

# Transcript – Eva Rae Solomon Oral History

Jan: Well, first of all, can you tell us what your name is and your birth date?

Solomon: My name is Eva Rae Solomon, and I was born on September the 6<sup>th</sup>, 1910.

Q. And where do you live now, and where were you born?

A. Now I live in Birmingham, Alabama. I was born in Asheville, North Carolina.

Q. And who are your parents?

A. Morris and Rae Lipids.

Q. And how did they meet each other, do you know? You can say no, that's okay.

A. No.

Q. Okay, what was your mother's maiden name?

A. Stern.

Q. And where was she from?

A. Louisiana.

Q. Was she from New Orleans?

A. Mostly New Orleans, sometimes up the river.

Q. Did you remember ever going to Louisiana to visit relatives?

A. Oh, years later.

Q. Not as a child?

A. No.

Q. Where did you live when you were a little girl?

A. In Asheville.

Q. Do you remember what street, address, the name of the street?

A. I lived on Cumberland Circle when I was very little, and then I lived on Montford Avenue.

Q. And tell us who was your grandfather and what kind of work did your grandfather and your father do?

A. My grandfather, Sullivan Lipinsky, who was the founder of the Bon Marche department store.

Q. And do you remember that pretty well?

A. Right well.

Q. What was it like to go into Bon Marche?

A. Like going home. My second home.

Q. Did you stay there a lot?

A. I went there a lot.

Q. And your father worked there too?

A. Yes.

Q. Can you describe what the inside – I know it was in different locations, but can you describe what it was like on the inside in some of the locations you remember?

A. The only one I remember, to begin with, was on Patton Avenue. And as I recall, the street goes down from Patton to College. The basement entrance was on college, and the front entrance was on Patton. The store itself was one story, I believe, on the street floor. There was a balcony in the back that my grandmother sat at. She did all the book work and took care of the business actually.

Q. What was she like? Do you remember her very well?

A. I couldn't describe her.

Q. She's indescribable?

A. I couldn't possibly describe her.

Q. Were you close to her?

A. Pretty close.

Q. So she was really a good grandmother to the grandchildren?

A. That's hard to say. She was different. I guess you'd call her a good grandmother.

Q. But she worked in the store a lot.

A. She worked in the store on Patton Avenue. They lived on Cumberland Avenue.

Q. And what kind of things, merchandise do you remember seeing in there?

A. No, I don't remember – I would just say general merchandise.

Q. What was your grandfather like?

A. He was wonderful. He was a great man.

Q. Was he really kind to you?

A. Oh, he was just wonderful. He was really a great man.

Q. Do you have any memories of either celebrating something like Passover or always going to their house on Sunday night or anything like that?

A. I always went for dinner on Sunday, and I watched my grandmother and my aunt ??? roll out noodle dough and then chop those noodles as fine as could be chopped.

Q. What were the noodles for? Kugel or ??? soup?

A. Sunday dinner.

Q. For soup or occur kugel or for what? What kind of food did they put it in?

A. Soup.

Q. So your grandmother was a good cook?

A. Yes, I'd say she was. And my aunt. Her daughter. Clara.

Q. How far did you live from where they lived? How would you go? Did you walk or go by car or –

A. Our house was on Montford Avenue, there house was on Cumberland Avenue. There was a back alley between, and I went from the back, from I guess about two or three houses down the back alley into that yard.

Q. Did you go by yourself or the whole family?

A. As I remember I went by myself, but then I was big enough to. Earlier I have no idea.

Q. Well, that's pretty neat, you went all by yourself to your grandparents for dinner. That was pretty neat.

A. I guess I was a little older then.

Q. For Sunday dinner do you remember who else would have been there for dinner?

A. My aunt and my grandmother and my grandfather, and myself. I cannot remember how many of my brothers or sisters made it. I don't know. Possibly not in those days, they were much younger than I was.

Q. Now did your father travel, like to buy merchandise? Did he go to New York for buying trips, and would you ever go?

A. I went to New York very often because my grandparents lived there.

Q. On your other side.

A. My mother's mother and father. And I remember those train trips very well.

Q. Did you go with your family or by yourself?

A. Sometimes by myself later, but I think first I went with my grandfather.

Q. Your grandfather Lipinsky?

A. Yes. He took me to my grandparents in New York.

Q. Do you know where they lived in New York?

A. On 72<sup>nd</sup> and ???, I think, Broadway, right where Broadway and Amsterdam go together.

Q. That's a pretty good memory.

A. Earlier than that they lived on a side street off of Broadway, I don't remember. I remember they lived on that close to the park, and it was during the war because I wore my Red Cross nurses' outfit.

Q. Were you a nurse?

A. I was a little girl, eight years old.

Q. So you had a junior nurses' outfit. Did you travel on other trips, kind of like you went to New York, when you were growing up?

A. The only other place I remember is Atlantic City.

Q. Who took you there?

A. My grandparents, and my aunt.

Q. Wasn't that with Solomon Lipinsky?

A. Yes, and my aunt Clara. Their daughter, before she was married.

Q. Right, so did you like Atlantic City very much? You just went one time?

A. Had a lot of fun. The boardwalk was wonderful.

Q. And the beach.

A. We had a good time.

Q. Did you go to the beach anywhere else, like in the South when you were little?

A. We lived in Wilmington, on Wrightsville Beach, so I imagine I went to the beach, when I was about three. I don't remember.

Q. Your grandfather had a store there. I guess your father ran it.

A. There was the store in Wilmington that my father was taking care of.

Q. Then you moved back when you were still young?

A. I only stayed at the beach a little while, not too long.

Q. Do you remember in Asheville where you went to school, grade school and high school?

A. I guess I went to Grove Park most of the time.

Q. Did you go to Lee Edwards High School, Asheville High School?

A. I went to Lee Edwards for about a year. I went to Fasifer??? in Hendersonville for a year. I graduated from Grove Park School.

Q. Did you know the Parkers? Josie Parker?

A. Jo Parker, sure, ???

Q. And Mary Parker?

A. Yeah.

Q. She worked for Bon Marche, do you remember that? As an adult, she did. She's still in Asheville, living on Charlotte Street in the same house. She's the only one left.

A. The big house across the street from the drug store.

Q. Yes, she's the only one left and she stays there by herself. Of

A. She's still there.

Q. But she told me all of them went to Grove Park School. It was a private school. Did you go on that trip to Europe for a year that Josie went on?

A. My mother was sick and they wouldn't let me go.

Q. But you remember it?

A. Oh, yes. My whole class went.

Q. And you were the only one who couldn't go out of the whole class.

A. Mrs. Fahrenheit???, they sent me instead to Fasifer??? in Hendersonville.

Q. So I wonder, did they send you letters from Europe? I know that Josie wrote Mary letters that she has.

A. If they did I don't remember, I don't have any.

Q. How did you meet your husband?

A. He came to Asheville, and somebody had told him to look me up.

Q. Where had he come from?

A. At that time he was in Kingsport, Tennessee.

Q. What did he do?



A. Had a jewelry store.

Q. What was the name of the jewelry store, do you remember?

A. I don't remember. May have been Jay Jeweler.

Q. What was his whole name?

A. Jesse.

Q. Jesse Solomon. Where was he born?

A. In Nashville, Tennessee.

Q. Now, did his parents have a business in Nashville?, no?

A. He just got out of school and needed a business, needed some work, so he opened a little jewelry store in Kingsport.

Q. Did your father want your husband to work in Bon Marche?

A. No.

Q. How come?

A. I have no idea. You'll have to ask him.

Q. I can't, that's why I'm asking you.

A. I have no idea, but I doubt it. To begin with, he wasn't the only one, my two ??? were – my grandfather was probably still living. I don't think he was, no, he died in 1915 –

Q. 1925. What year did you get married?

A. '26.

Q. You were married in 1926, so Solomon wasn't still alive. Do you remember much about Kingsport? Did you live in Kingsport?

A. I lived there several years, in fact bobby and – were both born in Kingsport.

Q. Did you know the Thorps in Johnson City?

A. I don't recall the name.

Q. So then you came back to Asheville after that? After you were in Kingsport?

A. I think it was when my husband -- ???

Q. Right, and you lived with your father and mother for a while – no, yes –

A. Yes

Q. So how many years were you in Asheville?

A. About two or three – was about six then.

Q. So when your husband came back from the war – what branch of the military was he in? Army, Navy?

A. Army.

Q. Did he go to Europe?

A. No, he went to the Philippines.

Q. Where did you live after he came back?

A. In Kingsport.

Q. After he came back, after the war did you live in Asheville or did you –

Daughter: After the war. After the war we stayed in Asheville.

A. Oh, okay, my memory.

Q. That's okay, you're doing great. Do you remember what kind of business your husband did while you were in Asheville?

A. He was in the plumbing business.

Q. Yeah, that sounds pretty good.

Daughter: Plumbing and supply. Drug store with the Clines, what was the Cline's name? Klein. Daddy was in the drugstore business with him. Ben Klein.

A. Right, he and Ben Klein. In the drugstore right on the corner of Charlotte –

Q. Right across from the Parkers, right. So do you remember what would you do while he was at work?

A. Take care of the children I guess.

Q. Do you remember where you lived then, when they were small?

Daughter: 54 Lakeshore Drive.

A. On Lakeshore? First I lived on Avon.

Daughter: That was when everybody was at war, and Jan and you and I and Betty and Sally, and Joe and everybody else lived together on –

Q. She said that, first we lived on Avon, then you lived on Lakeshore – Right. Do you remember if you lived anywhere else in Asheville?

A. No.

Q. Do you remember then, when you were grown up, with children, did you go downtown very much in Asheville, to shop or –

A. Probably. It was a very small town. It's hard to tell.

Q. Do you remember what it was like? Can you describe what downtown Asheville used to be like?

A. When?

Q. Probably in the 50s, 1950s when your girls were in school growing up.

A. I don't know, I can't tell you a thing about years. I remember the store that Ivy built for my grandfather, E. W. Grove built for my grandfather, Ivy's –

Q. Do you know how that happened?

A. I don't know. My grandfather had died by that time. I don't know. I can't remember. Ivy's came in and bought the thing out. Some architect, whose name I don't remember, built the Bon Marche, across the street.

Q. Do you remember Mr. Grove?

A. No. I don't think I ever knew Mr. Grove.

Q. Did you know Mr. Vanderbilt?

A. I met Mrs. Vanderbilt in the Bon Marche when it was on Haywood Street first. I met her in the store.

Q. Was she pretty nice?

A. I guess he was like almost anybody. She was friendly. She was a friend of my grandfather. She was friendly.

Q. Now, were you in the store to work or just to visit?

A. To visit.

Q. You didn't ever work in the store, did you?

A. I don't think so.

Q. Probably not, why would you, all those men were working in there.

A. I never worked in the store.

Q. Do you remember anybody with who worked in the store besides your grandmother and your grandfather?

A. My aunt, Hilda Goldsmith had charge of the lingerie departments for a long time. I sort of have a – Weed. Too much recollection.

Q. So did you always get all your clothes from Bon Marche?

A. Yes.

Q. You never shopped anywhere else?

A. In New York on buying trips.

Q. You probably didn't have to even go in any other stores in Asheville, did you?

A. I don't think I ever did.

Q. Well, interviewed Dennis and Robert Winner, and they said they never went in any other store in Asheville.

A. Really?

Q. Do you remember Winner's? Harry Winner's store?

A. Sure.

Q. Well, his sons told me that they never went in any other store, they didn't have to.

A. Right.

Q. So do you remember what downtown was like when the old Battery Park Hotel was still there?

A. Yes, I do remember a little bit. Battery Park was up on the hill, and that road was a winding road up there. But we went up there, I guess because you go to hotels mainly to eat.

Q. Was it real pretty?

A. Yeah, it was beautiful, as I remember it. I thought it was a shame they tore that whole hill down, but it was because it was beautiful. But it was a hill.

Q. Big hill.

A. Yeah, big hill.

Q. That's what they used to fill in Battery Park Avenue where the Bon Marche moved later.

A. I wouldn't be surprised. I don't know for sure.

Q. Did you ever go to the S&W Cafeteria?

A. All the time.

Q. What do you remember about it?

A. Not a thing except that I went there to eat.

Q. Did you meet friends there? Did you meet people there?

A. I could not tell you that, I don't know.

Q. Can you tell me who some of your friends were? Do you remember some of your friends, childhood friends or people who were your early married years friends?

A. Who comes to mind, Joanna Sternberg comes to mind. Lichtenfields???, but they were younger.

Q. Which Lichtenfelds ???, Gus?

A. Joe and – no, Gus was the father. Joe and –

Q. Wasn't it Carolyn? They had a daughter named Francis? Joe and Jodi Lichtenfields, but, are you talking about Joe's sister? Joe had a sister.

A. What was her name? Helen.

Q. Oh, Helen Gumpert. Helen, that's right. Now Joe was really good friends with my cousin Leonard, the one who said he went out with you. They were best friends. Rapport. That's okay. Anybody else you remember?

A. The Schochet boy, his name was Gene, I think, is that right?

Q. Right.

A. And there were two or three boys his age, I don't think who they were.

Q. Well, my dad was Sidney, other boys, I don't know. Did you know my Aunt Lillian Schochet?

A. I knew her slightly.

Q. You probably knew, I bet, the Bloombergs who were Sigmund and Nat and Frieda and Edna.

A. Frieda was my aunt, she married my uncle.

Q. Your uncle Marcus Stern? Who was your uncle that she married?

A. Walter Stern.

Q. Right, was Marcus Stern related to Walter Stern? No, okay. She was your aunt, well you know what, she was my cousin, that means we're related.

A. She was your real cousin and she was my married aunt. Are we talking about Frieda, she knew everything. And when Look Homeward Angel came out she told me every single character who was in it. I've forgotten now, but she knew who every one of them were.

Q. Was she red-headed? I remember her. I remember Aunt Frieda, red-head. Mother's right. She –



A. She knew everything and everybody. There wasn't anything she didn't know about. She was, oh, what's his sister, Harry. Harry sold daddy the Cadillac, so he must have been in the business.

Q. Yes, he sold Cadillacs, and Pontiacs. So your father always bought cars from Harry?

A. I wouldn't know that, but he always had a Cadillac. That's all I know.

Q. Do you remember any other people? Did you remember that Frieda played the piano?

A. Yeah, I think so.

Q. I remember she made things, made flower arrangements and all kind of things.

A. I don't remember.

Q. I heard she had a toy store out Patton Avenue. When you were really little, do you remember going to Montford Park?

A. Very very faint kind of recollection, I don't really remember, but just a kind of recollection. I went to Montford Park.

Q. Did it have a fountain?

A. It was right down the street from us.

Q. Was there a fountain there?

A. I don't know.

Q. Did you remember Riverside Park?

A. Yes, but very faintly. The streetcar ran up around the base – where – was then, down the mountain, to the shore down there. I can't remember much about it, but I know there was – I don't know, like a seaside, I guess you would say –

Q. Like a pavilion? It was the river –

A. I'm thinking of the river, went down to the river. The streetcar went down there.

Q. You might ask about the big flood, she remembers that.

A. I remember the big flood, my father took me down to Biltmore and held me up in his arms so I could see the water all over everything.

Q. That was kind of scary wasn't it?

A. I don't remember.

Q. Was that when Sally was born and they couldn't get to the hospital?

A. I think it was Judy. Sally was born at home, maybe that's what it was. She was born in 1915 or 16.

Q. What year were you born?

A. 1910.

Q. So you were six years old when that flood happened.

A. That's about right. And we went down to the edge, my father held me up, that whole place was covered, Biltmore was covered with water.

Q. Did your father have a car? Is that how you got down to Biltmore?

A. I imagine he had a car.

Q. I was going to ask you what did you do, like when you were a little child for play? Did you have friends you went to their house or did you go – you don't remember that. Do you remember, for example, where you went on dates? Did you go to Riverside Park for dates?

A. No, wasn't Riverside Park when I dated.

Q. What did you do? How would you all entertain yourselves?

A. The only dates I remember were going to parties, but I don't know what we did on dates. We probably went up to the top of the mountain.

Q. Who had the parties?

A. Most everybody went to the top of the mountain.

Q. Which mountain?

A. Parties, I don't remember.

Q. Sunset Mountain, behind the Grove Park Inn?

A. Yes, Sunset, is that the name of it?

Q. There was a park up there.

A. There was a parking lot up there.

Q. We had a different mountain we went up, Elk Mountain, we went up Elk Mountain. Do you remember when the Grove Park Inn first started?

A. No.

Q. Did you all ever go up to the Grove Park Inn, to eat or do anything?

A. I was there, but I don't know, I couldn't tell you what I did there, or why. But been there. That's when the columns were stone, they were not covered over.

Q. You are right about that.

Daughter: I think they got into moonshine, when they were coming of age.

Q. Did you ever have moonshine?

A. Yeah, a lot of it. We rode up, behind Bingham School was a still, and we rode up to that still with the gallon jugs.

Q. Who's "we"?

A. Whoever the boys were around. Whatever boys were around, I don't remember. We rode up to – down that hill and back to the still and had the gallon jugs filled with white lightning.

Q. Then what happened?

A. We went home and drank it.

Q. You didn't drink all of it did you?

A. I guess between everybody it got drunk.

Q. And then you got drunk.

A. That I wouldn't be surprised.

Q. Do you remember who any of the boys were?

A. Who they were? Not really. I remember one called sue ??? and Charlie and Billy. Billy was killed in the war. There were a whole bunch of them. I can't remember. Earl???

Q. Were they mostly –

A. The football team.

Q. Were they mostly Montford kids?

A. No, kids from high school. At that time ??? was high school. We took the streetcar. We were close enough to walk to town anytime we wanted to, on Montford, but when we went to school we took the streetcar to the square, and generally walked from the square down to the school.

Q. Do you remember going to temple?

A. With my grandfather. Rabbi Jacobsen, on Saturday mornings, he was there on the pulpit. My grandfather, with Amos, would pick me up. Amos was his chauffeur, in the Ford. He picked me up in the Ford, never the Cadillac, always the Ford ???. And we went to temple on Saturday mornings. Grandpa sat on the pulpit with rabbi Jacobsen, and I sat in the front row, period.

Q. That was it, nobody else? Did you go on Friday night ever, to temple?

A. Occasionally.

Q. But you went a lot on Saturday.

A. I went when my grandfather took me. He died when I was 15.

Q. Did you go to Sunday school and were you confirmed?

A. No, I wasn't. There was a confirmation class, I think it was either before me or after me, I can't remember. But I was in the middle, so I never was confirmed or anything else.

Q. Did your family keep kosher?

A. No.

Q. Did they – did you go to college?

A. Went to the University of Wisconsin for two years.

Q. Did you graduate?

A. For two years, then I went to New York and went to Parson's School, for a year, and Traphagen??? Art School for a year. Then I went back to – Asheville, then I went to Florida, and I worked in Florida for a little while. Then I've forgotten –

Q. Was it in Palm Beach?

A. Miami.

Q. I know who you remember who's about your age, and she went to Parson's also, is Miriam Cooper.

A. Yeah, sure, I knew Miriam very well, and Margery. They were good friends.

Q. Well, Miriam is still in Asheville. She's still there.

A. I thought Miriam died.

Q. No, Margery died. She had cancer a long time ago.

A. A long time ago. Miriam is still around? Call her and tell her I said hello. How old is she?

Q. 90.

A. Good heavens, she was one of my good friends. She was younger than I am, I think. I am not sure, I think a year or two younger.

Q. I'll give her your phone number.

A. I don't talk well on the phone. That's interesting, I would never have thought she was still living. Miriam wants my green chair –

Daughter: I have it, you'll have to tell Miriam it's in my living room.

Q. I will. Maybe I can send you a copy of her interview.

A. Miriam always said, "Will me your green chair ."

Daughter: I'll do that if you want me to.

A. She's a great lady. I can't imagine that she's still alive.

Q. Oh, yeah, she's doing pretty well. She's very spry. She's in a nursing home, but she's spry.

A. Who else is around?

Q. Did you ever know a man named George Roberts?

A. Not that I remember.

Q. He's your age. We just interviewed him, and he lived right next-door to the Bingham School, but he didn't mention the still. Maybe he didn't know about it.

A. Maybe he didn't. Maybe it was one of those things. The teenagers knew about it, although he was a teenager, I guess. You can ask him about the still in behind the school. I don't think it was – I don't know if it was Bingham School or not.

Q. Do you remember Chandler's?

A. Yes. Aaron.

Q. Did you remember the store that his father had?

A. The grocery store, sure.

Q. Did you buy things from there?

A. They had special things.

Q. Like what?

A. I don't remember.

Q. They had a lot of Jewish food.

A. I guess that's what I'm thinking.

Q. Would your parents have gotten food from there?

A. I don't know, because they didn't particularly go for Jewish food.

Q. They didn't eat lox or – corned beef or anything –

A. Not particularly. But I did. I used to shop there, and I don't remember whether mother did or not.

Q. Do you remember a store called Palais Royal, Morris Myers?



A. I remember the name. I don't remember anything –

Q. He was married to Eva Elleck??? did you know who she was?

A. One of my relatives.

Q. She was Solomon Lipinsky's half sister.

A. I know her name, I knew she was an Elleck???, a name I'm supposed to know, from Richmond. So who was –

Q. Morris Myers was married to Eva Elleck, but she died, I think only about two years after they were married, I think before you were born. He originally came to Asheville, he worked in the store that was S. Lipinsky, before Bon Marche, the very first store that Solomon Lipinsky had, he worked in it. On South Main, which was Biltmore.

A. Biltmore Avenue, toward the square. He had that store when he first came, in 88, 87, 89, whatever.

Q. But you don't remember that store, because I think it might have moved. They moved when you were one year old, to Patton Avenue.

A. No, that was way before I was a year old. I wasn't born until 1910, and that was in 18 – 1886 or 87.

Q. Were you born at home or in a hospital, do you know?

A. I have no idea. Sally's the only one I remember being born at home.

Q. Do you remember the other Jewish synagogue, the one that was on South Liberty, on the other side of Woodfin, the synagogue? The conservative – what was it called? You just said it. The other synagogue, conservative synagogue.

A. Oh, it was –

Q. Bicker coleman???

A. I don't remember.

Daughter: The Bards belonged to it, the conservative.) They did? I don't remember that. Down on Liberty Street. Still there?

Q. No, not that one. Actually, neither of the synagogues are where they were when you remembered. The temple moved to North Liberty and Broad, in 1949, that you remember, and that's still there. And the synagogue moved to Murdock in 1964. Runs parallel to Merrimon. Near Woolsy-Dip, do you remember Woolsy-Dip, an area of Merrimon Avenue going north called Woolsy-Dip, I don't know what was there – a grocery store, and a town hall, and a drug store, because Mr. Roberts worked in a drug store. No, she didn't remember that.

A. There was a lot of time I wasn't there. After all, I left when I got married. I might have left before I got married.

Q. Sounds like you did, you lived in New York to go to school.

A. I went to school at least two years in New York. Before that it was the University of Wisconsin.

Q. That was in Madison? What were you studying in Madison, do you remember?

A. Art.

Q. So you were quite the artist.

A. Supposed to be.

Q. Do you remember meeting the Cone sisters from Baltimore?

A. No, I never did.

Q. Do you know who they were?

A. Yes, of course. They were Mrs. Strong's ??? sisters, and I knew Mrs. Sloan very well. Of course I was little, so the way I know her is with the mind of a little child. And he, I can remember him better because he had all this white hair on his head and – Mr. Long. Her sisters were the Baltimore – then there was the Greensboro group who owned the cotton mills.

Q. Moses and Cesar Cone were her brothers.

A. And Gus Lichtenfield worked for the cotton mill, down at the end of Patton Avenue, you looked down the hill and it was there.

Q. Did Sternberg work there too? Sternberger?

A. Oh, yeah, Sternberg. He was a character.

Q. What was he like?

A. A character. Don't ask me what a character's like. He was a character.

Q. So –

A. He was the father of my best friend.

Q. Who was that?

A. Joanna. And Eva, of course. But he was a real character, and he kept a lot of white white liquor, moonshine, on his closet shelf, that we found. Everybody got drunk I guess. Everybody knew where it was, have a drink if they wanted it.

Q. How old do you think you were when that happened?

A. About in my – 18, 19, 20. I was old, I wasn't young. I was drinking age.

Q. So it sounds like you kind of knew everybody who had the moonshine around, if somebody wanted any they could ask you.

A. I knew plenty about it.

Q. So it sounds like you had fun growing up. Did you have a good time growing up?

A. I think so. I can't remember not having a good time. I can remember tracking ??? what is it they call – checking the drag or whatever.

Q. Is that a kind of dance?

A. Taking the car up and down –

Q. Oh, dragging, yeah,. Where did you drag? What street?

A. Patton Avenue, from the square to Haywood Street, and turn around and back up to the square, back down, back up, back down. Pick up somebody here, somebody there. You never had an empty car.

Q. Was that on Saturday night?

A. No, mostly after school.

Q. Who had the car?

A. I did. I had the family car, a Chevy, a roadster, whatever it was.

Q. What color was it?

A. Maybe it was green, I don't know.

Q. Who taught you to drive?

A. It had a rumble seat, that's all I remember.

Q. Who taught you to drive?

A. Amos, my grandfather's chauffeur, he taught me to drive when I was about 15.

Q. He must have taught you pretty well.

A. I don't know.

Q. Nothing was automatic then, you had to do all the gears on the wheel.

A. Oh, sure.

Q. Do you remember Pollock's Shoe Store? Somebody, sort of during the Depression, they used to have these dance contests in the window, do you remember that?

A. No.

Q. Did you remember they had a big – the Christmas parades or what downtown was like during Christmas? Not really? Do you remember the rhododendron festival?

A. The parade.

Q. Baby parade, I heard there was a different parade every day.

A. I don't know I only remember the big parade. Mostly Biltmore Forest people.

Q. Do you know who lived in the house – there was some Lipinsky who lived on Forest Hills, in Sheridan, close to Biltmore Avenue in Kenilworth?

A. Yeah, Aunt Helen and Uncle Whitt.

Q. Did you ever go into that house?

A. Oh, sure.

Q. So you visited your aunts and uncles, all of them, pretty regularly?

A. Yeah, the girls were my age, I went over there a lot.

Q. Who were their children, the girls?

A. Rosalyn was the oldest. And Peggy was the youngest. Elaine. Betty would remember.

Q. We'll call her and find out.

A. Anyway, those children all went to St. Genevieve, because they lived just across the street from Victoria Drive, right on the hill, first house.

Q. They were your age or older, younger?

A. Younger. Rosalyn was the oldest and she was younger than I. There was Elaine, Peggy –

Daughter: Uncle Lewis? Sonny, and what were their children's name, lived on Kimberly. Lewis junior, married Mary. He was adopted, Lewis junior. The other son was their son – Lewis junior was the only adopted one. They had two other children, a girl and a boy. I don't remember.

Q. Did you remember Leo Finkelstein?

A. Oh, sure, real well.

Q. Was he about your age? A little older?

A. A little older. Sylvia, his wife, I don't know if they had any children.

Q. They had Leo, Junior, and I think there's a sister, but I'm not sure. Leo Jr. is about your age. Did you know people from Biltmore Forest, were you friends with people from Biltmore Forest?

A. I knew some, I don't remember who. I doubt I knew them very well.

Q. Did you ever feel like you experienced any type of anti-Semitism when you were growing up in Asheville?

A. Probably. Not especially, I didn't, but there was a lot of it.

Q. Like –

A. Like the rhododendron ball was off limits.

Q. The debutante, country club. Did you all belong to the Asheville Country Club?

A. I guess at one time. We lived across the street.

Q. Did anybody ever say anything to you personally that was anti-Semitic or anything?

A. No, never. And I went mostly with Gentiles.

Q. Why was that?

A. Because there weren't very many Jewish people to go with. And all of my school friends were, except for Joanna Sternberg, she was the only Jewish girl I remember.

Q. That was your age, in school.

A. Yeah, but all the rest of them, the Parker girls, Mary Parker, Ruth Lan??? And ??? Westall, related to oh, what's his name? Thomas Wolfe.

Q. Oh, Emily Westall.

A. Lived in a brick house on Chestnut Street. And I stayed over there a lot of the time.

Q. Did you know Thomas Wolfe?

A. No. He's older than I am.

Q. Did you know his center Maybelle?

A. Yes, I knew her very well, because she was always at Westalls. I forget what I called her. Probably called her ???. Then one time I met Mrs. Wolfe, and I guess it was Maybelle, in the grocery store. And I remember Mrs. Wolfe turning and saying you're too high hat to speak to me, or something like that.

Q. Was she teasing you?

A. I didn't even recognize the woman.

Q. Was she teasing you?



A. No, I just didn't recognize her. I guess I was supposed to say hello, or something.

Q. Do you know what grocery store that was?

A. I don't know whatever that grocery was.

Q. Where was it?

A. Not far from West Avon.

Q. Maybe the A and P. Do you remember the grocery store on Montford Avenue?

A. The little grocery store on Courtland?

Q. The one on Soco, at 235 Montford, and you lived at 211.

A. I don't remember that at all.

Q. You were talking about one owned by Mr. Book?

A. I don't know who owned it. It was a little grocery store where you got penny candy, over on, I believe, Courtland Avenue.

Q. It was Mr. Book, I believe, he had one on Cherry Street I know, but there were several of those. Mr. Book. Cherry and Montford.

Daughter: Mama, who were some of the friends in the bridge group, that you played every week.

A. Lotti??? Rose, and Mary – what was her name?

Q. Gottlieb?

A. I forget her name. (end of first tape/CD)

Q. Okay, so the Striflings played bridge – tell me who those people were.

A. The Grands, Rose and Ruben; and the Striflings; Annette and Joe –

Q. Sternberg?

A. Yeah.

Q. And you and your husband. And the Striflings had two children. So how often would you play bridge? Was it every week?

A. Probably once a week. Rose would paint the cards up, when you were going over to Country Day – Rose held – they made cards, I guess words on them, and she held the cards up for you to tell her what they were. You were in the first grade at Country Day – second, at Country Day.

Q. I don't remember the dancing part, she said they went dancing every Saturday. Where did you go dancing every Saturday night?

A. Up the mountain.

Q. The Sky Club?

A. What was it called, yeah, it was called the Sky Club.

Q. Who went?

A. I don't know, I remembered very well Annette and Joe went. I'm pretty sure the Grands went, probably the Striflings. I don't know – I don't remember who all went.

Q. Did they have live bands play?

A. Yeah, I think so. I'm not sure, I think so.

Q. Did they serve liquor there?

A. I don't know whether they served it, we had it.

Q. They probably had where you brought your own liquor –

A. I really don't remember.

A. The Sky Club was fun, it was great.

Q. Had a good view?

A. Oh, sure, beautiful, but nobody looked at the view.

Q. What were they looking at?

A. Well, we went to dance and to eat.

Q. Was the food very good there?

A. I don't know, but we ate and danced. A lot of people were there.

Q. You went to have a good time.

A. Right. A lot of people were there.

Q. Do you remember any other people who were there that you didn't go with, but you saw?

A. People from town, I don't know who they might have been. But that was much later. That's when I was married.

Q. Well, that's okay, that counts. You had a good time when you were married.

A. Oh, Yeah.

Q. Sounds like you had a pretty good time when you weren't married too.

A. I had a real good time in my younger days.

Q. Do you remember anything else wild you used to do besides get liquor and drag?

A. That's not really wild.

Q. Well, it was teenage, wasn't it?

A. We called a Coke a dope.

Q. That's what you called a Coke.

A. You asked for a dope, you didn't ask for a Coke.

Q. Where did you do that?

A. In the drugstore, everybody from high school – Well, not everybody, but a certain crowd from the high school would go to the drug store. I think it was called Boone's, after school, and take up all the booths, and everybody I guess, ordered a dope, meaning a Coca-Cola.

Q. Did you eat food or just drink Cokes?

A. No, I think they would just order the dope or something. Because we didn't have any money.

Q. So you socialized there after school.

A. Yeah.

Q. There were a lot of drugstores downtown, that was your main hangout, though?

A. That's the only one I remember. I don't remember any others.

Q. Well, they might have actually been later, the ones I'm thinking of. Did you remember – trying to think of other stores up and down the street. Did you remember Perlman's Furniture, the original? Railroad salvage.

A. I was going to say, it wasn't furniture originally. It was railroad salvage, up on Haywood Street. I used to buy rice up there.

Q. Why rice?

A. Rice, she got – she would get – I don't know why I bought rice there, but whatever it was, it was railroad salvage before it was a furniture store, and then Fred made it into a furniture store. I didn't know if you had anything to drink, because I don't have anything – I'm sorry, I should have thought to get something.

Q. Did you know Milton Lurie? Lurie? Milton Lurie, did you remember Milton Lurie? Did you remember the Vanderbilt Shirt Factory? He had a business called upon Vanderbilt Shirt Factory. No, Cashmere was Hadley Corporation, and that was in the 50s, with the Habers.

A. Lurie, wasn't there somebody else called Lurie, besides Milton?

Q. Milton's wife was Mildred Lurie, and she was a Wadopian. Mildred Lurie. Milton married Mildred. And Milton did have a sister, you're right, and I can't remember her name.

Q. Did you know Sol Shulman?

A. The Schwartzburgs, I went with Milton a long time –

Q. Now, I don't remember that family, but my cousin Babs Bloomberg was telling me about Mrs. Schwartzburg –

A. His sister, I can't think of her name, moved to Charlotte. He moved to Atlanta, and his sister married and moved to Charlotte. Now, I don't know whether she's around or not.

Q. Did you remember Sol Shulman, he lived in Sylva, or the Lessings? That's too far away –

A. I guess the Pollocks were there.

Q. We interviewed Betty Pollock yesterday. She's in Atlanta.

A. She is?

Q. Yes, and we interviewed –

A. She lived in Florida once.

Q. No, that was her sister Mildred. Mildred is still in Florida.

A. Oh, is Mildred still around?

Q. Yes, she's still around, she's about your age.

A. She's younger than I am. Quite a bit younger than I am.

Q. She just had her 90<sup>th</sup> birth day.

A. I know she's married and runs around a lot. I hear she really gets around.

Q. I think she's on her fifth husband.

A. Maybe four or five, but I don't think she's got to the fifth one yet. She's had this one a long time. Really a long time. I know they traveled a lot.

Q. That's Mildred.

A. Sylvia Strifling keeps up with Mildred, and I keep up with Sylvia Strifling, so whatever news I get from Sylvia, is about Mildred, is what I know.

Q. Well, she was in Asheville last –

A. Jenny lives in Asheville.

Q. Last November. She was in Asheville last November, they had a big birthday party for her.

A. Because Kenny lives here and all her grandchildren.

Q. Richard lives in Camden, South Carolina. I'll tell you about him. So you are remembering pretty well. Unfortunately I can't remember all these people that are your same age. Who else?

Daughter: Mother, there was a Pollock who came in the summer time or who lived up near Rosalyn Cooley, right there across from Mount Vernon. And Cookie Rifkin used to come and stay with her, it was or grandmother. Who was that? Were the Rifkins and the Pollocks related? I can't remember the name. It was Cookie Rifkin's grandmother, used to come for the summer.

Q. Might have been another Pollock.

A. They lived up at the top of the hill.

Daughter: Some older woman, would have been a lot older than you. Have you run into the Horowitzs? There was a Horowitz that lived right there. Rosalyn Coolie, lived right here on Mount Vernon, across the street were the Horowitzs, and right across the street this way –

Q. Horowitz or Orowitz?

Daughter: I don't remember. Frankie –

Q. That's Orowitz.

Daughter: Whatever happened to them?

A. Wasn't he going to be a doctor or something? I know he went to school at – I forget. And what's her name, Jan's friend, that lives in Canada.

Daughter: Debbie Burnham.

Q. What did their family do?

Daughter: The mother was a math teacher, Mrs. Burnham was a math teacher at Lee Edwards. Right on that side street going down by the Doctors.

Q. I was going to ask, Michael Doctor was just through town last summer and – were you friends with the Doctor family?

A. Very close, some of my best friends.

Q. Betty?

A. And Milton, and then he married Ruth Perlman. When Betty died, Milton married Ruth Perlman, they lived out in Phoenix or somewhere. He had a couple of sons.

Q. Yeah, Michael and I don't remember the other ones name. Michael lives in Washington state, he's a lawyer. He was just in Asheville, I saw him in March, I think I saw him. I had never met him before, but he was very nice.

A. What did he come for? Does he have anybody is there?

Q. That's who was related to Melissa Fay Green. They were going to a bar mitzvah in Atlanta, and they came up to Asheville, because it's not too far away, if you live in Washington, to come to Asheville from Atlanta.



A. If you've been there and you want to see it again, I'm sure it's different.

Q. I'm sure it's different from what you remember too.

A. My niece bought a house on Montford Avenue –

Q. Which niece?

A. Sally's daughter.

Daughter: Sally is mother's center who lives in California. My niece lives in Washington, the name is

Daughter: Robbie – sorry, they bought a house –

A. They looked at 211, but it was too torn up to buy. But they bought a house on the corner –

Q. Which corner?

A. Montford and – you know where Dr. – I can't remember. One block toward town from where we lived at 211 Montford, the same block, one block down from Courtland and one block up from –

Q. Bearden?

Daughter: I live at 333 Montford Avenue, right next to Montford Park.

A. You're way down there, my friend lived on the next street, what's that?

Q. Watauga?

A. Going up.

Q. Panola?

A. Doesn't matter.

Q. Who was your best friend?

A. Lydia Creedo – wouldn't mean anything to you, didn't know anybody else.

Q. Did she live in a really big house?

A. 211 Montford, that wasn't such a big house – five bedrooms, but –

Q. Your friend, Lillian Creedo, was her house really big?

A. Lydia, she lived, yeah, right across the street from – the street goes up.

Q. It's Watauga.

A. No, she didn't have any money, she didn't have anything. She was just my friend. She married an Englishman, they moved to Charlotte, got a divorce, I don't know, she was an alcoholic.

Daughter: Sad.

A. Yeah.

Daughter: Anyhow, this first cousin of mine will be moving down and they have an 11-year-old –

Q. Wait, you were thinking of somebody, your other friend, the Rhodes? Yeah, Vern Rhodes –

A. Jewelry store on the corner of Patton and Haywood.

Q. R-h-o-d-e-s, Rhodes?

A. Yeah, Rhodes.

Q. Well, there are some Rhodes that live on Merrimon, Vern Rhodes, but I don't know that they ever had a jewelry store. I think he was more of like a lawyer or worker. I could be wrong.

Q. Somebody named Rhodes had a jewelry store. What was the girls name?

A. Lotti, remember, she was my breast best friend.

Daughter: I remember the store, you leave Ivy's, go around – she was just a center of Bill who owned the store. He married Mildred – lady who baked the cakes, the pound cakes. I can't remember. We bought pound cakes from this lady. They were out of this world. I can still taste them.

Q. They must have been good. I think there was a jewelry store called Bright's for a long time, must have been before Bright's.

Daughter: Where did some of your uncles live? You had two uncles?

A. Whitlock, he lived right across the street from the – Victoria Roads I guess you would call it. Toward Kenilworth, right across from Victoria Road.

Q. Where did your other uncle live?

A. Uncle Lewis lived on Kimberly, right on the corner of Kimberly and whatever street that was, I don't know.

Daughter: Somebody told me Mabel Wolfe lived on Kimberly.

A. I think she lived maybe on Chestnut.

Q. Did you know the Greens who lived on Montford?

A. They had the hardware store. I knew them I'm sure, because I knew everybody down there, but I don't recall –

Daughter: Otis Green.

A. I know that they lived right there.

Q. Did you remember the Norburn Hospital?

A. Yeah, well, I remember, yeah,.

Q. What about Highland Hospital and Dr. Carroll?

A. Because my Aunt Clara was there, and my mother was there.

Q. At highland?

A. So I know about highland.

Q. Did they live there? Stay there?

A. My aunt stayed there a while, and then she went up to Richmond and stayed, lived up in Richmond, near Richmond, where most of her family were. Because Grandpa came from Richmond. Most of the family were in Richmond. My father used to go and see her up there.

Q. Did you ever go to Richmond to see relatives? No?

A. I've never been to Richmond.

Q. What do you remember about Highland Hospital?

A. Not much, except that my mother was there, my aunt was there. My Aunt Clara was there, but she was not there at the same time that my mother was there. And my mother was not there for long, I don't think.

Q. Do you remember the Rumbaugh's?

A. Well, I know the name.

Q. They had a big house that was later part of the hospital.

A. Oh, it was? I remember the name.

Q. It would be right down Montford Avenue.

A. I know, right down by the end, by the park. Did they build up the park?

Q. It's still a park.

A. It's still a park? I'll be darned.

Q. But the Klondyke, the mansion is gone. Did you remember that, the big mansion at the very end of the road? Very end of Montford?

A. I remember the mansion, I don't remember the people.

Q. The man who owned it was a lawyer.

Daughter: Then we had the Van Winkles on Watauga, did you know the Van Winkles?

A. I remember Ginger as a young girl. She was so pretty. But you haven't seen her?

Q. Not in a long time, since she moved away.

Daughter: You were friends with her parents?

A. I would say they were our best friends. My husband ate breakfast at their house every Sunday morning.

Q. Without you?

A. Without me.

Q. Why, were they playing cards together or something?

A. No, he just went over there for breakfast. I probably didn't get up to get any. So he went over there for breakfast every Sunday morning.

Q. Now, where did they live? Were they close?

A. I remember the house but I don't remember where it was.

Q. Beaver Lake?

A. Somewhere in Beaver Lake, but I don't remember really.

Q. So how did you all become such close friends?

A. I couldn't tell you that. I don't have any idea.

Q. Did you ever buy furs –

A. The whole group of us, the Sternbergs, the Grands, who else, I don't know, there was a lot more, that Sylvia and Ray and –

Q. Who's Sylvia and Ray?

Daughter: The ones we were talking about, Strifling.

Q. Did you ever buy fur coats from Vogue Furrier?

A. No. If I ever bought a fur coat it was from the Bon Marche. I never bought a fur coat.

Q. That's good for you. Politically correct at an early age.

A. Well, just because I didn't have the money to buy one.

Daughter: What do you remember the most about Asheville, living in Asheville?

A. Remember the most, let me see. I guess Haywood Street, riding up and down, checking the drag on Haywood Street. Going to school, sitting on the wall watching the Bingham boys go up and down on Sundays.

Q. What wall was that?

A. In front of our house. Not much. Very little do I remember.

Q. Do you think it was a good place to grow up?

A. I think it must have been, I certainly enjoyed it. I remember the Bon Marche, when they went in the new building, I remember my grandfather very well. I used to go to New York. He would take me to my grandparents up there, and I know we would stop off in Salisbury where he had relatives. So we had relatives in Statesville, Salisbury, the train stopped and changed engines down there.

Q. Were they Lipinskys also, do you know?

A. No, they may have been on my grandmother's side. She was a Whitlock. They were probably on the Whitlock side. He used to go to Richmond quite a bit, to see his family. Her family, I should say.

Q. On the train?

A. I don't know how he went. I didn't go with him. I never went to Richmond. I only went to Atlantic City with him one time. I would go to New York with him. She would go to New York, I would have a ??? I would go with them to New York.

Q. do you know what the family in the other towns did, like the ones in Statesville?

A. I don't know. The ones in Richmond, I have no idea.

Daughter: Wasn't somebody in the sugar industry in Richmond?

A. Not sugar, tobacco. Yeah, the Whitlocks made all of their money in the tobacco business, mostly because they sold out to that vein of tobacco companies. Then they got all of their money.

Q. They sold to Phillip-Morris?

A. I don't know, it was tobacco.

Q. So what happened when the Depression came? What happened to Bon Marche then?

A. Oh, it was bad, real bad. I think they went into bankruptcy, pretty sure they did.

Q. But then they opened up a new store across the street?

A. That was a little later.

Q. They got out of that Depression thing. I don't know how, the bank lent them some money. But I guess they had to move, because they must have gotten – didn't have any money, I don't know they weren't broke or whatever. So they had to give up the store. That was way after grandpa died, so he didn't know about it, thank goodness.

Q. But what about your dad, what was he like? Do you remember how he was feeling then?

A. ??? he was a character.

Q. I meant during the Depression, with the store.



A. I don't know, truthfully. I really don't remember. My father was a person of his own – his own something. His own self I guess you'd say. They don't make two alike.

Q. Did he get along with his brothers?

A. I doubt it.

Q. Did he get along with you?

A. Yeah.

Q. That's good. Weren't they in business together? Who owned the store when it reopened, after the Depression?

A. I don't know, I wasn't around. And I don't really know –

Daughter: She was gone by then. She was in college.

Q. But you didn't have to come out of college, right, you could still stay in college?

A. After two years I went to New York, to art school. Stayed with my grandparents in New York. The one memory I have that's real bright I guess you'd say, of my father, was before the chestnut blight they were roasting chestnuts on every corner, and he would bring bags of chestnuts, and we would go down – I would go downtown and get me a bag of chestnuts. And I remember he loved those chestnuts. But then they had the blight and there were never anymore chestnuts. It was a shame, they were so good, nothing like them ever since.

Q. Do you remember Riverside Cemetery, and visiting your grandfather's grave?

A. Yeah. I remember that. And my mother and father are buried there. But I haven't been in Asheville in years. I don't know how long it's been so long.

Daughter: How many of us lived in the house on West Avon during that year that I lived there?

A. I guess everybody. Practically everybody. Sally and Betty, I don't think the boys lived there, though.

Daughter: They were in the war.

Q. So what was Asheville like during the war? Did a lot of your friends move back home?

A. During that war it was a blackout town. All we knew was blackout, curtains, had to buy blackout curtains, that I had for years. I don't know what happened to them. It was all blackout, and then there were ??? on the street, that walked up and down the street and it was bad. And everything was rationed, you had to have coupons to buy anything. LI mean mostly sugar and meat, those kind of things. It was pretty bad, not like any war anybody else ever saw.

Q. So were people afraid that something was going to happen there?

A. Sure, because they learned how to get under the desks, the children learned how to get under the desks. I don't know, it was bad. It was not good.

Q. And after the war did your family still all stay in Asheville or did some of them move away?

A. We stayed, and my husband came home from the Army.

Q. But what about the other people that lived in the house on Avon? Did they move away from Asheville?

A. Betty –

Daughter: Moved to New Rochelle. Sally moved to Elizabethton, Tennessee.

A. And we moved to Kingsport.

Daughter: No, no, we stayed in Asheville, and Joe and jimmy stayed in Asheville.

A. When did we go to Kingsport?

Daughter: That was before the war.

A. Before the war.

Q. That's where you moved from to move back to Asheville.

Q. I think we've taken enough time.

A. I'm a little fuzzy about when things happened.

Q. That's okay –

A. I know they happened but I can't figure out when they happened.

Q. You did really great. Thank you very much.

A. I don't know if I didn't tell you anything, what good you did.

Daughter: They got confirmation on a lot of stuff.

A. I didn't really know anything.

Q. Yes, you did.

End of Interview