

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Joseph A. De Laine, Jr.

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## Overview of the Collection

<b>Repository:</b>	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
<b>Creator:</b>	De Laine, Joseph A., 1933-
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Joseph A. De Laine, Jr.,
<b>Dates:</b>	June 21, 2007
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2007
<b>Physical Description:</b>	7 Betacame SP videocassettes (3:16:34).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Retail entrepreneur and pharmaceutical executive Joseph A. De Laine, Jr. (1933 - ) was both a cancer researcher and the founder, owner, and operator of Joseph's Imports in Charlotte, North Carolina, selling international artifacts from Europe, Africa and Asia from 1984 to 1992. De Laine was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on June 21, 2007, in Charlotte, North Carolina. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2007_182
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Pharmaceutical executive and retail entrepreneur Joseph Armstrong De Laine, Jr. was born on August 17, 1933, in Blackville, South Carolina, to Mattie Lee Belton De Laine, a teacher, and Joseph Armstrong De Laine, Sr., a minister, teacher and community activist. De Laine, Sr., was instrumental in the Civil Rights Movement in Clarendon County, South Carolina, that led to the Briggs v. Elliot court case. De Laine attended Scott's Branch Public High School in Summerton, South Carolina, and graduated from high school at Mather Academy in 1950. De Laine attended

Johnson C. Smith University for a year until transferring to Lincoln University in Pennsylvania, where he graduated in 1954. He served for the U.S. armed forces during the Korean Conflict.

Upon De Laine's return from Korea, he joined his family in New York, where they resettled after death threats in South Carolina. Over a six year period, he was employed as a cancer research assistant at Roswell Park in Buffalo, New York; Sloan Kettering Institute in New York, New York; E. R. Squibb in New Brunswick, New Jersey; and Joint Disease Hospital in New York, New York. In 1964, De Laine joined Hoffmann La Roche, Inc. as a pharmaceutical sales representative. During the ensuing twenty years, he enjoyed positions at the management level in promotion, marketing, and staff positions as Director of Marketing for Diagnostics Division and Corporate Director of Corporate EEO. Upon retirement, De Laine relocated from New Jersey to Charlotte, North Carolina, where he owned and operated Joseph's Imports, an outlet of unusual imported artifacts from Europe, Africa, and Asia.

De Laine presently serves on the Board of Directors for the Briggs-De Laine-Pearson Foundation in Summerton, South Carolina, and for the International African American Museum in Charleston, South Carolina. Since retirement, he also served as a Presidential Appointee on the "50th Anniversary Brown v. Board Presidential Commission" and for several years as a member and president of the Board for the Northwest Corridor Community Development Corporation in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Joseph A. De Laine, Jr. was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on June 21, 2007.

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## Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Joseph A. De Laine, Jr. was conducted by Cheryl Butler on June 21, 2007, in Charlotte, North Carolina, and was recorded on 7 Betacame SP videocassettes. Retail entrepreneur and pharmaceutical executive Joseph A. De Laine, Jr. (1933 - ) was both a cancer researcher and the founder, owner, and operator of Joseph's Imports in Charlotte, North Carolina, selling international artifacts from Europe, Africa and Asia from 1984 to 1992.

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## Restrictions

### Restrictions on Access

Restrictions may be applied on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of The HistoryMakers®.

## **Restrictions on Use**

All use of materials and use credits must be pre-approved by The HistoryMakers®. Appropriate credit must be given. Copyright is held by The HistoryMakers®.

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## **Related Material**

Information about the administrative functions involved in scheduling, researching, and producing the interview, as well as correspondence with the interview subject is stored electronically both on The HistoryMakers® server and in two databases maintained by The HistoryMakers®, though this information is not included in this finding aid.

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## **Controlled Access Terms**

This interview collection is indexed under the following controlled access subject terms.

### **Persons:**

De Laine, Joseph A., 1933-

Butler, Cheryl (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

### **Subjects:**

African Americans--Interviews

De Laine, Joseph A., 1933---Interviews

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African American scientists--Interviews

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## **Organizations:**

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

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The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

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Hoffmann-La Roche, inc.

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## **Occupations:**

Retail Entrepreneur

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Pharmaceutical Executive

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## **HistoryMakers® Category:**

BusinessMakers|MedicalMakers

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## **Administrative Information**

### **Custodial History**

Interview footage was recorded by The HistoryMakers®. All rights to the interview have been transferred to The HistoryMakers® by the interview subject through a signed interview release form. Signed interview release forms have been deposited with Jenner & Block, LLP, Chicago.

