily take care of, I don’t know, a large number of guests. But the guests were almost always



Charlie's business acquaintances or business friends, as a result of which Doris's personal friends were in a small minority.

But Doris made her own place in the community quite well. She, I think, was a member of and then chairwoman of the—well, I guess I don't know what you'd call it, but the committee that would consisted of townspeople that served in a rather important capacity for the school here, Cal Tech, which is in Pasadena. She, with a very effective capability, ran that for several years and from time to time, even since Charlie's passing, she's taken me as a guest to have dinners at the Atheneum there [when wife Bonnie may be away on one of her trips], and we always get a prized table because she's recognized as a wonderful person. She'd take me as guest because my wife has a travel book and does a lot of traveling [to distant lands].

You may see stuff that she's got all over this place here. [points] She just got back from Russia two weeks ago, and she's looking through some of her travel journals now to see where she will go next, and she's planning some trips that I'm going to be stuck with probably later in the fall.

Adamson: That's great. Well, just for the record, I think you said before we started the recorder that when Doris and Charlie eloped, she had a year left of nursing school, and I think you said she went back and finished?

Josselson: Yes. She, I think, missed that year and then returned. I don't know the rules run, but apparently she was accepted to complete her training and she graduated with full recognition and full training as a practicing [graduate] nurse. I don't think she did any

nursing after that because I think she was quickly pretty busily involved in raising her children.

I remember on one of the occasions when we visited them in the home they lived in before they lived in the present one.<sup>6</sup> They had three sons. The oldest son was Chip, who was at that time, I think, in his teens, and the daughter at that time was about six months old. We had gone up to see the new baby, and when we came in, we found Chip lying asleep on a couch in the basement or in the family room of this home, and the daughter—her name has escaped me for a moment, I'll think of it in a minute—she was about that big [demonstrates], a few months old, and she was lying on Chip's chest and abdomen, asleep on his abdomen, and the two of them were asleep in this chaise lounge thing. Now I can remember that was the first time I saw her.

Adamson: That's neat.

Josselson: Betsy Rue was her name.

Adamson: Okay.

Josselson: So Doris was pretty busy raising a family because Betsy Rue was, as I say, less than a year old, and I think Chip was in his mid teens at that time.

Adamson: The other two were in between?

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<sup>6</sup> Josselson adds that this visit occurred when both Charlie and Doris were away.

Josselson: And the other two were in between.

Adamson: Did they take family vacations?

Josselson: Oh, yes. We weren't participants in those, so I can't tell you the frequency or their destinations.

Adamson: I'm supposed to interview one of the sons. I'll ask him about that. You arrived in Pasadena area in what year was that?

Josselson: 1952.

Adamson: 1952.

Josselson: I think they were out here after the war, which would have been probably in '46, thereabouts, because he had worked for Peter Kiewit for several years when we came out.

I'm sorry. I should apologize for all this rambling.

Adamson: Oh, no, I'll put it all together when I get it all on paper.

You mentioned, and I know from doing my own research, that Charlie built, his company built, mostly commercial buildings.

Josselson: Yes.

Adamson: Is there any insight as to how he got into those types of buildings rather than building people's houses?

Josselson: No. I, standing on the outside looking in, just know he was doing a great job, but how these things came about, I was not privy to.

Adamson: Did you ever take a walk around Pasadena looking at all the old homes—

Josselson: Well, Pasadena was one of the places he built. He had some high-rise apartment buildings out on the west side of town [Los Angeles] on—I forget which of the main streets they're on, but he built several there. When he completed one out there, he said he wanted us to come out and have a look at it. I think it was about a fifteen- or eighteen-story building. I remember we were in the elevator inspecting it, and the elevator got stuck on one of the floors. I can remember that about it.

Adamson: What was his reaction to it?

Josselson: It wasn't occupied, it was just showing us the thing then since it had been just completed immediately before that. But we had no trouble getting out of it.

Adamson: Did it embarrass him at all that it—

Josselson: I don't think he was even with us at the time.

Adamson: Oh, I see. Okay.

Josselson: He just said, "You go out and see it. They'll take good care of you. I'll tell them you're coming." So Bonnie and I went out and looked at it.

As he got bigger and bigger as he grew, not only in the dimensions of the building but, of course, the places, the cities and the numbers of buildings, he took great pride in telling me, "In all the buildings that I've constructed, I've never once had an owner begin or even think of a lawsuit against me for any dissatisfaction he might have had." He took great pride in the fact that he gave full value to each and every one of his clients, and he was proud of that.

Adamson: Dean Stephan yesterday also told me that they took great pride in building distinctive buildings.

Josselson: Unique ones.

Adamson: Unique ones—

Josselson: Yes.

Adamson: —that made a mark on the community. Was that something that you got?

Josselson: I got that impression, too, yes. As a matter of fact, a neighbor I have here across the street when we got to know each other after we'd moved here about three or four years ago and I told him something of where I've been and what I've done. I happened to mention Charlie Pankow, he says, "Oh, when I was a young kid, I worked for his company. I knew Mr. Pankow," which was, I think, nothing unusual because there had been a lot of people that worked for him. When they built some of these large buildings, they would get unions of workers, bricklayers or carpenters or whatever are involved, so that they might have had hundreds of people working for them at any given time in any of these structures.

Adamson: I was also told that he had a policy of not hiring his—bringing his children into the company.

Josselson: Absolutely. When I asked him about that, he said he simply didn't want—and the word escapes me—when a son of an owner is employed in the building it is a deterrent to getting the best man because they feel that the climb of the ladder upward would be obstructed by the family member taking first position on that ladder, and there's a word for that, but it escapes me now.

Adamson: Nepotism?

Josselson: Exactly. I was going to promise you I'd call you tonight about midnight when the word occurs to me and let you know what it was. Nepotism is the word.

Just a bit of advice to you in regard to that, Mike, stay young, don't get old.

Adamson: That's great advice. I'm trying my hardest.

Josselson: All right.

Adamson: Let me stop here, flip the tape because we're at forty-five minutes, and we can take a short break if you want to.

Josselson: Okay.

[Begin Track two]

Adamson: So we were saying that Charlie's kids didn't work in the company.

Josselson: Did not because of nepotism. He has a son who's in exactly the same kind of work that he did, that the Pankow Company did. I don't know the name of his company, but it's a comparable one. This is Steve.

Then Chip, the oldest one, has been in an assortment of jobs. I think he played semipro ball when he was a teenager, a youngster, and I'm not sure what else he did other than I think he had a section of the city or the county, managing one of the—not patent

medicines, but I forget what the name of it. I'll think of it in a minute, where he sold medication for general use of citizenry, and I think he was very successful at that.

Then the other one, Rick, worked for a bank and was, I think, an important person in the bank. I think Comerica or something like that was the name of it. But he relinquished that job when he began the supervision of the administration of the Pankow Trust and, I think, Pankow Foundation, I believe.

Then Betsy Rue was set up in a horse ranch, and I think she boarded at one time, or maybe still does, several hundred horses. I remember looking at some of the stables and structures that were used in that program. They look about as nice as some motels that I've spent my time in in years past.

They all, I think, are busily involved now with things that they received as part of the estate in Charlie's death.

Adamson: Was Charlie glad that one of his kids went into the building business?

Josselson: I think he was very pleased with that, but I think Steve understood that it would work to everyone's detriment because of the nepotism that we discussed, if he did not work at the company, it would be better off.

I think something that I forgot to tell you that Charlie developed renal failure [years ago] because I think his damage to his heart occurred as a result of scarlet fever in his teen years. That also damaged his kidneys and he developed a bad state of renal failure, for which he had a kidney transplant. The donor of that kidney was his son Steve, and that worked out well. That was sometime before his death, years before. Steve's



doing fine with one kidney, because one kidney's all we need, and Charlie did fine with the kidney, so everyone prospered from that.

Adamson: That was recent then?

Josselson: The heart surgery was just shortly before his death, I think a few weeks maybe. The renal transplant, which he had originally gone to UCLA for—and I think one of the things he was dissatisfied about was they told him he was too old for something like that, because Charlie, I think, was just a little younger than I am when he died. He got his kidney [transplant] in San Francisco with great results, and Steve went up, of course, and gave him his kidney.

They're good boys.

Adamson: You mentioned Charlie's drive to succeed in business, his integrity, his desire to give full value to his clients. Are there any other characteristics or traits of Charlie's you'd like to highlight and any stories—

Josselson: I don't think so. There's not anything I can think of. His drive, his aggression, his integrity, his honesty, his subtle humor, certainly his integrity involved fair play with not only his workers, his employees, but all of the business contacts that he had. I think, without question, his clients were delighted, pleased to have had the Charlie Pankow flag on their structures. Yes.

And he also enjoyed a good joke. He served as president of some national and international construction organizations, whether they were straight construction or cement contractors or something like that, and on occasion, because he had been elected or appointed to positions of prominence in those organizations, he had to address large audiences. He always liked to have them in a jovial mood and make them fun for everyone and not anything else. So one of my jobs, even when he called me on the phone and said, "Joss, I'm going to Australia to give a speech to such-and-such an organization, tell me a couple of good jokes I can use." Just like that. He gave me big orders in that regard, but I think he used most of them, and I think he used them to good effect.

Adamson: Okay. You got good feedback on your material.

You had mentioned these Christmas parties with people at his business. Then were you introduced or get to know some of these people, because I'm told that many of them were repeat customers.

Josselson: Yes, I knew a number of the people who were in positions of importance in his company, some of whom were patients of mine while I was still in practice. I retired in 1992, so I've been a loafer for a long time. I'll be eighty-eight, I think I told you, next month. So some of these were remarkably pleasant and competent people as I got to know them, and some were my patients as well.

But other than that, I remember on one occasion when Charlie and I had lunch at our favorite luncheon place in Pasadena and before he had hired Dean Stephan, whom I think he met in Texas or somewhere around there, and he said, "Joss, give me some

suggestions, whom do you think I should make my CEO when I step back and release the reins a little?”

I said, “Charlie, thanks for your confidence, but if you can just ask me if I can treat the blood pressure of some of them for something, but I can’t tell you anything about their competence.” But he wanted—I was flattered to see or to know that he wanted my thoughts about people he had promoted to positions of importance, and I did get to know some of them, without mentioning any names, and took care of some of them for their medical problems.

Adamson: Other people have told me that Charlie was very inventive and liked to, at least before he got into the building business, tinker with things and work out things. Are there any stories of that you can tell me?

Josselson: I wish I did know those, but I don’t. But I’m sure things went wrong with any of the mechanical appliances or structures [items] in the homes that he lived in, he didn’t have to call many people in to fix them. He knew what to do. So he was a competent and creative building man, or he’d have made a great mechanic in any field.

Adamson: I’ve also been told by Dean that Charlie was very—one of the strengths of his style was that he let creative people within his company create and come up with some—

Josselson: Indeed, give them a free hand. But on stuff like that, I think you’d get far more reliable information from Dean, who was there and who was his number one man

for some years. Dean retired pretty young, though. I think he was only in his mid-fifties when he retired. I'm not sure.

Adamson: Yeah, I think he said '96 or '7.

Josselson: I don't know how old Dean is now, but he's a pretty husky-looking guy and a pretty healthy-looking guy, and he loves to swim in the ocean.

But I can't help you much with that because the interpersonal relationships with his people and whom he, I'm sure, always gave a fair chance to show their mettle and gave them every opportunity and encouragement to rise in the ranks and to prosper in the company. I've never heard of anyone leaving his company, but there could have been some that left that I don't know about.

Adamson: Do you have any insight on then how he nurtured his children's interests and desires once it was known that they couldn't work in the company, how they came to decide what they wanted to do?

Josselson: I'm not sure [how] intimately he was involved in their decisions.

[End of interview]