

Q. First of all, tell me your full name and your birth date.

A. You have to know my birth date? My name is Phyllis Sultan, and my birth date is 6/29/20.

Q. Where were you born?

A. I was born in Norfolk, Virginia; and moved to Asheville when I was 9 months old. So I have never really known any place but Asheville.

Q. So, how is it that your family came to come to Asheville?

A. It's an old story around here, because we were a big tuberculosis center. And my father's sister had tuberculosis, and they sent her here.

Q. What was her name?

A. Her name was Anna Gallumway (sp?). And she was sent here because of tuberculosis. And my parents, who lived in Norfolk, Virginia, came here to visit her, and fell in love with Asheville, and moved here. And as I said, I was 9 months old when they came here.

Q. And you remember your aunt?

A. Vaguely. I had two aunts actually, that had tuberculosis; and both of them lived here. But there was this particular one that actually brought them to Asheville.

Q. What was the other one's name?

A. Her name was Ella Bane. And they lived here for a long time.

Q. How do you spell Bane? (BANE, yes)

A. Anna was Gallaway (sp?), and they were married. She was the one they came here to visit. I am not sure when Ella came here.

Q. Do you remember Mrs. Bane?

A. Oh sure, she lived quite a while. The other one died when I was quite young.

Q. Which one came to Asheville first?

A. Anna. Ella was probably older. Anna died, but Ella lived for quite a long time. She and her husband lived here for a good while. I do remember her. I vaguely remember Anna. Not well.

Q. And her husband was Jewish?

A. Bane, yeah. Anna was not married. They were both Jewish.

Q. What was his business?

A. They had a little business on Biltmore Avenue, but to tell you the truth, I have forgotten what they did, I forgot what they sold.

Q. And what was her husband's first name?

A. Abe Bane.

Q. So your family came here to visit, and decided to stay?

A. Right. Decided to come back and live here. Just liked Asheville.

Q. How did your father make a living?

A. He had a business that they use to call wholesale dry goods business, which is no long—there is no such thing any more. He was the middle man—what he did was, in those days, you didn't buy direct from factories. There was a middle man that was called the factor or agent; and they bought from the factories and sold retail. Unlike today, where everything is direct. So that is a business that no longer exists.

Q. But he was almost like a distributor?

A. Well, he was really more like a factor, because—a wholesaler, yes.

Q. What was his business called?

A. I can't remember. I think it was Gallumbake (sp?) and Company. I am pretty sure.

Q. And was that the only business he had, and where was it?

A. Yeah, on 54 Broadway.

Q. And do you remember what it looked like on the inside? Did you go in there?

A. Oh yeah. Well, it was a typical old store, in those days, it was like all the stores. I can't really describe it. It was like a building, you know, with goods and merchandise in it.

Q. But did he specialize in anything in particular?

A. Well, it was pretty general. Men's clothes mostly.

Q. In other words, could only the people who buy from him have a store?

A. It was a wholesale business. And they sold wholesale, which meant they sold—people didn't walk in off the street. If you were a friend or knew somebody, it could be done; but that was not the business. The business was a wholesale business. And they sold to retail stores, and of course a lot of the business was out in the country. They went out with cars, you know, and like peddlers sort of, except it wasn't peddling, because they were delivering and taking orders.

Q. So he had delivery trucks?

A. Mostly cars, went out to millions of little stores all around in the county. And they use to go out and sell to them.

Q. So they were like salesmen? Almost like Asheville Showcase does now, but with clothes.

A. Yeah. About the same thing.

Q. So, do you remember any of the people who use to work for him?

A. Yeah, I remember some of them. We had a secretary that was a woman. Her name was Selma Questenberry (sp?). Don't ask me how to spell it. She was with him for years. And then he had, you know, men that worked for him as salesmen. One was Goldforth (sp?), and then there was another one, I don't remember.

Q. These were people that obviously worked a long time for him?

A. Yeah, they did. They had cars, and they went out and sold to stores all around the county.

That's how they got their stuff, was through us, because they couldn't buy it from factories.

Q. In other words, a store like The Man's Store or Bon Marche, they wouldn't buy from your father?

A. No, that is retail.

Q. Because they sort of bought from the big cities. But these are smaller stores?

A. Right.

Q. So did you ever work in the business?

A. Yeah, I use to be down at Christmas. They had toys, and I use to love to go down there and work with the toys. But not really, not that much. There just wasn't anything for me to do there. But during Christmas, when we had the toys, it was kind of fun to go down there.

Q. Now did your mother work in the business?

A. She did. I guess whatever had to be done. I guess she would spare the secretary so she could go out and get lunch. She did some.

Q. Was she mostly working in the store, or mostly not working in the store?

A. Oh, probably about half.

Q. And what were your parents' names?

A. My father's name was Tippie, and my mother's name was Francis.

Q. And how did he get the name Tippie?

A. Nobody has ever figured that out. That was his name as far as we know, and he never had a middle name; so he invented an initial and became a Tippie T. Gallumbeck (sp?). But nobody that I ever knew could ever figure out where that name came from.

Q. So how did your parents meet?

A. O.K. My mother was a New Yorker, and her parents were New Yorkers—all the line, New Yorkers. Her mother and grandmother were born in New York.

Q. What was her maiden name?

A. Fruhauf. Not the truck people, Theirs has an E in it. Unfortunately, we had nothing to do with the truck people. She was working in a store—my mother sewed—she did some designing and drawing. I guess that is another things that my kids—another source for my kids. And he went up there on a buying trip—at that point he had, I gather—because this was before my time—a lady’s shop, in Norfolk. And he went on a buying trip, and he went where she was working. And that’s how they met.

Q. So, was your father born in America?

A. Oh yeah. He was born in Weldon, North Carolina, as a matter of fact. In Halifax County.

Q. Really, my mom—my cousins are from Weldon. Do you have any other relatives there?

A. Not that I know of. They moved to Norfolk. I guess my grandfather came over after the civil war or something, and went to a farm in North Carolina—I have no idea how or why.

Q. And he was Gallumbeck?

A. Yeah. And he couldn’t make it, so he moved to Norfolk. I don’t know how long—the whole bunch of them—I don’t know how long he was there.

Q. Do you know what his first name was?

A. I should, but I can’t remember.

Q. Do you remember him?

A. No, I never knew him. I vaguely remember my grandmother, who was like 30 or 40 years younger. He was like this old patriarch guy. He had a wife that had children as old as his second wife. So she was a good bit younger. So I think he was maybe a hundred when he died, but I

never knew him. But I did know her. Her name was Fannie. And she was a little _____ when I knew her, you know, she was older. Fannie Gallumbeck. She was young, a little shriveled-up little lady, that's about all I remember of her. But I never knew him.

Q. And she lived in Norfolk when you knew her?

A. Yeah, they all stayed in Norfolk.

Q. Did you go to Norfolk to visit them?

A. Yeah, we use to go. My father had brothers there.

Q. So they came to Asheville. And both of your parents were born in America?

A. Yeah.

Q. Do you know what country your Grandfather Gallumbeck was from?

A. I really don't. You know he came over here like right after the civil war. And my mother's mother's grandmother, they were all born in New York. They were there for generations. But my father was the first generation. His father wasn't born in this country. He just came over here, from wherever he came from.

Q. Now your father's brothers, were they in the same kind of business?

A. No, they were all different. Did different things. The youngest brother was a salesman for Hobart. I remember that. And my Uncle Ben, who was the oldest brother, he had property in Norfolk. He had a daughter who was pretty much my father's age. They were always close. Her name was Minnie Straliss (sp?).

Q. Now are there any relatives left in Norfolk?

A. Yeah, I have a cousin. I never see him, but he is there, Leonard Straliss, still lives there. In fact he has the furniture business that was his father's. It's his. But that is a different branch.

Q. So you came to Asheville, and do you remember the first place you lived in Asheville, or any place that you lived in Asheville?

A. Yeah, sure. Seems to me the first place that I really remember was on Colonial Place.

I don't know where I lived as a baby. But that was where I grew up, on Colonial Place. It's still right there, right behind—it's a school now—I think it is the first house on the right-hand side.

The street was right where Buddy Patton lived. The Finkelsteins lived right behind us and the Kromes lived right across. I don't know whether the Coopers lived there.

Q. And Jeff Blumberg?

A. He lived up the street from us, he lived way up on the top of the hill, he did. And Buddy Patton lived right down the street. Leo Finkelstein was around. We all—Max Krome. But Cooper, I don't remember living in that area. Somebody like Miriam, I don't remember.

Q. She said that's where they lived before they moved to Griffing Boulevard in the 40's.

A. She's probably right, I just don't remember.

Q. So where did you go to school?

A. Of course I went to what was Grace School, at that point. Down the street, where Ira B. Jones is today.

Q. By any chance were you in class with Wilma Dykeman?

A. Yep. Absolutely. We went to school together. We use to, during recess—we still think about it whenever I see her—we use to go out and do recitations, they called it in those days.

Yeah, we were in school together. We occasionally see each other and reminisce. I remember her mother and she remembers my mother.

Q. So did you go all the way through grade school? (Yes) And then where did you go?

A. Then I went to David and David Miller, I guess, and then on to Asheville High or was it Lee Edwards then?—or the other. It was Lee Edwards by the time I finished, I think.

Q. So was Lee Edwards the principal when you went there?

A. Part, yeah.

Q. How did you meet Norman, your husband?

A. Well, of course, he lived here too. But we had really never met much, we knew of each other. After the war, when he came back, we started going together. I can't remember exactly what precipitated it.

Q. Was he older than you?

A. Just a couple of years.

Q. Maybe that's why you didn't know each other.

A. Yeah, growing up, I don't know whether we saw each other or not.

Q. What neighborhood did he live in?

A. He lived in a couple of neighborhoods. He lived over on Forest Hill Drive, and then he lived on Farwood. When he was living on Farwood is when I knew him. We started going together after the war, when he came back from the Army. I can't remember exactly how it came about.

Q. When you were growing up on Colonial, were the families close, the Jewish families?

A. Yeah.

Q. Did they all go to the Temple or the Synagogue together?

A. Well, as Jan probably can tell you, there was a big division in those days, the two congregations didn't mingle. There was the orthodox and the reform. There was no conservative. And they really didn't much mingle.

Q. So were your neighbors—did they go to the—

A. Of course everybody we knew, was reformed. We knew them, but they didn't socialize.

Q. So who were some of the kids that you grew up with?

A. Well, Sylvia Strauss, Elaine Shapiro, Margie Gross more than Miriam—she was a little bit younger. Elyse Schwartzberg.

Q. What did Elyse Schwartzberg's father do?

A. He had a men's store. His name was Roy Schwartzberg. Bess Schwartzberg and my mother were really close friends. Of course Leon and I grew up together. Leon Roccamora. And the Lewpinski's, Sally and Stanley and Marci was a little older. It was mostly Sally, and I guess Stanley was the closest one to my age.

Q. I don't even know who Stanley is.

A. He's one of the brothers. He didn't die young, but I think he did die recently.

Q. Nobody ever mentions his name.

A. Really? Why not? He lived in Florida. He was the one—Morris, Jr. was older. Sally was a little older too, but she always so nice to me, I will always remember her. I just loved her, because she was the sweetest girl. She was older, but she treated me nicely. The Lewpinskis, Louise—Elaine and I—Elaine (or Blane?) was one of my closest friends. We still keep in touch. Edith too sort of, but she was younger.

Q. Now where did Elaine and Edith live?

A. On Forest Hill Drive.

Q. But where do they live now?

A. Elaine is up in Massachusetts. She got married and they left. She got married and lived in New York, in Westchester, for years. Then her husband died, and she lived in Florida. She had

two places. And then she got older and wasn't well, so she got rid of the place in Florida; and now she lives just up in near Great Barrington, up in Massachusetts. But we keep in touch.

Her last name is Spector. S-P-E-C-T-O-R. So we all grew up together. Probably others. Many have left. Myra Perski. I don't remember what her father did. They lived out in Kenilworth, I think. A few years ago, she lived where Elaine lives, and they see each other.

Q. Do you know what her name is?

A. Myra. Her husband died. Something like Behrshof. But actually, after all these years, I did see her again. We were all sort of in the same—some more than others—you know, I wasn't that friendly with Myra, as I was with the others. You know, all of us grew up, like Sylvia and Elaine Shapiro and Elaine Fader and Helene Lees and the Lipinski's. Probably others.

Q. Now were you close friends with Dorothy and Jo Ann Ziegler?

A. Well now Dorothy is a good bit younger than I am. So although we knew each other, we never, I mean, five years is a lot when you are growing up. So it wasn't until after the war that we started all getting together. Like Marilyn is a lot younger than I am. I always knew her, but she is like 10 years younger than I am, so growing up—even 5 years—Dorothy is 5 years younger than I am, so growing up, that is a pretty big difference. After the war, it didn't matter any more. Then we all started seeing a whole lot of each other. Before we all knew each other.

No, I didn't baby-sit. We didn't have baby-sitters in my day. Everybody had to live on _____.

Baby-sitters came up in my generation. LAUGHTER.

Q. So everyone had live-in maids, like when you grew up—

A. Not necessarily all live-in, but full-time help.

Q. Were they mostly African-American people?

A. Yeah, we called them Negroes, or blacks.

Q. Did you pretty much had one person who stayed for a long time.

A. Yeah, well we did, most of us did. We had pretty long-term relationships and were practically raised by these. We saw them a lot more than, you know, our parents. Because they were always there.

Q. What was the lady's name that took care of you?

A. Inez. We had others. Nobody was forever. She was the one I seem to remember the best. She was with us for a long time. Always had somebody. Some of them lived on, some of them didn't.

Q. To get back to your friends, did you have friends who Jewish and friends who were not Jewish?

A. Yeah.

Q. Did you ever feel like, growing up, did you ever have any kind of anti-Semitic experience?

A. You know, I have been trying to deal with that, and I actually don't remember. But it is probably because we kept pretty much within our own groups. We had other friends, but I don't know that we relied on them that much. I can remember maybe one or two incidences in my whole life where I ran into anything, overtly, of course it was there. You couldn't get in country clubs and their social life was different, you know. That was always there. But anti-Semitism, I really don't remember that much, growing up. Whether I just didn't get involved to where it would have hit me, is a possibility. But I really can't remember—now Marilyn claims she ran into a lot of it, but I really don't remember that I did. There were a couple of incidents. And basically, you knew your boundaries, you knew you were never going to be in the Cotillion and you knew you were never going to be invited to anything at Biltmore Forest, and the

Rhododendron stuff—I mean, you know, so it didn't bother us. It was there, but it was never going to affect us. So I really can't recall too much—it definitely was there—don't misunderstand me. It was absolutely there. As far as any overt, I just don't remember—even the clubs, when I was growing up they had social clubs in high school, didn't take Jews. There was one that did, and I was in it. The Boosters.

Q. And what were some of the ones that didn't?

A. I can't remember the names of them, but 2 or 3 of them, and they did not take Jewish girls.

Q. What about the yearbook or the newspaper, or something like that?

A. Yeah, I did all that in high school. Worked on the yearbooks and all that stuff. But I really don't remember, and I have been trying to think—I keep hearing about it, but I really don't remember a whole lot of overt anti-Semitism. I just know it was there.

Q. Did you know if there were any Klan marches or anything like that?

A. I think as a matter of fact there were. Down at Biltmore, they had an organization called the Civil thing, the Silver Shirts. And that's what we had here. We didn't have the Klan. But we had the Silver Shirts. They had a building down at Biltmore. Vaguely, that's all. I knew they were there and I don't remember any incidents. There may well have been some.

Q. So, when you were growing up, I guess Downtown was the hub?

A. Oh yeah. Downtown was great.

Q. So talk about what it was like to go Downtown when you were—

A. Oh well, it was wonderful. When you went Downtown, you had Bon Marche and you had Ivey's, a lot of little shops. There were quite a few that were run by Jewish people. L_____ Lowenbiem, does that name mean anything to you? He had a great store.

Q. I just spoke to his niece, Josephine.

A. Yeah, he was never married. He had a store. And the Perski's, Myra Perski, that I just told you about. Her mother had a place. Some of this, the time sequence is going to be different, I may get mixed up on the time. Jack Blumberg had a store. Downtown. Julius Lowenbiem. I am trying to think what he had. He was a little old man, a little bachelor. He had a store. A nice guy. The Perski's, it seems like it was hers—she was the one that had the store. It was a nice women's shop, on Hayward Street, vicinity. And then Jean West was downtown. That was a really nice lady's store. And John Carol's. And Bon Marche. And Ivey's. And then all these little stores. Oh going down, even in my day, some of this I'm telling you about may be my generation instead of, you know, my parents, my years as single. But even then, it was great to go downtown.

Q. What did you like to do the best when you went Downtown?

A. Well, you'd go and shop, you know. Go Downtown and shop. We'd go to Woolworth's down there, we could eat. _____ and Kress's was there. It was a whole hub of stuff. That's where you went. There were no malls. They did have quite a few nice specialty shops.

Q. And did the owners of those shops all know you?

A. Mostly. Of course Bon Marche. In those days, they did know you. When you went in those stores to buy, the people knew you. Sometimes, if they had something, they would call you and say 'I think I've got something you would like.' You had very personal ties to people in the stores. Very personal. It was nice. Now they say 'it's over there if we have it.' Everybody had relationships with all the people that worked there. They all knew you and watched out for you, and knew what you liked. It was great.

Q. Do you remember any particular outfits that you got for particular occasions or any special—like Mary mentioned that she got her trousseau from somewhere—

A. I guess, if you were going for something really nice, you'd probably go to Jean West. They had the real, you know, more expensive stuff. There were a lot of good places to shop Downtown.

Q. Was anything by your house in Merrimon Avenue?—were there stores there then?

A. Right across where—use to be the post office—there's a farm, next to us was a really-working farm. Mr. Greenwood. He had a real farm. Cows, chickens. Right across from, actually on Colonial and Merrimon.

Q. Kind of where Fritchie's was?

A. No, that was on the other side.

Q. So where the old post office was?

A. Yeah, that was a farm, a real farm. That was the end of the line. Past that, there was no houses, nothing. That old dry goods store and a coal company, down at the end of Grace. And the school.

Q. And they had some kind of little grocery store called Kareem's or something, 'cause my aunt use to go and get ketchup for my father there from College Park.

A. I don't doubt it, I just don't remember it. I remember the little dry goods store.

Q. Maybe that was it. Kind of near where Grace Restaurant was?

A. Yeah.

Q. How did you get Downtown?

A. That's a good question. There was a trolley. I guess we drove. I don't know. I don't remember. No, I remember the trolley. We use to take the trolley. This is where I get confused—when I was growing up and then my own life after I was married. The lines get a

little bit blurry. And of course in those days, everybody drove, but back when you are talking, I don't remember how we got back and forth.

Q. Because there weren't that many parking lots.

A. Or that many cars. This was not a 2-car generation. Most people did not have two cars.

Q. Probably most people didn't even have one.

A. Well, no, most everybody had one. But my father used his for business. So we must have had some way of getting around. Some of the things that you grow up with, you just take for granted, you just don't even remember.

Q. I think the trolleys went until the '30's.

A. The trolley went right down on their land. I use to take the trolleys.

Q. So when you got married, where did you all live first?

A. Well, we lived in a little place on—right off of Merrimon. We rented that. It was a house. Then we moved up on Edgewood Road.

Q. Was the house off Merrimon, was it like on Maney, or was it closer to town?

A. I'm trying to think of how to tell you where it was. It was obscure. It was a complex of old houses, and it was the only house that had an apartment in it. There were no Edgewood Knolls back in those days. Everything was something in a house. So when we first got married, for about a year, we lived in this place. And then we moved up on Edgewood Road, which is still there at the top of Edgewood Road. Then we moved here. And that was it, just three places.