### **Preferred Citation**

The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Joseph A. De Laine, Jr., June 21, 2007. The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection, 1900 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.

## Processing Information

This interview collection was processed and encoded on 2/5/2020 by The HistoryMakers® staff. The finding aid was created adhering to the following standards: DACS, AACR2, and the Oral History Cataloging Manual (Matters 1995).

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## Other Finding Aid

A Microsoft Access contact database and a FileMaker Pro tracking database, both maintained by The HistoryMakers®, keep track of the administrative functions involved in scheduling, researching, and producing the interview.

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## Detailed Description of the Collection

### Series I: Original Interview Footage

Video Oral History Interview with Joseph A. De Laine, Jr., Section A2007\_182\_001\_001, TRT: 0:28:36 2007/06/21

Joseph A. De Laine, Jr. was born on August 17, 1933 to Mattie Belton De Laine and Joseph A. De Laine, Sr. His maternal ancestors were enslaved on the Belton plantation, and some of their descendants who worked on the Ross plantation were sent to Liberia after the owner's death. De Laine's paternal ancestors migrated from North Africa and settled in Clarendon County, South Carolina, where they enlisted a white family for protection from others who sought to enslave them. Prior to emancipation, they hired slaves to help cultivate the several hundred acres of land belonging to the family. The property was inherited by De Laine's paternal grandfather, Henry De Laine, Sr., who worked as a teacher and minister. De Laine's paternal grandmother, Tisbia Gamble De Laine, was the mixed race granddaughter of slaveholders, and had white relatives who lived in the area. Both of De Laine's parents were schoolteachers, and his father pastored a circuit of African Methodist Episcopal churches in Clarendon County.

Slavery--South Carolina.

Plantation life--South Carolina--History.

Miscegenation--United States--History.

African American educators.

African Methodist Episcopal Church--Clergy.

African American families--South Carolina.

Video Oral History Interview with Joseph A. De Laine, Jr., Section  
A2007\_182\_001\_002, TRT: 0:28:54 2007/06/21

Joseph A. De Laine, Jr.'s paternal great-great-grandfather may have come to the United States from North Africa with his brother, Ben De Lane, who was the wealthy husband of Celia Mann. De Laine's paternal great-great-grandmother, Maria, was a member of the Mohawk tribe working as an indentured servant. Generations later, De Laine was born in Blackville, South Carolina. There, his parents, Mattie Belton De Laine and Joseph A. De Laine, Sr., taught at Macedonia High School, until his father was fired for refusing to convert to the Baptist denomination. The family then moved to Summerton, South Carolina, where his father was assigned to lead the Springhill A.M.E. Church, and his mother taught at the affiliated church school. De Laine attended the Bob Johnson School, where his father also worked as a teacher. De Laine's father was a leader in the community, and often advised the African American farmers in the surrounding area. He taught De Laine to stand up to discrimination, and warned him to do so safely.

Freedmen--Southern States--Social conditions.

Clarendon County (S.C.)--Race relations.

African American children.

Video Oral History Interview with Joseph A. De Laine, Jr., Section  
A2007\_182\_001\_003, TRT: 0:28:46 2007/06/21

Joseph A. De Laine, Jr.'s father, Joseph A. De Laine, Sr., was a respected leader in the black community of Clarendon County, South Carolina, especially among the poor and illiterate, who trusted him to count money and read legal documents. As the county was strictly segregated, De Laine and his peers attended small, all-black schools; and many of his classmates walked several miles to class each day, or boarded with a family that lived

closer, like the De Laines. In 1944, sixteen of De Laine's neighbors, including Levi Pearson, purchased an old school bus for the students. When the bus broke down, De Laine's father petitioned Clarendon County for funds to make the repairs. After being rejected, he convinced the state's NAACP to underwrite a lawsuit against the school district. *Pearson v. Clarendon County and School District No. 26* was dismissed on a technicality; but De Laine's father appealed to the national NAACP, and secured a meeting with civil rights attorney Thurgood Marshall. Segregation in education--South Carolina--Clarendon County.

African American leadership.

*Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka.*

National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

Video Oral History Interview with Joseph A. De Laine, Jr., Section A2007\_182\_001\_004, TRT: 0:29:09 2007/06/21

Joseph A. De Laine, Jr. was a student at Scotts Branch High School in Summerton, South Carolina when Principal A.M. Anderson was ousted for speaking against African American disenfranchisement. After the tenth grade, De Laine transferred to the Mather Academy boarding school in Camden, South Carolina. When the students at Scotts Branch High School revolted against the new principal, Thurgood Marshall decided to try the case for school desegregation in Clarendon County. With the help of De Laine's father, Marshall argued *Briggs v. Elliott* at the U.S. Supreme Court, and forced South Carolina to provide more resources to black schools. Shortly before De Laine's graduation, two new black high schools were built in Clarendon County. In 1949, his father moved the family to Lake City, South Carolina; where, two years later, their home was burned by opponents of integration. In 1954, *Briggs v. Elliott* returned to the Supreme Court, where it was combined with *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*.

Public schools--South Carolina.

Marshall, Thurgood, 1908-1993.

Segregation in education--South Carolina--Clarendon County.

Ku Klux Klan (1915-)--South Carolina.

Video Oral History Interview with Joseph A. De Laine, Jr., Section A2007\_182\_001\_005, TRT: 0:28:22 2007/06/21

Joseph A. De Laine, Jr. graduated in 1950 from the Mather Academy in Camden, South Carolina. He matriculated at Johnson C. Smith University in Charlotte, North Carolina, where he joined the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity; and then transferred to Pennsylvania's Lincoln University in 1952. After earning a biology degree in 1954, he was drafted into the U.S. Army. During this time, De Laine's father, Joseph A. De Laine, Sr., was the target of white reprisals because of his role in desegregation. After the U.S. Supreme Court ordered the integration of schools in 1955, De Laine's father received a threatening warning to leave South Carolina within ten days. On the sixth day, his church was burned down; and, on the tenth day, he was the target of a drive-by shooting. He fled to New York, and De Laine's mother took shelter with Ossie Davis' aunt until she could join him. The authorities in South Carolina issued a warrant for his father's arrest, but the officials of New York State refused to extradite him.

Ku Klux Klan (1915-)--South Carolina.

Lincoln University (Pa.).

Johnson C. Smith University.

Korean War, 1950-1953--Personal narratives, American.

African Americans--Education (Higher).

Video Oral History Interview with Joseph A. De Laine, Jr., Section A2007\_182\_001\_006, TRT: 0:28:20 2007/06/21

Joseph A. De Laine, Jr. was discharged from the U.S. Army in the mid-1950s. He joined his parents, Mattie Belton De Laine and Joseph A. De Laine, Sr., in Buffalo, New York, where his father had established the De Laine - Waring A.M.E. Church. De Laine took graduate classes at the University of Buffalo; and, after his father was reassigned to a parsonage in Brooklyn, New York, continued his studies at New York University. De Laine conducted cancer research at Memorial Hospital and the



Sloan Kettering Institute until 1960, when he left to join F. Hoffmann-La Roche Ltd. as a pharmaceutical salesman. He succeeded there despite experiencing discrimination, and retired as the director of sales administration. At that time, De Laine moved to Charlotte, North Carolina, where his parents had relocated. He established the Joseph's Imports retailer, and joined the board of the Northwest Corridor Community Development Corporation, where he later served as chairman.

Korean War, 1950-1953--Personal narratives, American. United States. Army.

Sloan-Kettering Institute for Cancer Research.

Video Oral History Interview with Joseph A. De Laine, Jr., Section A2007\_182\_001\_007, TRT: 0:24:27 2007/06/21

Joseph A. De Laine, Jr.'s parents, Mattie Belton De Laine and Joseph A. De Laine, Sr., both came from large families, and taught their children to fight for justice in brave and unconventional ways. De Laine reflects upon his mother's unsung legacy, and describes how he would like his father to be remembered. De Laine also reflects upon his own legacy, and how his involvement in the Brown v. Board of Education 50th Anniversary Commission helped promote knowledge of his father's contributions to the Civil Rights Movement. He also talks about his involvement with the Levine Museum of the New South in Charlotte, North Carolina; which, at the time of the interview, had loaned its exhibit about the struggle against segregation to museums in South Africa. De Laine concludes the interview by narrating his photographs.

Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka.