

Betty S. Rosenberg and Phyllis Small
June 25, 2002

Tape 1 (1 of 2) – Side 1

Interviewer = Marlene Haus (MH)

Interviewee = Betty S. Rosenberg (BR)

Interviewee = Norman Rosenberg (NR)

Interviewee = Phyllis Small (PS)

MH: My name is Marlene Haus and today's date is June 25, 2002. And I am in Monroeville at the Extended Stay Facility and interviewing Betty, a Darling Rosenberg, and Phyllis Small about Jewish life in Glassport, Pennsylvania.

Betty, would you state your address for the tape recorder, so we can test the tape recorder.

BR: My address is 14321 S. W. 88th Street, Apartment F303, Miami, Florida 33186.

MH: And I forgot to ask you to mention your name and your birth date, if you wish.

BR: My name is Betty S. Rosenberg. And my birthday is May 19th, 1924.

MH: Okay. And Phyllis, would you do the same. Mention your name...

PS: My name is Phyllis Snyder Small. And I live at 2220 Pleasant Drive, White Oak, PA 15131. My phone number's 412-678-3867. And my birthday is November 28th, 1923.

MH: Thank you ladies. This interview is being conducted for the Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania and the Rauh Archives, I believe.

All right. Thank you for that information. The first thing is... I would like to know, Betty and Phyllis, were you both born in Glassport, Pennsylvania?

BR: I was born in Pittsburgh in Passavant Hospital and...

MH: This is Betty talking.

BR: But my family lived in Glassport at the time. As a matter of fact, Phyllis's father and my father were partners in a grocery store at the time we were born.

MH: So you and Phyllis are good friends. Is that it? I see.

PS: We were raised in the same buggy.

MH: In the same what?

PS: Buggy.

MH: Buggy. Oh! That's wonderful. (laughs)

PS: But I was born at McKeesport Hospital, but you might as well say Glassport, because Glassport didn't have a hospital.

MH: I see. And you did give me your birthdays.

PS: Yes.

MH: Would you, Betty, tell me how many brothers and sisters you had.

BR: I have one brother... I had... I had one brother.

MH: And his name?

BR: And his name was Sol Darling. And he was born in Pittsburgh.

And I have a sister, Dorothy. And her name now is Dorothy Weiss. It's Dorothy Gross Weiss. And she was born in Pittsburgh too.

My grandmother was a midwife. And my grandmother delivered both of them.

PS: Oh...

MH: In the home?

BR: In her home. In her home in Pittsburgh.

MH: Would you know the address of that home, by any chance?

BR: No. But it was on... What was the street... You would remember...

MH: It was the Hill District?

BR: Yes.

PS: Soho?

BR: No. No. No. No.

MH: I don't know that much about...

BR: Norman, what was the name of the...

MH: It doesn't matter.

BR: It was on the Hill – in the Hill District.

MH: But the old Passavant Hospital – I remember hearing about that.

BR: That's where I was born. But my grandmother delivered the other two.

MH: I see. And Phyllis, do you know where your parents lived?

PS: We lived in Glassport.

MH: Yeah. And the street...

PS: Yeah. We lived on Monongahela Avenue across from - on the corner - first from the Borough Building. Then we moved down to what is now the high school. Later went to high school on Ohio.

And I had a brother, Merril. And he was five years older than me. And I had a sister, Beverly, she's gone. And we were all born in McKeesport Hospital. And...

MH: That's the same place where it is now? McKeesport Hospital.

PS: Yes. Exactly.

MH: Yeah. I know where that is.

PS: Painter Memorial it was called. Where the birthing was. And my sister's gone. But my brother - we keep in touch. And once in a...

MH: Where does he live?

PS: He lives in Baltimore, Maryland.

MH: Baltimore.

PS: He was a doctor. And I taught school in Glassport. So I go to town and I see all the people I know. (laughs)

MH: I'll want to get back to that teaching in a minute. But... Betty, can you tell me how – what made your family move from Pittsburgh to Glassport?

BR: Well, I have to go back because my family did live in Pittsburgh. And then part of the family moved to Wheeling, West Virginia – not Wheeling – Moundsville, West Virginia, where there was the prison. And they sold groceries to the prison. And they found a place for my father, which was across the river, you had to take a ferry. And it was called Dilly's Bottom, Ohio.

And my father was... He bought the company store. He was a postmaster. He sold furniture, he sold clothing, he sold groceries, he cashed all the checks. And they lived there until Saul was eight-years-old and Dorothy was six.

And then my mother said, "We have to move back to the Pittsburgh area because Saul has to have Hebrew School." So they moved to West Newton and they stayed there just a short time. And then my father moved to Glassport and went into business with Mr. Snyder.

MH: I see.

BR: And they lived on Monongahela Avenue on – above the store – not their store, but above a store.

And then when I was born... My brother was twelve years older than me. My sister's ten years older. When I was born, then they bought the house on Ohio Avenue, where they lived until my father passed away.

MH: I see. And that's where you grew up?

BR: I grew up on Ohio...

PS: Across from the shul.

BR: It was across from the shul.

MH: Okay.

BR: And whenever there was a teacher that taught the children Hebrew or somebody needed a home, they stayed on the third floor of my mother's house.

MH: Oh, 'cause it was... And your mother was kosher, I assume.

BR: Oh, yes. They didn't always eat with us. They ate occasionally with us. But they always stayed across the street from the shul – and stayed at our house.

MH: Did you remember the shul being built? Or was...

BR: No. It was... I only remember it already built..

MH: It was there? I see. And did they call it, indeed, the shul?

BR: It was called Congregation Temple... No Congregation B'nai Israel.

MH: Israel. Do you know what denomination? Was it orthodox?

PS: Oh! Orthodox.

MH: Very definitely orthodox.

PS: Very Orthodox. In fact, everybody in town was orthodox originally.

MH: Really?

PS: Oh, yes.

BR: It was very orthodox.

PS: Oh, yes. The women sat on one side and the men sat on the other side.

MH: Was there a mech... No. Not a mechitzah...

PS: We sat separate.

BR: No. No. There was no curtain.

MH: There was no curtain.

BR: Just different sides. There was never a curtain.

MH: Well, let's talk a little bit about the synagogue. I think that is what the Historical Society is interested in. But, of course, we're interested in everything about Jewish life in a small town. How large, actually, was Glassport at its hey day?

BR: Probably eight to nine thousand people. And we had approximately forty Jewish families. Some -----?

PS: My husband said maybe... My brother said maybe sixty.

BR: I didn't count.

MH: Okay. It's approximately.

BR: Approximate. Forty to fifty say – families at one time that were active. We didn't always have a Sunday school. But we always had a teacher. They always hired a teacher who came four days a week after school and taught us.

PS: But not at the beginning. My brother used to hop on the street car after school and go to McKeesport to cheder (Hebrew school) That's where some of the boys went. But my mother walked the hill to collect money so we girls could have a Hebrew School.

BR: Well, we had... The first teacher we had was a Mrs. Zuckerman.

PS: Yeah... (laughs)

BR: And she was very, very nice. She did not hit with the ruler or any of those things that you hear about. And then after Mrs. Zuckerman left – she and her husband left.

Then they got Mr. Papir. And Mr. Papir lived at our house for years. And he taught. And...

MH: Do you know how to spell his last name?

BR: P-a-p-i-r.

MH: Oh, I see.

BR: Papir. And he lived with us. But Mrs. Zuckerman traveled. She traveled on the streetcar. She had a husband in McKeesport and she traveled on the streetcar and taught us.

MH: Would you say... How many years would you say that...

BR: That span was?

MH: Yes. That there was a teacher.

BR: Probably...

MH: Or when do you first remember that? At what age?

BR: When I was about eight she came. Because I didn't want to... I didn't like the orthodox services. And I didn't like the orthodox Sunday school.

So then my father sent me to McKeesport to the Hebrew Institute and I didn't like that.

PS: Orthodox. (laughs)

BR: So I ended up... He paid tuition for me to go to Sunday school at the Temple, with the idea I wouldn't have to go to the Temple Hebrew School because he had to pay for Mr. Papir... To keep Mr. Papir there he was assessed so much every month. And so I stayed and Mrs. Zuckerman taught me and Mr. Papir taught me until pre-confirmation.

PS: Well, wait... We had others. The rabbi from Duquesne used to come.

BR: I don't...

PS: We had him for a while.

BR: A teacher?

PS: Yes.

BR: I don't remember him.

PS: And then the one in McKeesport that was... The reverend, you know... Not the... His two daughters came and they were very nice.

MH: Do you remember their names?

PS: I don't remember.

BR: Wait, I'll tell you what his name was.

MH: All right.

BR: Friedman.

PS: Yeah. Friedman.

BR: Friedman. I had to think of that.

PS: And we had... The two sisters... One came... And we had one of them's husband and then he left and went to Palestine and we thought that was like... Whoa...! You know.

MH: And it was Palestine then. It was called Palestine then.

BR: But we always had someone that taught the children in McKeesport – and Glassport.

PS: Girls. Mostly girls.

MH: Mostly girls?

PS: Yeah.

MH: When you said you went to the Temple in McKeesport...?

BR: In McKeesport. Temple B'nai Israel.

MH: I see. Temple B'nai Israel.

BR: And I was confirmed from Temple B'nai Israel.

MH: That was Reformed?

BR: Yes. And my children went to Temple B'nai Israel. And my grandson was bar mitzvah at Temple B'nai Israel.

MH: Wonderful. That's really wonderful.

BR: And our children were bar mitzvah and bas mitzvah and confirmed. So that's...

PS: My roots all the way back... And many in McKeesport are Hungarian – from before World War One. It was the Hungarian Empire. But after World War One it became Czechoslovakia. And that's where my roots were – both sides – my mother's and my dad's. And my dad's first cousin... No, my dad's uncle – it was my great uncle – was the founder of Gemilas Chesed in McKeesport. Orthodox.

MH: Gemilas Chesed, which still exists.

PS: Oh, yeah. It still does. And then my dad came from...

MH: This is Phyllis talking.

PS: And my dad came from Europe to work with Firestone's that owned a grocery store and they were the founders of Temple B'nai Israel. So I had relatives on both sides.

But then my dad had this grocery store in McKeesport and he was in the Reserves World War. And then somebody... I don't know. He decided to go to Glassport with her dad and they opened a grocery store...

MH: That grocery store.

PS: But that's how we got to Glassport.

MH: Okay. Very good.

PS: But our roots really were McKeesport.

MH: About how many children would you say were in the Sunday school at the time you were there?

BR: Probably thirty.

MH: Thirty.

PS: Yeah.

MH: So they did have a pretty good population.

PS: Yeah.

BR: And my sister taught Sunday school and the Klein girls taught Sunday school.

MH: What Klein girls?

BR: Well, one was Esther Klein Kendall. And the other one was Rose Klein Kimmelman.

MH: I see.

BR: And they taught Sunday school. And my sister, Dorothy Darling Weiss, now. It was Dorothy Darling then. And she taught Sunday school.

MH: Now, did you all have education... Did they have education backgrounds, or they just...

BR: Well, they just... They taught. They had books and they taught the kids.

MH: There was really not formal training.

PS: No. No. No.

BR: That was it.

PS: But it's nice. I'll tell you why. I go to the Gemilas Chesed. And it's great. I read Hebrew. I'm not fast, but I find my place and read and I always say – my mother walked the hill collecting the money – and (laughs) I did okay.

MH: What about you, Betty?

BR: Well, I read Hebrew. And Norman and I go to Torah study every Saturday and we study from nine to ten-thirty. And then ten-thirty to twelve we have a minyan. And our minyan is mostly in Hebrew. And, it's...

MH: Do you want to name the synagogue in Florida?

BR: Oh, yeah. We belong to Beth Am.

MH: Beth Am, a famous synagogue in Florida. Wonderful music program.

BR: Yes. Yes. Our minyan is all music. And the girl who... She's an assistant cantorial soloist. She's the assistant cantor and she brings in a lot of original music from other places and teaches us music. So we have quite a repertoire.

MH: That's wonderful. Let's go back to B'nai Israel.

BR: Okay.

PS: Okay.

MH: ...in Glassport. Can you sort of describe the building a little bit?

BR: Sure. Like all old synagogues it was on a hill, because I think it had something to do in the Torah where it says it should be on a hill. And very steep steps. And when you walked in – you walked downstairs – it was the social hall, if that's what you want to call it and a little kitchen. And the bathrooms were downstairs.

And then you walked up these steps and the old synagogue was like sephardic, in a way, because it had the bimah and a railing all around the bimah. And it was like in the center. And then wooden pews, naturally. And windows on the side. I would say it seated seventy-five to a hundred.

PS: Yeah. I would say.

MH: And on the high holy days...

BR: It was filled.

MH: Jam-packed.

BR: And it's very interesting because we have some people that used to live in Glassport – they were born... I don't know if they were born in Glassport, but their parents lived in Glassport. And they donated beautiful lights in memory of their children. One was killed in World War Two, his name was Lee Katz. And their other daughter died of leukemia and her name was Shirley Katz. And they donated these beautiful lights.

And then the Raden family donated the seats. And they took the pews out and put these seats in.

PS: Theater seats they were.

BR: They were very... They were very beautiful. And we didn't have carpet. And then we got carpet that went down the center. And they kept the shul in good repair – always in good repair.

PS: And we had one big stained glass window.

BR: Yes. And it was in the foyer. When you walked up the steps, the stained glass window was facing the street. Beautiful! Beautiful!

PS: And our ark was gorgeous.

BR: Now, we have to tell her what happened to that.

MH: I was just going to ask. Is the building still standing?

BR: The building is still standing. But it was sold. And that's where the money for this project came from – the sale of the building.

MH: When was that? Do you have any idea?

BR: Well, it was four... I know it was four years ago when my brother finally...

MH: Oh, so that's two thousand and two... Four years ago – it was '98, right? .

BR: Yes.

MH: Not too many years.

BR: And everything... When the money was finally distributed and everything. And the Torahs were distributed and what have you. But the window was gonna' cost fifteen

thousand dollars to move the window, so it was sold with the window. And at that time, Tree of Life was moved – built a new synagogue.

MH: Tree of Life in...

BR: Tree of Life was in McKeesport.

PS: White Oak.

BR: In White Oak. And that was a conservative. And so, they took the seats that the Raden's had donated and they took the lights that the Katz's had donated and they took our Aron haKodesh.

PS: Gorgeous.

BR: And it's still in that building. And now Temple B'nai Israel owns that building. So when we go to services we have part of Glassport there and part of Temple B'nai Israel and part of Tree of Life. And all the plaques are there from all the synagogues.

PS: Well, the Temple had to move. It was just too big and they couldn't manage with the members. McKeesport's not like it was when there were mills and everything.

MH: Members have diminished.

PS: So, everything is at the Tree of Life. It's the Temple B'nai... The art just... When I go there, I just sit there. It looks gorgeous.

MH: Yes. There's a rather well-known rabbi now.

PS: Oh, Rabbi Schiff.

MH: Rabbi Schiff. Yeah. Danny Schiff. And he's well-known in Pittsburgh. And I was surprised to hear that he took over this congregation.

BR: When he came he did not have these jobs in Pittsburgh.

MH: Oh, I see. He came for the synagogue.

BR: He came for the synagogue.

MH: I see.

BR: And his wife had this job in Duquesne – in Duquesne University. And then he got the other job with J. E. I. and...

MH: That's right. He's an excellent teacher.

PS: And at one time in McKeesport there were at least five or six shuls.

MH: I see.

PS: But I doubt that anyone else has a Rabbi Chinn.

MH: Chinn. Also a well-known rabbi.

PS: Oh, yeah!

MH: Okay. Let's get back...

PS: ...to Glassport

MH: ...a little bit more to the activities in the synagogue. Now, Phyllis, you said your mother climbed the hill. Was that...

PS: To raise money to pay the Hebrew school teacher.

MH: I see. Okay.

PS: And then we used to have a picnic every summer. And we had raffles, you know how they did, at the old picnic – to raise money. And you paid your dues... And then when we couldn't afford a rabbi, they would get somebody to come each year and daven for the high holidays.

And I remember once somebody came that was a holocaust survivor, with his number on his hand, related to somebody in McKeesport. And when he saw there wasn't a mechitzah he was gonna' leave.

MH: Oh!

PS: So Sam Papernick put a mechitzah and we women sat behind it, so he would stay.

MH: Do you remember his name at all?

PS: Oh... I don't know.

MH: Okay.

PS: I know my mother... He came and stayed with us and she wanted to give him to eat. The only thing he took from us was a Coke.

MH: I see.

PS: He brought his own food. And he had been, during the holocaust, on a train for three days. A lovely fellow. Then another one came and when my sister was married and went to New York, Youngwise, Rabbi Youngwise, and he was very nice.

MH: Youngwise.

PS: College graduate and everything. And he came and davened for us.

BR: Well, before that, when I was a little girl, my zayde, Oscar Kopelman, was the Baal Tefillah, and they came... My grandmother and grandfather came and stayed at our house for every holiday, but especially for Rosh Hoshanna and Yom Kippur.

MH: Where were they from?

BR: They were from Pittsburgh.

MH: Pittsburgh. Because that's a famous name in Pittsburgh too. Then you must be related to Myron Cope. Is that correct?

BR: Well, his – his... I think his father was a nephew or a cousin or something of my grandfather. But my grandfather was very well-educated, and he was a man who davened three times a day. And my grandmother was also very well-educated. And they came every holiday. And we were married and they still came. And it was very interesting because my grandfather davened. He was the Baal Tefillah And he also... Before that, I think he was at Beth Shalom too, in Pittsburgh.

MH: I wanted to ask you about the services... Were all the children in the services at the same time as their parents?

BR: Yes.

PS: Oh, yes.

MH: Nothing called children's services?

PS: No. No.

BR: And we had to be quiet. And it was all in Hebrew. And sometimes the sermon was even in Hebrew. You know, in Yiddish.

MH: Oh, really?

BR: Yes. The sermon would be in Yiddish. And not in English. And... It was hard, because we had to sit.

MH: Did you speak Yiddish – either one of you -----?

PS: Well, I understand a little bit. But it's a funny thing... Most of the McKeesporters – all these Hungarians – they rattled off in Hungarian all the time. But my mother was born in Nashville, Tennessee.

MH: Oh, so she wasn't born here.

PS: And, so she couldn't speak Hungarian. She spoke Yiddish. She even went to the Yiddish theater in New York. And then when my brother went to Pitt, and he spoke Yiddish and took German, because he was gonna' be a doctor. The lady said, I give you an A, but your accent is Yiddish. But we were all raised orthodox in Glassport.

MH: And what about you, Betty. Were your parents immigrants?

BR: Yes. They both came from Vilna in Lithuania. At that time, it was Poland, so it says on their – that they originated from Poland yet.

My father came after his bar mitzvah and my mother came when she was eleven. My mother came with her father. Her oldest brother came first. And he found an apartment and everything. And then my mother and my grandfather came.

And my mother sewed. She was only eleven, but she sewed beautifully. And she got the room – she paid for the room by helping the woman sew. And so they didn't have to pay the room.

And then, when my grandfather found work... Between my grandfather and my uncle, they got a bigger place and my grandmother came with the other children.

MH: I see.

BR: And with my father... My father came alone and he told me many times that he came alone. So, last June, Norman and I were in New York and we went to Ellis Island and we found my father's name there.

They had him down as ten, but he told me he waited until after his bar mitzvah. But they must have had to buy a children's ticket, so it was cheaper, and he came alone. And it said on the manifest that he was going to Pittsburgh – that was his destination. So we knew.

And he told me that he worked as a huckster. He used to work with his brother on the truck and when he would get fifty cents he would go to this woman and she would teach him English. And he wrote. He read Hebrew. He read Yiddish. And his math was superb. And he managed quite well.

And my mother went to night school. 'Cause in Pittsburgh they had night school. And she went to night school. So she could read and write...

MH: That was all in the Hill District, I believe. It's a wonderful story.

PS: But all us kids in Glassport, we all went to public school.

MH: Yes. I would like to hear a little bit about that. What public school did you go to?

BR: Second ward.

PS: Well, it was second ward. And it was third ward.

BR: I went to second ward.

PS: And then in Otto, there was like...

BR: ...first ward.

PS: ...first ward... There was like, her brother was the last graduating class from first ward. And they had like first and second grade together, you know.

BR: Third and fourth.

PS: Third and fourth. But we Jewish kids we all missed for the holidays. We took off. And we missed for Succos.

BR: Two days before and two days after.

PS: Yeah. We were raised orthodox. Oh, yeah. And my dad would always say, "Just remember," – if it was Easter – "don't take any candy from anybody." Because we're kosher, you know. And we changed everything for kosher. Her grandmother came and stayed at her house.

MH: So you changed all the dishes and everything.

PS: Oh, yes. I still do.

MH: You observed all the holidays.

PS: Yeah, we did.

MH: Well, that's an orthodox way.

PS: And growin' up, we... We did all right at school though. I remember my sister once saying – somebody that she was friendly with sat behind her – and said, “Well, you Jews killed Jesus.” And she turned around and hit him. And the teacher was... It was either second grade, third grade... “Beverly Snyder, stay after school.” And she said, she told her what she did. And I said, to her – with her big mouth... You know what I said... “And if he does it again, I'll hit him again.” (laughs) But we usually got along.

MH: [No. No. I just want to make sure the tape isn't ending.]

But that's a wonderful story.

PS: We usually got along. (laughs) You know.

MH: I was gonna' ask you about that. If you suffered...

PS: We did. And then the other thing that everything... Every year they had a church service when you graduated high school. Lotta' schools have done away with that now.

BR: The baccalaureate service.

PS: And you had to go to baccalaureate. And it was all... You know, this, that, and the other. But... They were gonna' have a church – like you could come and learn after school. And my mother says, “Uh-huh, then we're gonna' bring somebody in for the Jewish kids, so they can learn.” And she brought in a rabbi from McKeesport and the school board couldn't say nothing.

MH: I see. I'm gonna' stop right there. This is the end of Tape 1, Side 1.

PS: All right. I'll never...

End of Tape 1 (1 of 2) – Side 1

Tape 1 (1 of 2)– Side 2

MH: ...how children started having an after school religious...

PS: When they had an after school religious class, she said, "Uh-huh," she said, "If they can have an after school religious class, the Jewish kids will have their own class." And she got Rabbi Siskin from McKeesport to come to Glassport and teach the kids after school.

MH: What was your mother's name?

PS: My mother's name was Gussie Janovitz Snyder.

MH: And your father's name?

PS: And my father's name was Milton.

MH: Milton.

PS: Uh-huh.

MH: Snyder. Okay.

PS: And my mother was always... She was president in the sisterhood and this and that. And for thirteen years she was secretary at the Ladies Beneficial in McKeesport where we used to go. They had that building. And she worked... They formed the Neighbor's

Women and she was the first president. And she went all the way up to be president in the District 3. Three states.

MH: Oh, that's wonderful. Do you remember what year that was?

PS: No. But the only thing she always said...

MH: '40's, '50's?...

PS: And I was her -----? She always said, "You might not have money in this world and you might not have a lot, but do a little bit. And if everybody does a little bit, it becomes a lot."

MH: That's very -----?.

PS: And I never forgot.

MH: This must have been in the '40's or '50's.

PS: Oh, yeah. '40's.

MH: Would you say about 1940, roughly, after the Second World War?

BR: Oh, yeah... After the Second World War.

PS: Oh, after the Second World War.

MH: 1950. Yeah, 1950.

BR: She was active with Ida Binstock and Dorothy... Dorothy Holstein...

MH: Munter? No. I'm tryin' to think.

BR: But Ida Binstock...

PS: But she didn't go any further because...

MH: This is B'nai Brith. In B'nai Brith.

PS: Yeah. Because when you went really to the top in the national, you needed money.

MH: I see.

PS: And she didn't have that. I remember once a lady... She got a call... There was a lady that served, and she was going blind. And, I don't know, her son was out of state and wouldn't help her. And my mother was calling everyone. And I said, "Mum, why are you calling everyone?" "I gotta' get her help." And she did get the lady help. Just little things.

BR: Another thing about Mrs. Snyder, was... After Mr. Snyder passed away...

MH: Of course, you remember her very well, Betty.

BR: Yes. And she did run the business after he passed away.

PS: Yes, she did.

BR: And she kept the business going.

MH: She was one of these women... (laughs)

PS: Oh, yes.

BR: She was a very intelligent woman. She was a very wise woman. Very wise.

PS: She only finished eighth grade and her mother died. Her father died two months before she was born – in Duquesne. And then she went to Douglas Business College, where quite a few Jews in McKeesport... Max Gold went, and somebody else went. And that's where they went to school. But, they were all raised... My mother's family were all Kohen. So they did all the dehening.

MH: What do you call it?

PS: Kohen.

MH: No.

PS: The dehening.

MH: Which is...

BR: The blessing.

PS: The blessing.

MH: The blessing. Okay.

PS: On the ark. And they were all shomer Shabbos. That's the way they all were.

MH: Isn't that something. Now, I'd like to talk a little bit about – just your recollections of Sunday school maybe. Besides the teachers... Did you have parties?

BR: Yes. The women always had Simchas Torah with the apples and the candle and flags, always. -----? And they would have a party downstairs at Simchas

Torah. And they would have... They never had break the fast or anything like that. We always went home.

But they would have a party. They would have a dance now and then, take it out someplace else. The sisterhood. They had a lot of lunches. They would have, you know... They didn't have much of a kitchen, but they would have lunches. It was – it was a nice sisterhood.

We had some... I will say one thing. We had the women – the older women that had come from Europe – were so bright. They really were. Bright.

MH: Bright. And right too.

BR: They were all good cooks, but they were avid bridge players. And, you know, you can't be an avid bridge player and not be smart. (laughs) And they were...

One family that lived down the street from us, about a block – they were an older family. His name was Max Broder. Her name was... What was Mrs. Broder's name? I don't know. I only knew them by Mr. and Mrs., 'cause that's what I called them.'

And she was a real smart woman. And when they had a sisterhood meeting, if Mrs. Broder said something, that was it.

PS: That was it.

BR: That was it. And she was very wise. I found these women to be very wise. I really admired them because they didn't have the chance that I had. But they certainly knew what to do.

PS: And they didn't have the money, and yet when you look among all the people that came from Glassport, they pushed their kids to get an education. Lawyers. Doctors. Dentists. Yes, they did.

BR: All of them. They made sure all of their kids went to school – went to college.

PS: Yes. Yes.

MH: Were any of the women officers in the synagogue.

PS: Oh, yes.

BR: Not in the synagogue. In the sisterhood.

PS: No. Not in the synagogue.

BR: Not in the synagogue. The men were.

MH: It was orthodox.

BR: When we first got married, they wanted Norman and I to join the synagogue. So, Norman was still going to college because he had come from the war and he became the secretary and then they gave him free, you know, free membership...

MH: Membership?

BR: ...to the Temple – to the shul so that we could join. And he was their – for a long time – he was their secretary. So when you read the minutes, you'll see...

MH: (laughs) You're proud of that.

BR: Yes. That was the way for us to belong to a... And we have always belonged. Even when my mother... When my father passed away, and my mother couldn't... She said, "I can't make the holidays anymore. I'm going to Atlantic City for the holidays." So that was the first time I took Norman into the Temple and he was raised in Beth Shalom, and the Temple was very foreign to him.

MH: Beth Shalom in Pittsburgh?

BR: In Pittsburgh. And the Temple was very, very foreign to him. But he got used to it because then – when the children got older – then we joined the Temple.

MH: The difference between conservative and reform.

BR: Orthodox.

MH: Oh, orthodox. Pardon me.

BR: -----? was orthodox.

MH: What did children do in the summer – or for recreation?

BR: Well, first of all, I belonged to the Girl Scouts and we met in the school. I will tell you one thing, Phyllis and I – even though we were in school at the same time – we were never in the same class. They kept us apart. She was in one class and I was in the other.

PS: Yes.

BR: We were never together. Phyllis started to school before me and there was another girl that lived in Glassport, her name was Rhea Lebowitz. And Rhea's birthday was in April and mine was in May. Well, Phyllis got to go to school and Rhea got to go to school...

PS: No, she didn't.

BR: She didn't. Well, anyway, I cried 'cause Phyllis got to go to school and I didn't. So my father went to the school board and said, "My Betty wants to go to school." So they

said, "Well, she could go a half a day." There was no kindergarten. "She could go a half a day till Christmas. And then after Christmas she could go full-time."

PS: Didn't you hire a tutor or something?

BR: No. I didn't have a tutor. But I went half a day.

PS: -----?

BR: And then I started to school. But they always kept us separate. I don't know why. But she was never in the same class as me.

PS: Well, we did belong to Girl Scouts...

BR: We belonged to Girl Scouts...

PS: And one day there was an article in the Forward Newspaper, which we get...

MH: The Yiddish newspaper?

PS: Well, we get it in English.

MH: I see.

PS: English.

MH: Comes from New York.

PS: Yeah. 'Cause my husband's a holocaust survivor. And we love it. So there was an article on how to date non-Jewish and marry non-Jewish. So I, without thinking, sat down and I said, "You don't have to put this in, but why didn't you write a book and

say..." I said, "When I was growing up the Girl Scouts were going to have a box social and I said to my mother, 'there's nobody to invite,' and my dad said, 'no, you won't go.'"

And when it came time for the prom, I invited somebody from out-of-town, just as my brother had before me, because unless he was Jewish, I wasn't allowed to go.

MH: I see. Now, Betty, was your family that way too?

BR: Pretty much so.

PS: They were. They were.

BR: My junior prom, I had... I think my junior prom I had a date from Pittsburgh. But my senior prom, I didn't. And there was a gentleman in Glassport – he graduated high school two years before me – and I called him and I asked him if he would take me to the prom, which he did. And every time I see him, it's a big joke how I (laughs) called him and invited him to the prom.

MH: That was very bold of you – (laughs) – in those days.

BR: He said his mother and his father said, "Melvin, you have to do it." (laughs)

MH: I see. (laughs) -----?

PS: That's the way in the old days... They were from Europe and that's the way you were raised. When I got ready to go off to Indiana State Teachers, and my dad was on the porch, and he said, "I raised nice daughters." I knew what he meant. Don't go out with anybody if they're not...

MH: Well, other than this story that you told us about your sister, Phyllis and Betty... Were there any other anti-Semitic experiences? Did any of your non-Jewish... I assume you had non-Jewish friends.

PS: Oh!

BR: But you see, we had... My father lived in Glassport a long time. And just like we had three black families that lived up on Red Road, they were accepted the same as we were accepted because we were minority, first of all, and second of all, we had been there longer than some of them.

PS: Oh! The only thing... I'll tell you one thing that happened. The Ku Klux Klan marched through Glassport.

MH: Do you remember when?

PS: Oh! -----? I just remember...

MH: Before the war? After the war?

PS: After the war.

MH: After the Second World War – it was in the '50's.

PS: And my father saw people marching that he thought were friends of his. And do you know, coming from Europe, my Dad always wrapped his Torahs and tallis and his stuff with newspaper. And I'd say, "What are you ashamed of?" But that was from Europe. They did that in Europe. So anyway, he saw a friend of his. They met in the Methodist church.

MH: Methodist.

PS: And he went in the back and sat in the last row. And he come back to his grocery store and the lady come in whose son was principal of the high school. And another lady

came in and said, "Well, Mr. Snyder -----?, what did you think about the Ku Klux Klan meeting in the Methodist church?"

And my dad's standing there and said, "I couldn't believe it. And by the way, Mrs. Hickes. I couldn't believe you were there." And my mother said, "You're in business -----? You shouldn't have said that." "Yeah," he said, "I shoulda' said that." But normally, we weren't bothered much.

MH: I see. Did they... Was anybody beaten up or anything?

PS: No....! -----?

MH: I see. They just came.

BR: They just came.

PS: No!

BR: But I have to tell you, my father and Mr. Snyder weren't partners until like 1930. And then they dissolved the partnership. And my father went to Duquesne and opened a business meat market and had the business for five years in Duquesne. That was the agreement. And then after the five years, he opened the store in Glassport and he had the store in Duquesne too. And then...

MH: And what was that called – in Duquesne?

BR: Darling's Market.

MH: Darling's. Okay. What street, do you know? What street did he pick?

BR: It was on Monongahela Avenue – it was the main street. And then when they were partners it was called National Grocery.

PS: ...groceries. That's what my dad's was called – National Grocery. But, oh, we never... I can't... Oh, I'll tell you one other anti-Semitic story.

A boy was... Lebowitz's was in Glassport and they sold shoes and clothing and whatever. And things got real bad and they were going like bankrupt. And the boy was in high school. And he came to work with us. He had relatives, but he came with us. He was the same age as my brother. Worked in the mill all night – in the high school by day and it was all straight A's in high school.

Came time to graduate... And in those days, the first honor student got the scholarship to Pitt. And he's comin' up the steps in the high school and the English teacher, Mr. Milroth says to somebody, "That Jew ain't getting' that scholarship. I got it all fixed with Mr. Quick at Pitt and you don't have to worry. You'll get it. You won't..." And he did not get the scholarship.

But Judge Samuel A. Weiss that was from Glassport, the college and everything – he said to him, "I'll see that you get a scholarship." And so, he went to Duquesne, where Sammy had gone, and each year they renewed his scholarship. But all through high school and all through college he worked nights in the mill. I'm just showing you how you can make it. And he made it.

MH: What as his name?

PS: Joseph Lebowtz

MH; Lebowtz. Okay.

BR: That was his sister, Rhea, that was the same age as...

PS: But... This guy says, "You aren't getting' that scholarship." And then, when they went to Pittsburgh for the interview, they was comin' back in the car and there were five of them – four of them – and my brother said, "Well, it was a wasted trip for most of us 'cause it was decided before."

And the head of the schools, Mr. Naserived next door to the Raden's, who were Jewish. And he said to Mrs. Raden, "What did Merrill Snyder mean by that?" She said, "I don't know, Mr. Raden." She knew what he meant.

MH: Now, I would like to know a little bit about what other professions besides the ones your parents were in.

BR: Okay.

MH: And tell me about... Were there men who worked in the mines? Was that the main...

BR: The mill. The mill.

MH: In the mill. Okay. The main industry...

BR: The main industry was... there was a Pittsburgh Steel Foundry. And there was the Glass Works, the glass factory. And then there was Copperweld Steel. Now Copperweld Steel – Frank R. S. Kaplan – he owned that. And then there was Southwest Steel that Ampers owned, who were also Jewish. And then there was Tube City Steel – the Coslov's owned...

MH: Coslov..

PS: That was Jewish.

BR: And so they were Jewish. Now they didn't live in Glassport, but they had businesses in Glassport.

PS: -----? in Glassport.

BR: Scheiner's – their relatives lived in Glassport too. But they did have businesses. Now Sam Papernick was in real estate. And he had four daughters and three of his daughters went to college. And you know Janet Moritz? Well, Janet Moritz is Sam Papernick's daughter.

MH: I see.

PS: And he owned about half the town.

BR: Half the town.

MH: Janet Moritz's husband is now head of Equitable Gas. Or he was.

BR: He was.

MH: Yes. He's retired now.

PS: His mother was -----? Klein and I'm related. Anyway... Mr. Papernick owned about half the town and when we teachers were gonna' go and strike and we wanted a raise somebody on the school board said, "You go tell Sam Papernick the taxes are going up." (laughs)

BR: Then we have... We had a lot of people who were in the grocery business. A lot of people. There were other Papernick's that were in the grocery business. And the Alpern's were in the grocery business. And then we had the Mendlowitz's, and they were truckers. They had one truck and they did hauling. And now they have many trucks and do hauling.

PS: And they also hauled produce.

BR: And then there were the Mendlowitz – another Mendlowitz. No. The Raden's. The Radens family had a – he had a haberdashery, a men's store. And he had three children. All three of them went to college. One is a dentist and he opened an office in Glassport after World War Two and was there until he retired. And now his son-in-law, Joel Casar is in his office.

MH: Isn't that something.

BR: Then there was Al Levin. They lived here. They lived in Glassport. And he was a dentist, but his office was in McKeesport. And he had two daughters. One is married to a rabbi – Herron – I think, is his name. And I don't know what the other one – the other one – who she's married to.

Then we had Klein's. And Morris Klein was an engineer at Westinghouse and he was a very bright man. And his brother was Max Klein and he owned a haberdashery. But mostly he sold uniforms. And his children were in the business, you know, followed in the business.

And then there was another family of Klein's who had girls. They were the girls that taught Sunday school.

PS: And what about the one that was a schoolteacher.

BR: Eleanor. She was a schoolteacher. And she moved away.

PS: She got married.

BR: She moved – somewhere East.

PS: Philly, I think she -----?

BR: And then they had a son, Joe Klein. And then they had a daughter, Frances Palley and she lived in Glassport and raised her children in Glassport. And Phyllis said he worked in the mill mostly.

PS: Yes.

BR: And...

MH: You mean in an executive position?

PS: No.

BR: No.

MH: As a laborer? Really? 'Cause that's the thing you don't find.

PS: You have to remember... When my mother's mother died, she went to McKeesport – her aunt had a boarding house and people slept in that boarding house day shift and night shift. And they came from Europe to work in the mills.

MH: Were they Jews?

PS: Oh, yeah! They were all orthodox Jews. And they worked in the mill. They weren't educated.

BR: I have to tell you one thing. Phyllis talks about the Hungarians. My family, we were Litvaks. And we were not Hungarian and my parents did not speak Hungarian. And it was difficult when my mother played penny-ante poker with the women. She never knew when they spoke in Hungarian if they were talking about her or not.

But I found as a Litvak that I was discriminated. And that's why I went to the Temple. They called me a herring slinger and I didn't know what that was. And so I did not go to the Hungarian Sunday school. That's why I went to the Temple.

MH: I see.

BR: (laughs)

MH: It's interesting that -----? children's generation didn't know about this.

PS: I went to a wedding in Cleveland. 'Cause my husband came from Europe and his family was in Cleveland. And somebody said, "You mean you came from McKeesport, and you don't speak Hungarian?" (laughs)

MH: I see. So that's how...

PS: That's where they came.

BR: I wanted to put that in there because I didn't want you to think that I was a spoiled brat.

MH: (laughs) Certainly not.

BR: Because it hurt me. And I was different. I was blonde-haired, blue eyes. And they were dark hair and dark eyes.

MH: You were a different kind of Jew.

BR: I was a different kind of Jew.

And then we had the Ehrenreich family. They were in the produce business.

And Marty Morrow, who owned Hardy and Hayes. They lived in Glassport at one time. And he had a jewelry store in McKeesport.

And then we had Morry Levenson. He was a pharmacist. And he lived... His business was in Wilson, which is another small town.

And then we had the Broders. And I had told you about Mrs. Broder being so bright.

PS: And Leroy...

BR: And Leroy was an attorney. And his sister, Ann Broder, was a teacher. An excellent teacher.

PS: She taught me.

BR: And then they have a son, Bill Broder, and he was a grocer. And Bill Broder's daughter was married to Rabbi Address(?) – a Rabbi.

And then we had Sammy Weiss -----?

MH: I'd like to talk about him.

PS: Oh, yeah!

MH: Now, unfortunately, we never got a chance to interview him. He was already elderly.

BR: So I could tell you about Sam.

MH: Okay. Well, you finish first, and we'll get back to him.

BR: And Sammy had a... There was Mr. Weiss. He called himself Weiss, Sammy's father. They lived on a hill.

And down below on Monongahela Avenue was the uncle, and his name was Veiss – V-e-i-s-s. But it was his brother. And he owned a paper and paint store. Wallpaper and paint store.

And he had two daughters. And they were the ones who donated... The one daughter donated the lights that were in the Temple. In the synagogue.

Then there was Louie Jackson. And Louie Jackson was the Justice of the Peace, and he worked in Pittsburgh in one of the -----? law...

PS: They owned a clothing store.

BR: Yeah. But he worked in... I think he was a tipstaff, I think.

And then there were the Katz's. Gertrude Katz, she had a grocery store and she raised two sons who were attorneys, Sherman and – what was the other... Sherman and Herbert...

MH: It doesn't matter.

BR: But anyway, they went to Florida and they developed so much of Hollywood and...

PS: Not only that... The one became head of U. J. A. for all of Miami. So you know how they made it.

BR: And then there was Abe Darling. And I'm the product of Abe Darling. And my sister Dorothy. And my brother Sol.

MH: And what was your mother's name?

BR: Rebecca.

MH: Rebecca.

BR: Rebecca Frances Kopelman Darling.

And then there were the Weisenthals. And they had a store in Glass... In Wilson. A grocery store. His father, Charley, lived in Wilson. But Arthur, his son, lived in Glassport.

Then there were the Saks's. And the Saks's had the... He worked in men's clothing. He was a brother-in-law to Mr. Raden and he worked there for a while. And then he went to Pittsburgh.

And then there were the Millers. And the Millers had a grocery...

PS: Had a shoe store.

BR: They had a shoe store. And their son, Ben, worked in the shoe store.

PS: And Phil.

BR: And Philip.

And then there was Jacob Chotiner. He was a handyman. He put in garage doors for everybody in Glassport.

MH: (laughs)

PS: Anywhere.

BR: Anywhere.

MH: That, you remember.

BR: Then there was my brother, Sol Darling. He lived in Glassport and he took over my father's store after my father retired.

And there was Sam Schomberger. He had a pool hall.

PS: But before that, he had a cleaning place.

BR: Oh, he had a... Benny Lebovitz had the cleaning place.

PS: And so did Schomberg.

BR: Benny Lebovitz had the cleaning store.

And then there were the Weinbergs.

Then there were the Goldsteins. And Sam Gold... I don't remember what his parents' name was. But there were three girls and a boy. And Sam Goldstein became a very prominent attorney in Pittsburgh.

And the Weinbergs lived in Glassport. They had a gasoline station on the way to McKeesport. And...

PS: Benny Lebovitz's daughter, Helen, who was a college grad, married Berman that was in charge of all the recycling for Allegheny County.

MH: No relation.

PS: No. No relation.

BR: And then I told you about the Coslovs

MH: Coslovs

BR: Coslovs. And the Scheiners. The Scheiners were part of their family and they came from New York and they lived in Glassport. And he worked in the offices. I think I told you just about every...

MH: That is just wonderful -----?

BR: And there was... We had another woman. I don't know what her husband's name was. But she was another exceptional woman. Her name was Mary Seigel. A very exceptional woman. I think her husband was an accountant. But I don't remember what his name is.

PS: Her brother was the third base coach of the New York Dodgers.

MH: No kidding? (laughs)

PS: And there was seven in that family. And he was always giving the kids money.

BR: Pittler was her maiden name.

PS: Pittler.

BR: Pittler was her maiden name.

PS: And her husband was purchasing boss at the Copperweld Steel Company. That was his job.

BR: I don't remember...

PS: He was a purchasing boss. And she was a nurse. And she met him... He was either gassed in the war or something. And she met him in the hospital and they got married.

MH: Was he Jewish? He was Jewish?

BR: Oh, yeah.

MH: I want to talk a little bit now... We went over grade school... And this is just wonderful. Because you remember...

BR: I want you to have this.

MH: I intend to take it and keep it, because you wrote it out so beautifully. That is kind of Glassport at its heyday for the Jewish community, which I'm assuming was the '40's to '60's, or something like that.

BR: Yes. Yes.

PS: I would say.

MH: So let's talk a little bit about your high school experiences. You went to grade school, and I guess everybody moved on to high school.

BR: Junior-senior high school. Glassport Junior-Senior High School.

MH: Okay. And where was that located?

BR: On Ohio Avenue.

PS: About five doors from where I lived. (laughs)

MH: Very good. And did you mix in with... All the Jews mixed in with the other kids?

PS: Yeah. We did.

BR: Yes.

PS: I joined Girl Reserves.

BR: I belonged to the Home Ec Club. I don't know if I belonged to Girl Reserves. I don't remember.

PS: I joined Girl Reserves.

MH: What was that?

PS: That was for me church.

BR: YMCA.

PS: ...CA.

MH: Oh, I see.

PS: And I joined...

BR: The DeMolay was the boys. And the girls were the Girl Reserves... I don't...

End of Tape 1 (1 of 2) – Side 2

MH: Betty's going to continue her story about one of the highlights of her life.

BR: So, it took eight years for all of this. And there was a lot of printing and a lot of talking and they offered me a settlement, which I didn't want to take. And after eight years the case finally went to the State Supreme Court. First it went to Commonwealth Court.

In Commonwealth Court you have three judges and usually the person doesn't go. But I went as a spectator because I wanted to see what was going... There's two attorneys and three judges. And I got a two-to-one decision in my favor. And there were two men and one woman and I don't know how they voted, but I was happy with the decision.

And then the school district took it to the State Supreme Court. And the State Supreme Court upheld the Commonwealth Court's decision. And sent it back to the Appellate Court to make a monetary decision. And I came out smelling like a rose.

MH: (laughs)

PS: That's nice.

MH: Yeah.

BR: And I just felt that they couldn't do that to a woman, and they couldn't do that to a Jewish woman. At that time there were just two of us that were Jewish that were on the staff of the school district and I just felt that part of that was because I was Jewish. And part because I was a woman. And they knew they were gonna' lose because they had the money put away.

MH: I see. So you got it.

BR: I did. I did get it.

MH: Oh, that's very good.

BR: It was Neal's first non-jury trial and he was so pleased 'cause he won it.

MH: Well, it was a righteous cause.

PS: Well, she did deserve to win.

MH: She certainly did.

BR: Yes.

MH: I wanted to go back a little bit. You started to tell me about this woman, Charlotte Papernick, who was in the Navy during the war. You don't hear of too many Jewish service women.

BR: Yes. Yes. Charlotte was... Sam Papernick, who owned the real estate, it was his second daughter. I told you he had four and that was Janet Moritz's sister. And she was a very... They were all very bright.

And she joined the Navy and served in the service. And then she came home. I guess... She went to Pitt and finished her education.

And then they had an aunt in Detroit. And the aunt in Detroit used to say, "Send me your girls, I'll get them married." (laughs) So they went to Detroit. And she got a husband. (laughs)

MH: (laughs) Isn't that something. Did she tell you anything about her Navy experiences at all?

BR: No. She never mentioned it. Though she and her... When she got married, she and her husband owned gift shops. And...

MH: That was quite unusual. At one time, I read in a newspaper somewhere that someone was doing a project on Jewish women that had been in the service. And she...

PS: Well, she got to use her G. I. and go back to Pitt...

MH: ...to school. I see.

PS: ...and got her Master's in retailing.

MH: Yes.

PS: Yes.

MH: Let's talk a little bit about Judge Weiss because he was such a prominent figure in Pittsburgh.

PS: Oh, yes.

MH: And in the Jewish community.

PS: Yes.

BR: Well, when he was growing up he went to Glassport High School.

MH: This is Judge Samuel Weiss.

BR: And he graduated and went to Duquesne University. And he played football for Duquesne University.

MH: And he was not a big guy.

BR: No. He looked like... He was stocky. And he played football for Duquesne University. And then from that he became a referee at football games. And then later, he went into politics. He became a State Senator. And then he became a Congressman. And then he became a Judge.

And all this time he lived in Glassport. He married Jeannette Hoffman and they had two children. Jimmy's the younger one. And then their daughter, Joy.

MH: Joy. I happen to know her.

PS: I had Jimmy in school.

MH: I wanted to ask... Were his parents immigrants?

BR: Yes.

PS: Oh, yes.

BR: And he had sisters. He had Molly and Pearly and Ettie. And there's one other one...

MH: Are any of them surviving? Would you know?

BR: I don't know if Pearly's still living. Molly passed away. And I don't know...

PS: One was in the old home and she died.

BR: That was Pearly.

PS: Yes.

BR: And Ettie died.

MH: Okay.

BR: They all died.

MH: Yeah.

BR: He was the only boy.

MH: Right.

PS: Married to Buddy Broudy.

BR: Yeah. That's Molly.

MH: I wanted to ask... If this is too personal, you have the right to refuse. Having a son who was retarded in those days... Things are a little bit different – more accepting today than they were then. I'd like to hear just how things happened and what you... You kept him at home? Is that it?

BR: Mm-mm.

MH: Until...

BR: I kept him at home. When he was six months old there was an ad in the paper that said they were gonna' start something at Western Pennsylvania Psychiatric Hospital.

MH: Can you give me a year -- approximately?

BR: Well, Richard was born in '48. So it had to be '48, '49.

MH: Okay.

BR: And we went to that meeting. And from that meeting we joined that group, which was called Parents and Friends of Mentally Retarded. It finally became ARC.

MH: Yes.

BR: It finally became ARC.

MH: Can you give me the... American Retarded...

BR: That was the Association for Retarded Children.

MH: Thank you. Okay.

BR: Association for Retarded Children. And then they had a falling-out and it became Allegheny County Mental Health and Association for Retarded Children. They divided. And we stayed with the ARC.

In the meantime, I met a woman who had a son who was retarded and we met a third woman and we went to the McKeesport school board and asked them if they'd give us a room because Richard was getting to be five-years-old, six-years-old, and had to start to school. I make it sound simple that he got to be five or six-years-old.

MH: Well, I'm interested in that.

BR: Richard had lots of therapy because I took him to Children's Hospital.

MH: Was it available?

BR: Only one therapist in Children's Hospital. And she taught me. And I had to do exercises five times a day, five minutes each day – each time – for years.

And then when he was about four, a man from Glassport opened up a chiropractic office and his name was Dr. Masch.

PS: I remember him.

BR: And I went to see him. And Dr. Masch said... I said to him, "Do you think you can help him? Because I'm not doing real well with this therapist in Pittsburgh. I'm doing the best I can."

So I started to go to him twice a week. And he didn't charge me what he charged everybody else. He charged everybody else four dollars for a treatment. He charged me two. So it cost me four dollars a week. And he must have treated Richard for about two years.

MH: So this was physical manipulation?

BR: From the chiropractor. And he started to walk during that period. And he helped me – he helped us a lot. I never went to a chiropractor in my life, but it was somebody that knew how to manipulate and I thought, well, they told me Richard may walk, but he wouldn't talk. Well, he walks fairly well. And...

MH: I was curious to know what services were offered to you once the diagnosis was made.

BR: Almost none. Almost none. I had to find the services. And I found a doctor in... A Dr. Donaldson in Pittsburgh.

And then I found a Dr. Betty McWilliams, who was a speech therapist, who helped me teach him to chew. I had to... We had to hunt out everybody in order to get...

And I couldn't drive with Richard in the car. There were no such thing as car seats. And my father... Norman would work in the store, and my father would get a

driver. We had drivers in the store. The driver would take me to Pittsburgh to all these appointments. Because it just... I couldn't drive with him.

MH: Did you have other children at that time? Or just...

BR: Mm-mm. Well, Richard was four-and-a-half when Susan was born.

MH: Yeah. Okay.

BR: And then two years later we had Chuck.

MH: So you had younger children at home and you still had to do this.

BR: Well... And then... When Richard was six, through my uncle, Natie Darling...

MH: A pharmacist.

BR: A pharmacist. And who had connections in the Catholic community. We got Richard in St. Anthony's School for Exceptional Children in Oakmont. And he would go there on Monday morning and would come back Friday afternoon.

MH: Oh, it was a boarding situation.

BR: It was a boarding... Yes. And they taught him and they worked with him and they helped him. He was there for a while. And then the opening came at Polk State School. And he went to Polk. And he was at Polk for eighteen years.

MH: Were there fees involved?

PS: -----?

BR: Oh, yes. Fees involved at St. Anthony's School. And fees involved with the State.

MH: No subsidy. No State – County...

BR: No – State. They have a... They did allow us a certain amount of money to come once a month to see him. But we came twice a month. But they would give us that much credit on what we paid because we came such a distance. It's a hundred and three miles from my house to... From our house to Polk.

MH: I was there once. Yes. It was quite far. But were you satisfied with the treatment?

BR: No. No, I wasn't. But we saw him often enough and took him home enough that we always had an input. But I wasn't happy because it was more custodial than anything else.

And then Richard had a chance to come to Pittsburgh. And after eighteen years he came to Pittsburgh. And...

MH: To a facility or...

BR: It was a rehabilitation facility. In Marcy.

MH: Oh, I see.

BR: Marcy in Pittsburgh. And he was there for approximately two years. And they taught him how to make a bed. They taught him how to take care of himself. They taught him to plant flowers and many things.

And then he had a chance to go into a C.L.A., a community living arrangement. We met Richard at several of them. And it was his decision which one he wanted. Sometimes he said, "No." He didn't like this place.

But he finally went into one that he liked and now... He was in there – I guess about five years. And now he's in the one that he's been in now – with the same people. He's had the same people for almost twenty years.

MH: Isn't that wonderful. Where is that? Is that in Pittsburgh?

BR: In Pittsburgh. In Squirrel Hill. Now he's on Asbury Place.

MH: Oh, I know where that is.

PS: Yes.

BR: And there are two men. There were three men. And they decided that Richard and this young man that he's with get along so well, so they just... They each have their bedroom and a bath. And upstairs there are three girls. And they have been together - the three girls and two fellows – for eighteen years ago. So it's like a family.

PS: I know.

MH: I'm asking that because through some volunteer work I advocated for some of these neighborhood living arrangements.

BR: Well, this is for... Now they call it Community Endeavors, but it used to be Children's Aide for Jewish Women.

MH: Children's Aide Society. Right?

BR: Children's Aide Society. And it was for orphans originally. Way, way, way back. And then... This one woman, I don't remember her name. But she had two retarded grandchildren. And she said, "Well, there aren't any more orphans." So they took the

cause of the retarded children. And they started... Now I think they have about fifteen places now.

MH: Right. And people don't know they're in the neighborhoods. They can be next door to you. 'Cause their wonderful facilities.

BR: Yes. Wonderful.

MH: Would you say that when your son was born there was a stigma, or did people urge you to put him in an institution right away and not keep him at home?

BR: I never... I never... That was never the intention. And Richard had always... I always took him everywhere. The important thing was, I made sure that he was dressed fit to a T. And he went everywhere with us. And he still does.

MH: That's wonderful.

BR: He's traveled with us. He's gone to New York. He's gone to Florida. He flies to Miami every year.

MH: Very enlightened.

PS: Oh, yes.

BR: And they put him on the plane. And this time, I had... We had to see that somebody took care of him because he got sick in Florida and I didn't want him to go back. So we paid a fee and they assigned someone to watch him while he was on the plane and then they took him to the car. Because now, he's at the point where he has to have a wheelchair to get... The airport is so long.

MH: Oh, it certainly is.

PS: That's true.

MH: Everybody needs a wheelchair.

PS: I could use a wheelchair. (laughs)

MH: [I want to talk to whoever is listening to this tape. Someone is running a sweeper upstairs from our room, which we have no control over. I'm hoping it doesn't...]

BR: [Could that be the air conditioner?]

MH: [No. I hear it's a sweeper in the facility. So I hope it doesn't come out on the tape or hinder that. So I'm just mentioning that now.]

I'd like to get back a little bit to B'nai Israel Synagogue, which was our main topic. You moved out of... Let's see. Betty moved... No. Wait a minute. Tell me again. You lived in Glassport all your married life until when?

BR: Until... Let's see.

MH: Well, roughly.

BR: In probably '67, '68.

MH: Okay. And the Synagogue was still viable at that time?

BR: I don't know. I belonged to the Temple in McKeesport.

MH: The Temple in McKeesport. Okay.

BR: I belonged to the Temple in McKeesport.

MH: All right.

BR: And Phyllis, when she got married, she didn't live in Glassport too long.

MH: Okay. Where did you move to?

BR: I moved to White Oak.

PS: I lived in some other -----? And then I moved when I got off to... I lived in Glassport. Then when I adopted the one child I lived up on Euclid Avenue. I was still in Glassport.

MH: I see.

PS: Then I went out to the country for a little bit. Then I came back to Glassport for twelve years. Other than that...

MH: Did we establish when the Synagogue closed?

BR: I don't know when it closed. I don't know when it closed.

MH: I can't remember when the last... Were you there at the last – when it...

BR: No.

MH: Were you, Phyllis, by any chance?

PS: I don't remember.

MH: I mean, did they make a ceremony or... You said when they distributed your Aron haKodesh and everything...

BR: So many of them passed... So many of them passed away. There was my brother and Harry Kimmelman, and Sidney Mendlowitz. And the three of them made the decisions. Glassport had a cemetery. It was part of the Temple cemetery. And they always gave burial privileges. So many members that were left in the Glassport community that belonged to the Temple belonged to the Glassport Shul – they bought plots for all those people.

MH: I see.

BR: They bought that from the Temple so that those people have their plots.

MH: Oh, isn't that... That's wonderful.

BR: Yeah. And then they sold everything and then they distributed the money.

MH: Right.

BR: Then some of the money went to the Historical Society.. Some of the money went to...

PS: Well, I know they gave money once... The Gemilas Chesed had a house shul in McKeesport. And I remember Sol gave money so they could pay a davener, someone to lead services. And they gave, I think, to the McKeesport Hospital – a thousand dollars.

MH: I see. So that's how they distributed the money.

PS: Yeah. They did that.

BR: And the rest of the money went to the Historical Society to maintain – to use the records.

MH: The records. And keep the books. Well, that's terrific! How many Jews would you now say are left in Glassport? Phyllis, could you say.

PS: Well... Let's see.

MH: For Jewish families. Don't tell me you're it.

BR: No.

PS: No. No.

BR: There're probably about twenty.

PS: Oh, let's see. The girl that's the secretary for Gemilas Chesed. She and her mother live in Glassport. And...

BR: The Raden's sold their house to her daughter, so the Shor's live in Glassport.

PS: Glassport. And...

BR: Mendlowitz's live in Glassport.

PS: Glassport.

BR: And the Papernick's live in Glassport.

PS: Glassport.

MH: Oh, really? They still have that...

PS: Well, that's to -----?

MH: So, would you say about forty, sixty people. More than that? No. Not that many. Okay. Maybe ten, twenty.

BR: Twenty.

MH: Twenty. Okay.

PS: I would say about twenty.

MH: Yeah. Twenty. And I assume the young people don't come back to live...

PS: This week is their hundredth anniversary. And last time they had an anniversary...

MH: This is Glassport?

PS: Yeah. And my husband took me and I hardly saw anybody I knew. (laughs)

MH: How did they celebrate?

PS: I don't know what they're having this week. A parade – and a this – and a bingo. And something else.

MH: And can you tell me, Betty, a little bit about McKeesport and White Oak. What is their Jewish community? Is it shrinking or...

BR: It's shrinking. But it's pretty stable. The children have not moved back. But the people that are there are very active. They still maintain two shuls.

PS: Yes. And Gemilas Chesed that I belong to... They have minyan everyday and yeshiva – they formed a boy's school and that helps with the minyan.

MH: Really?

PS: And they have boys come from New York.

MH: You mean Yeshiva?

PS: Chicago. Yeah.

MH: Really?

PS: That's why... That was the Rabbi Chinn's one hope. Because it's hard. Yiskor - when we had yiskor, there were a lot of people. But when we got a meeting ----- --? I was the Sisterhood President for three years. And we got -----? and this and that -----? And I'll tell you... We don't have a lot of people doing. But we still have a shul. And it's viable. And we have a cemetery up on the hill. And one --- -----?

MH: The hill in Glassport?

PS: No. No.

MH: In McKeesport?

PS: In McKeesport.

MH: Okay.

PS: Up on top of the hill. They have a cemetery. And...

MH: What hill is that?

BR: That's Polish Hill up this... St. Joseph's is up there.

PS: Yeah.

MH: Okay. That's Polish Hill.

PS: (laughs) And we... The only thing is – one time they were – we were comin' to service and somebody had painted swastikas on the path. And a few holocaust survivors didn't want to walk in. They wanted to know why those swastikas weren't gone. And then one time...

MH: Do you recall when that was? Was that recently?

PS: Oh... Not too long ago.

MH: Okay.

PS: And then up on top of the hill a lot of stones were turned over.

MH: So there was some vandalism in the cemetery.

PS: Yeah. But the Rabbi was smart. He didn't put it in the paper or anything. And we fixed whatever stones. Other than that, we haven't... And they watch the mail when it comes.

MH: I see.

PS: They're careful about opening the mail.

MH: Is that just since September 11th? Or is it... Has it been for several years?

PS: No. It was before. Several years. But I know that there was some holocaust people that didn't want to walk into the shul because they said, "Why weren't the swastikas washed or painted off."

MH: You had something, Betty.

BR: Yes. I noticed when we went to Temple B'nai Israel that there are no children anymore. There are no... And I don't know – do you still have your Sunday school? Do you still have your pre-school?

PS: Yes. We have a pre-school...

MH: At Gemilas Chesed.

PS: But we... Lindy Kendall has a pre-school. And we take kids that are not Jewish and Jewish kids. And I still do graduations every year. So I do... I still do what I can.

MH: Graduation from...

PS: Pre-school.

MH: Pre-school! Isn't that... What do you do?

PS: Well, we serve. You know. We have cake and we serve... Our shul is still... Everything we ever have is strictly kosher.

MH: Oh, of course. Rabbi Chinn. My goodness! Are you kidding. (laughs)

PS: Oh, yes. And my husband...

BR: But we notice there are no children at Temple B'nai Israel. And we used to have big Sunday school classes. And big confirmations. It's sad when you see it.

PS: The mills are gone. So, you know, the businesses are gone.

MH: Yeah. Sure. So you would say... It's probably -- that's what did it.

PS: Older people. Because the mills... The mills went and the businesses went.

MH: Betty, do you live most of the time in Florida? You live all the time, permanently?

BR: All the time. All the time.

MH: And then do you just come back...

BR: To visit.

MH: ...to visit. Well, you have family here. Yes, of course. How nice.

BR: I have family in Florida too. My sister and her children live in Florida. And her grandchildren and her great-grandchildren.

MH: Oh, wonderful!

BR: So, that makes it nice.

MH: Sure. I'm tryin' to think of anything else that you would like to say. This is your...

PS: Well, the only thing is...

MH: Okay, Phyllis.

PS: ...Glassport really had a nice shul. And it was viable. And we used to hire somebody every year to daven for us. They'd come from New York or wherever.

BR: I have to tell you. When I was growing up, they had minyan every Saturday morning at the shul. And my father used to get up at four o'clock in the morning and go to the store and work so that he could leave at seven o'clock to go to shul to make minyan. And every Saturday morning there was minyan at the Temple. The shul was opened up.

And all the businessmen came. They came at seven and they had their... They didn't stay till ten o'clock, like you know... But they had minyan. And if anybody passed away there was always – we always had minyan. They felt that obligation that maybe some of our young people don't feel today.

PS: Well, that's true. And they have to really beg a little bit at our shul for minyan -----? It's rough, but they...

MH: Now, could you just give me a comparison between... Since you both lived in small towns and in big cities. Which would you think... What were the advantages, Betty, of a small town life?

BR: The advantages of a small town was... It was a different time when we didn't have to worry about... You could... I could walk to Phyllis's house. And I could come home, if it was six o'clock and it was dark, and I didn't have to worry about it.

PS: No.

BR: You didn't have to lock your doors. And we had a sense of belonging. And there was no fears. You asked what we did in the summertime. We had a swimming pool that we went to.

MH: The whole...

PS: We went to the high school basketball games.

BR: And the football games. Those were all very, very important in a small town.

PS: Yeah.

BR: And the other thing was... I visited relatives. Now, I did go to camp. I went to camp two years.

MH: Where?

BR: At Camp Louise in Maryland.

PS: Oh, well, we went to Emma Farm. You know all about Emma Farm?

MH: Yes. Well, you tell me.

PS: We kids all went to Emma Farm.

MH: I see.

PS: And it was Depression. So maybe we paid eighteen dollars or twenty dollars. And my sister...

MH: It was in a different place than it is now.

PS: Oh, yeah. They're in Harmony, Pennsylvania.

MH: Harmony.

PS: And you meet all these kids... They're lawyers and doctors. There was Depression. And everybody went to Emma Farm.

MH: For how long did you go?

PS: Well, we stayed like two weeks.

MH: That was a part of the Jewish community.

PS: Yeah. But you stayed two weeks. And I can remember the Emma Farm. They had the different bunks and things. And they were named for birds. And sisters went to the Orioles. And my sister lied about her age – she was younger – but she wanted to go. And she went and she put her... You had like a place you kept your suitcase and then you'd stand in front of your bed and they'd come around and stand – how you made your bed and everything. And we're all there and I said to my sister, "Don't tell anybody we're related."

MH: (laughs)

PS: Well, she was young. The clothes fell out of her locker. And I said, "Oh, that's alright sister, I'll help you fix it. I'll put it back." Then everybody knew we were related.
(laughs)

MH: How did you go to camp in Maryland? That was unusual.

BR: Well, my Aunt Belle sent Jerry to Mt. Airy, which was the boy's camp. And so she talked my mother into telling my father that that's what I should do. So I went to Camp Louise.

PS: Did you. How long?

BR: I stayed two weeks the first time and the second time I stayed a month.

MH: I see.

BR: And I loved it.

MH: I can imagine.

PS: But we all went... All these kids from Pittsburgh...

BR: Yes. That was quite a... First time I went, when the week was over, I called home my dad said, "Are you comin' home?" And I said, "No." And he said, "Well, I don't know if I have thirty-five dollars to send. (laughs)

MH: That wasn't a Jewish camp?

BR: Oh, yeah!

PS: It was. It was.

MH: Oh, it was a Jewish camp.

BR: It was a Jewish camp.

PS: In the old days...

MH: What was the name of it? I'm sorry.

BR: Camp Louise.

MH: You said that. Okay.

PS: But in the old days all these kids in Pittsburgh and the small towns and everything, growin' up, money was tight – they went to Emma Farm. And there was...

MH: They still are going.

PS: They still are.

BR: And my granddaughter is a counselor at Emma Farms this year.

MH: Isn't that nice. But nobody... What about Camp Louise? Is it still operating?

BR: Well, they're... Yes. They're still operating. And, in fact, we're going to Norman's sixtieth high school reunion and one of the girls went to camp with me.

MH: Isn't that wonderful. Where is this reunion?

BR: One of the women.

MH: Is that Allderdice reunion?

BR: Uh-huh.

MH: Oh, I see. Sixtieth.

PS: My sister passed away and they were sitting at my house and Max Sherwin and his brother were twins and they said, "Oh, you paid twenty dollars to go to Emma Farm. My brother and I, we were twins. We went for eighteen." You know... They were -----
---?

MH: They gave a discount. (laughs)

PS: Yes. (laughs)

End of Tape 2 (2 of 2) – Side 1

Tape 2 (2 of 2) – Side 2

Includes Norman Rosenberg

MH: ...experiences. Norman, would you repeat again, what branch of the service you were in.

NR: I was in the Army. In the Field Artillery.

MH: And what years was that? And how old were you?

NR: I was nineteen years old. And it was March, 1943, when I went into active service.

MH: And when did you leave?

NR: I was discharged October 20th, of 1945.

MH: That's something you always remember, right?

NR: Certain dates you do.

MH: Tell us a little...

NR: In fact, one of the dates I was tryin' to remember – or one of the things I was tryin' to remember was... During my high school years I was a very big enthusiast of ice-skating. And three nights a week, usually, I was down at Duquesne Gardens. And I had many of my young girlfriends who ice-skated with me.

MH: That was on Craig Street, wasn't it?

NR: Right.

MH: Yes.

NR: And on December 7th of 1941, that Sunday, I was ice-skating at Duquesne Gardens.

MH: In Pittsburgh.

NR: In Pittsburgh. When the announcement came over the intercom that the Japanese had attacked the United States at Pearl Harbor in Hawaii. Most of us left the Duquesne Gardens feeling very downtrodden, as you can imagine, because it was the next day when Franklin Delano Roosevelt declared that date as the day that will live in infamy.

And I was already still... I was still in high school. I didn't graduate until June of 1942. And I went to enroll at the University of Pittsburgh then. And the first semester I completed, but after the first semester, I had to go into active service and that was March of 1943.

MH: Now, you were drafted then?

NR: No. I enlisted.

MH: You just enlisted.

NR: I enlisted. I enlisted.

MH: Was there pressure on – people to...

NR: Well, I thought maybe by enlisting I would have a more – a better chance of staying in college a little bit longer.

MH: I see.

NR: It didn't work out that way. So I went... Took my basic training at Ft. Bragg, North Carolina in Field Artillery. And I went to Camp Shenango in Pennsylvania after the basic training.

MH: Was that Shenango Valley?

NR: Shenango – north of Pittsburgh – it was.

MH: Okay.

NR: And I... I was able to come home on weekends and I would visit Betty. She was working at Western Psychiatric Hospital at that time.

Anyhow, from there I went to Camp Patrick Henry, which is Newport News, Virginia. And I shipped overseas on a Liberty Ship convoy. And not being very knowledgeable about volunteering in the Army, I volunteered to be on the auxiliary gun crew on the Liberty Ship convoy going overseas. And we shipped out in September.

It took thirty days going back and forth in the Atlantic, trying to dodge the German submarines that were very prevalent at the time. And when we got through the Straits of Gibraltar, we were attacked by the German Air Force. And being on the auxiliary gun crew, it gave me the opportunity to be on board on top of the ship, rather than down in the hole where the other passengers were.

But we were very fortunate that we were able to continue on the way. I don't if there were many casualties in the convoy itself. But we landed in Bizerte, North Africa as our destination. I went to a replacement depot in Bizerte that was assigned to the Third Infantry Division, the 39th Field Artillery Battalion.

It was one of the three American divisions that landed in North Africa originally. The First, Third, and Ninth. And they fought through North Africa. And then they fought through Sicily. And then they went to Salerno, Italy. And it was shortly after Salerno that I joined the Third Infantry Division.

You have to know that the Third Infantry Division is world-renowned because it had as one of its members the most decorated soldier in the Second World War – Audie

Murphy. I served in the Field Artillery that supported Audie Murphy's infantry regiment. So most of the places that you heard about the Third Infantry going, I was with Audie Murphy.

We went first to southern Italy, around Naples. And we were tryin' to move the Germans back, but it was at Mt. Casino that they had us stopped cold in our tracks. We weren't able to move at all. We shelled that mountain and we shelled that monastery till there was nothin' left of it, but we still couldn't move. And that's when they decided to do a end-around type of amphibious landing. And that became the landing at Anzio.

I landed on Anzio on D-Day of the landing. And we moved very quickly until we stopped, and we dug into our foxholes. And that was in January. It was during this period of time that I was wounded and I received a Purple Heart for shrapnel wounds.

We stayed in the fox holes on Anzio – that was January, February, March, April, May – till we were finally able to push out of there. We had terrible, terrible results.

MH: Is that where you lived – was in a foxhole – you didn't live in a tent or anything?

NR: In a foxhole.

MH: Go ahead.

NR: Lived in a foxhole. And I...

MH: Did you move then? Did you move from -----?

NR: Well, we had to come outta' the fox hole just in order to do the fire missions.

MH: Oh, I see.

NR: But we never moved from one foxhole to another one...

MH: You didn't.

NR: ...until May of 1944. I'm tryin' to think now. We finally were able to move the Germans back and we went on to fight into Rome. We arrived in Rome the same date...

MH: I'll give you a chance Betty. Okay.

NR: We arrived in Rome on the same date that the allies landed on Normandy. The reason I can remember that it was the same date because the Stars 'n Stripes, which was the Army newspaper came out with a double edition that day – Allies arrived in Rome. Allies land in Normandy.

So after being in Rome for a very short time, we took amphibious training again. We had to go down around Salerno to do the training. And we would go out on the water and practice the landing and everything. And this landing was for the... One in southern France. We landed around St. Tropez, which is not far from the Mediterranean – the French Mediterranean – the French...

MH: Riviera?

NR: ...Riviera, at Nice. I had been a replacement to the 39th Infantry – Artillery – and some of the men that had been wounded in North Africa and Sicily in southern Italy were startin' to return to their outfits. So they had first choice to come back.

And so it took me from the Third Infantry Division and put me into a replacement depot in southern France. It was then that I was assigned to the Sixth Armored Division under General Patton and we were fighting in the Saar area of southern France at the time.

I have to go back a little bit and tell you that my battery commander with the Third Infantry Division was a Jewish officer from Squirrel Hill – a neighbor of mine on Pocusset Street – his name was Raymond Wiener. And Raymond Wiener, as the battery commander, had to select the positions for the artillery pieces and we went into the one area to pick out where we were gonna' locate. He was shot and killed by German Infantry that had been by-passed by our infantry.

I have to tell you as a Jewish war veteran and having a Jewish officer – it had some advantages. Because at one time on Anzio they had officers – or they had a rabbi come over from the States to do a Passover seder for us men there. And Ray Wiener always saw that I had a jeep available so that I could go to religious services.

Anyhow, he was killed in southern France and then I was put into replacement depot and assigned to the Sixth Armored, which was under Patton, and happened to be in the Saar area of southern France at the time.

Shortly after I went to the Sixth Armored Field Artillery, the Germans broke out in the Ardennes and the Sixth Armored along with the Fourth Armored Division had to race immediately up to the town of Bastogne which was being held and surrounded by the Germans, but it had taken the 101st Airborne completely surrounded.

And it was there that the General of the 101st, General McAuliffe refused to surrender his 101st Division with the one word, “Nuts.” And today, if you go back to Bastogne to look at the memorial that they have for the Battle of the Bulge, you will see a tank right at the entrance to where the memorial is and it also has a bronze statue of General McAuliffe with one word under it – Nuts.

MH: Did you go... Have you gone back?

NR: Yes. My wife and I went back...

MH: ...anniversary of Normandy...

NR: No. We went back in '71, it was our...

BR: Our twenty-fifth anniversary.

NR: Anyhow...

MH: Are you active in the reunions of...

NR: Yes. I am active in the Jewish War Veterans.

MH: Jewish War Vet... And reunions of your infantry division?

NR: No. I've never... I've never been to a war reunion.

MH: Reunion... But the Jewish War Vets...

NR: Jewish War Veterans I'm very active with.

After the Battle of the Bulge we went to Germany. We crossed over the Rhine and we were moving very, very quickly as General Patton was noted for. In fact, he had to stop sometimes in order to get re-fueled. And we were movin' so fast and we moved into...

MH: Did you move in trucks and convoys? Or do a march...

NR: Well, I was on an M-7. An M-7 is a full tractor -- like a tank.

MH: Oh, I see.

NR: With a 105 on it.

MH: No one marched these distances did they?

NR: March. Oh, the infantry did.

MH: They did, huh?

NR: Oh, sure. The infantry... But I was in the Field Artillery. Even in the Third Infantry we had the 105 pulled by a two and a half ton truck. It so happened that the one

I was on was a half-track on a 105. So it made sense that when I got transferred it wasn't much difference from me going to the half-track 105 to a M-7 full-track with 105.

But we went ahead and we went into Germany.

MH: You were being shot at all this time?

NR: Everyday of every year of every month.

MH: Oh, my goodness!

NR: We had German 88's that was very, very effective. We had the German mortars and they had the one that we called – we gave it a nickname – a Screaming Mimi. It was a mortar that had like twelve barrels and when they fired it, all twelve went out and you never knew where they were gonna' land.

But anyhow, we finished the war in May of 1945. And I had enough points because I had six battle stars and I had a Purple Heart and they gave you two points for every month of service overseas and one point for every month of service in the States.

MH: Did that translate to money? No.

NR: No. No. No. That was points for discharge.

MH: I see. I'm sorry.

NR: That's how they determined who would be discharged first.

MH: I see.

NR: And I had the... I think the minimum for early discharge was like eighty-five. And I had over ninety. So, I just had to wait. But in the meantime, they assigned me to be an M. P. on occupation duty. Well, as an M. P. I got to visit...

MH: Where was this?

NR: It happened to be near a town called Erfurt in Austria. And happened to be the town that had the concentration camp Buchenwald. So I had an opportunity to visit the concentration camp there at the time.

I didn't realize at the time though... We're talking fifty, sixty years ago... And my wife and I just went to a holocaust museum in St. Petersburg – Florida. I didn't know anything about this museum because we had been to the one in Washington. And we'd been to the one in Los Angeles and last year to New York. And St. Petersburg is number four in the country. They're not counting the Yad Vashem in Israel. But in the United States.

In there they have a... Just like the one in Washington, D. C., they have a railroad car that they transported the Jews to the concentration camps. And alongside of this one in St. Petersburg there's a monument like – and it has different units that liberated the various camps. And there was my Sixth Armored Division. So I knew that that was the reason why I'd been able to visit the camp.

MH: I see. But you weren't in with the first group that – went into the camp.

NR: No. Not that I know of. No. I don't remember that. I don't recall that. But I remember going to visit it and seeing the crematorium and seeing all the...

MH: The people.

NR: ...the people. It was just horrible.

MH: So all of those accounts that I've grown up with are true? How horrible it was.

NR: Absolutely. Absolutely. We have... Betty and I have gone to programs recently where they've had people who were holocaust deniers. And you can listen to these

people talk and you know that they're so full of B. S. Because if you see it with your own eyes, you can't deny it.

And the same thing happened when they took newsreels. You had General Eisenhower, took Fox Newsreels of all these concentration camps that he was able to get to. How do you deny it?

MH: What do you think about the German people themselves? The townspeople – did you...

NR: I have never...

MH: Did you think they were aware of really what was going on?

NR: They had to be. They had to be. They could not have... They could not deny it. We have had instances...

My wife and I – one time we went on a cruise. And we made friends with a couple. And the wife of the fellow, he happens to live in Clearwater – wasn't it? He was a chiropractor in Clearwater, Florida. And we're talkin' with the wife, Ingrid... Nice Jewish... (laughs) Nice German name. Anyhow, we're talkin' and she's telling us all these stories about when she was a child and she was in school... That she didn't know any of these things that was going on.

And I asked her a question, "Ingrid, if you saw someone in your class one day and another day they're not there anymore, what did you think happened to those people?"

Anyhow, you still have people that are tryin' to – deny that.

MH: Did you, as a soldier, know?

NR: Yes. Not only... I, as a soldier. But I knew... I had my... I had my dog tags that identified me as a Jewish soldier.

MH: And... You were... Were you worried?

NR: I was aware of it. Oh, I certainly was. I was worried because I knew that they were taking prisoners in certain combat zones that I happened to be in at the time. Especially in the Battle of the Bulge. They took so many American prisoners, you cannot believe. A lot of people may not even know about it, but they did.

In fact, I go to the counseling session at the Vets Center in Miami... And one of them happens to be – his name is Schragar. And he was taken prisoner during the Battle of the Bulge. And we asked him certain times, “Well, how did you keep the dog tags from being able to identify you. And he said he hid them. He never kept his...

MH: So they never knew his was a Jew.

NR: They never knew he was Jewish. You had to know... If you knew what was going on, you had to realize that they're certainly not gonna' treat anyone – whether it's a American Jewish soldier or whatever. If they become like prisoners, they're not gonna' have the Red Cross help in being treated under the rules of the Red Cross and the...

That's just like our rabbi from Temple B'nai Israel. Rabbi Leonard Winograd. He was a P. O. W. in the Second World War. He was shot down over...

MH: He was -----?

NR: No. No. He was shot down over Yugoslavia. He wasn't a rabbi at the time, but he was...

MH: Right.

NR: He had been from Johnstown and he was in the theater business. But he never denied that he was a Jew. And you have to know that I'm certain he wasn't treated very nicely.

MH: It was that experience, I think, that turned him towards what happened, as I recall.

NR: Right. I was very, very good friends with...

PS: That's interesting Norman. Aren't you -----?

MH: So you were discharged before they sent... Did they... Were they sending people troops to the Pacific?

NR: Well, yeah. That was another thing I was concerned about. I had so many points from the European theatre. And they had threatened to send me over to the Pacific because in May it still was...

MH: War.

NR: War. Yeah. Well, it was going on. It wasn't until what -- August -- till they dropped the atomic bomb in Nagasaki and Hiroshima.

But, I had some very, very funny experiences. I had... I took basic training at Ft. Bragg with a Jewish fellow by the name of... What was his name?

BR: Pollock.

NR: Pollock. Joe Pollock. And we went overseas about the same time from the States.

MH: Was he a Pittsburgher?

NR: No. He was, I think, from Massachusetts.

MH: Oh, I see.

NR: Anyhow... We went overseas together and went to the replacement depot in North Africa, and I was assigned to the Third Infantry and he was assigned to the Forty-fifth Infantry.

Well, you have to know that the Third and the Forty-fifth, even from North Africa, from Sicily, from Italy, from Anzio, the whole way – the whole way in the war – follow each other like. You know, there are certain parts where you are... I never ran into Joe. Never.

When I was assigned to do M. P. duty after the war, I happened to stop into a U. S. O. facility – run into Joe Pollock. And we're talking, and it was like my story was his story. He fought on Anzio right along side of me. And he was wounded on Anzio too. (laughs) And it was unbelievable. But I've never heard from the man since.

MH: What was the trip back like – after you were discharged?

NR: The trip back was... Compared to the thirty days going over, it was a snap. It took us like seven days on a big ship. It wasn't...

MH: What was it like going over?

NR: Terrible.

MH: The conditions? Is that what you mean?

NR: Yeah. Well, if you knew anything about... The Liberty Ship is not a very big ship or anything. It was so hot going over that a lot of us slept up on board on the deck. We laid a blanket down and then slept on the deck.

MH: And there were no requirements for knowing how to swim or anything like that?

NR: No. They gave us no...

MH: Or seasickness or anything like that?

NR: No. No life preservers, training or anything.

But let me tell you a story – talking about life preserver training. When we were taking amphibious training for – we had to get Anzio... We used to get on these LST's and we would have our whole gun section and our 105 artillery piece. And the one I was on, we happened to have a medic from our -----?

So this day they were takin' – it was just a dry run. It wasn't a landing. We were just practicing. And the weather had turned really, really bad and so we thought, well, maybe they'll – you know – cancel this. It's only a practice. What are we takin' a chance here. But the Navy said, how do you know what it's gonna' be when you're makin' the actual landing. You're gonna' go – you're gonna' do this practice.

So we're on a duck, the front of it opens up... The duck has to go out and go into the water and that's the way you go in to make the landing. A wave comes just as the duck – as our duck is going out. Takes a whole gun section, the gun, everything down into the Mediterranean.

We got... I was picked up by a sub-chaser. I had... We all had our life vests on. But... The medic from our duck got caught underneath the 105 and drowned. And I don't know how many other men in the other LST's had an incident like that.

But we all thought, "Well, gee, they're not gonna' make this landing on schedule." We lost all of our equipment, we lost some men... That isn't the way the Army works.

They re-supplied us and we made the landing on the original date it was.

MH: I see.

NR: The only thing about... When you make an amphibious landing... I don't know... But I know we didn't know where we're going. They never tell us. Only when we're on board the ship and going away from land and we're on the way.

If you ever hear anything about the Navy. You hear the intercoms calling out, "Now hear this. Now hear this. You are about to land on Anzio." Where the hell's Anzio. We didn't have no idea where Anzio was at the time. We come up from Naples and...

MH: And what about when you were on land? Did you know where you were? What the plan was?

NR: Well, yeah, you knew something about it. Like on Anzio, we were in that fox hole for all those months. The only thing we did do, we fixed them up with... They had these... What'd they call it? These radios you made out of crystal.

MH: Crystal sets.

NR: Yeah. Crystal set radio. And you know who we'd be listening to? Axis Sally. Axis Sally played American music that was our kind of music. The only thing is, you had to listen to her propaganda about givin' up and, you know, surrender, and you'll be treated very, very nicely. Except if you were Jewish. (laughs) You couldn't be sure you were gonna' be treated anyway. (laughs)

MH: Did you run into any anti-Semitism with all this kind of – such a cross-section of the country of soldiers?

NR: Well, I guess there was some.

MH: In basic training -----?

NR: I don't remember too much about really bad anti-Semitism. But there had to be because I guess a lot of the G. I.'s that were fighting the war thought that they were fighting the war for the Jews.

MH: You did feel that way with them?

NR: Oh yeah.

MH: I wondered how much was after... You know you were pretty young. (laughs)

NR: Yeah. We were all young.

BR: One thing I hate – he didn't tell you – was all the time that he was in the foxhole he had a dog because the dog kept him warm. And so many...

NR: The weather was pretty nippy then. It was winter.

MH: It was?

NR: Yeah. January.

BR: Very bad. And he fed the dog part of his food so that... Because so many men had frost bite. And their shoes got wet and stuff like that. And thank God...

NR: You're talking about frost bite and that. I have a book that came from the Sixth Armored Division and during the Battle of the Bulge, I think there were numbers that they quote, it was more... [Phone rings]

In the Sixth Armored Division history of the Second World War and they quote that the number of G. I.'s that came up with frost bite – frost bitten foot was more than the one's that were wounded -----?

MH: I'm surprised they let you have the dog. Or no one cared?

NR: Let me have the dog?

MH: The dog. Yeah.

NR: Well, I didn't have the dog in the Battle of the Bulge. I had him on Anzio.

MH: Yeah. Well, in the foxhole?

NR: Yeah. -----?

MH: Okay. I didn't know.

NR: I'll tell you an incident that happened on Anzio.

MH: Okay.

NR: We had our guns located in a row like and the mess tent was up at the end. So when we had to go for our meals, we would walk up from our gun section and go to the mess tent.

Germans... Well, we know now what happened was... We were carrying our mess kits out rather than have them underneath our shirt or anything, and the sun was shining on these mess kits and giving the Germans a reading on our location.

So the first thing we know, they're puttin' their 88 shells in our gun section -----
-----? And we didn't know how did they find this out. But they came out with a directive after that. That you never – if you don't want to be court marshaled – you better not ever carry your mess kit out in the open.

MH: Well, this...

NR: -----? do that.

MH: I'm sure you could go on and on. I hope someone is interviewing ex-soldiers.

NR: Well, I have to tell you. We were in New Orleans last year.

MH: Oh, at the D-Day Museum. Yeah. My son...

NR: We went to the D-Day Museum. And they wanted to do an oral history...

MH: Yes.

NR: ...of me at the time. But I never did it because we didn't have enough time to be there. And the Center – I think it's the Eisenhower Center -----?

MH: I know. My son lives in New Orleans.

Okay. I thank both of you. I thank all three of you – Phyllis, Betty, and Norman.

PS: Norman, that was so interesting and you're so lucky that you made it. Whoa!

MH: We're all grateful. And thank you so much for this wonderful interview about the synagogue. I don't know if you had anything to add about the synagogue and the life in Glassport. But actually, you were mostly in McKeesport and White Oak.

BR: Well, he was eighteen years -----?

MH: He was.

BR: And we lived eighteen years in Glassport.

NR: Most of that time I was a member of Rotary.

PS: Oh, yeah! I forgot about that.

BR: Oh, yeah. He was a Rotarian for thirty years.

PS: My dad... My dad was president of the Lions, even though he was Jewish.

BR: I know.

MH: Well...

PS: I forgot about that.

NR: I was president of the Rotary three different times.

PS: Yeah.

BR: Every time...

NR: Every time they would change the name of the club. Started out as the Glassport Rotary.

PS: And you wanna' hear something funny...

NR: Changed because the school district...

MH: We're right at the end of the tape. I'll just put another...

End of Tape 2 – Side 2