Q. What year did you move here?

A. Let's see, Jeff was a year old when we moved in the house. Jeff is now 55, so it was about 54 years ago. What year was that? That's as close as I can remember.

Q. Like '53.

A. Something like that.

Q. Did you all build the house?

A. Yes.

Q. Were—it looks like the other houses on this street are older.

A. They are. The one next door to us is newer. Well all these around in here are older houses.

Q. From the '30's?

A. Some even older.

Q. '20's.

A. These were all here, all these, and the one right across the street from me was. But then as you get further down, there are still some old ones, but there are also some new ones.

Q. Do you remember how you came to have this property? Was this a spec house and you drove by and saw it?

A. No, we just bought the lot and had the lot for about a year. And we decided to build, so then we started looking around at houses and getting ideas.

Q. Did you have friends who lived around here?

A. Most of us ended up out here, I am just trying to think who was here.

Q. You might have been first.

A. Probably were, because Dorothy and Jo Ann of course, that was later, they moved up here. Leon and Dot moved out here. This just seemed to be the place, I don't know how it happened. The lot was for sale and we liked it. We just decided to move out here. So we had bought the lot. See, Norman was just out of the Army. We didn't have any money. So we bought the lot, and then you know, about a year later, we decided to build a house.

Q. So how did he end up—he went into business with his father, right?

A. Yes.

Q. Was that sort of a foregone conclusion?

A. Yeah, evidently. He was before he went in the Army; and we came back.

Q. And tell the tape what business that was.

A. The tire business, called the Sultan of Tires. I think he was Carolina Tire for awhile, and then it became the Sultan of Tires.

Q. And they had a bunch of different locales, didn't they?

A. Well, they were on College Street for a long time. And then they moved over to Asheland Avenue. So actually, there may have been some before then, but those are the ones I remember. The one on College Street, which is where Max's Deli is now. And then up off Asheland Avenue, where basically, it still is, although it has changed names and owners. Those are really the only two that I remember. Now my father-in-law may have had some others.

Q. Do you know how your father-in-law came to Asheville?

A. I think it was the same thing—his wife was sick. I think they came here for her health.

Q. Where did they come from?

A. Detroit.

Q. Did they have any other family here, or friends?

A. Not that I know of. They had a lot of family, but not here. I think again, it was health. A lot of people who are here today, came because of health. You know, that was before the wonder drugs, and in those days, they used the altitude. This was a big big tuberculosis center.

Q. Do you know how he got into the tire business?

A. I don't.

Q. Now was he friends with—didn't the Wadopians have a tire business also?

A. Yeah. Did they have a tire business? Yeah, I think they were friends.

Q. And they had the re-cap—remember Milton told me—

A. I guess it was the same. I just didn't remember that. That was our big business, was re-cap. New tires too, but in those days, re-cap was the big big business.

Q. Well, they must have been in competition?

A. I guess, I don't remember. It doesn't seem to have made much of an impression on me. But I guess so.

Q. But were they friendly?

A. Yeah. Sure. They were all friends.

Q. So, do you remember some of the social activities, kind of like, I am thinking about your father-in-law's generation. Like I know there were these poker games that guys use to do, and the women had bridge clubs.

A. I don't know much about my in-laws. But my parents did. They had a big social thing going. They use to party like mad. During the Depression, when everybody was broke, they use to have Depression parties. And they use to all party like mad. I've got pictures around here somewhere—they use to have all these fancy—they'd wear bad costume parties, they'd have at each other's houses. I have pictures somewhere of some of those parties. I never really knew, until I started going with Norman, I really never knew much about his parents and what they did.

Q. Now the parties that your parents had, were they sort of with your friends? Your Jewish neighbors, or everybody?

A. Well, they had a big conclave. They were mostly or all Jewish, I guess. Again, it was the Lee's, the Lipinski's, the Schwartzberg's, the Roccamora's. There were a bunch of them. A lot of them moved away from here, and you wouldn't even know them. I don't remember a lot of

people that were here and moved on. There was a big gang of 'em; and they use to party all the time. They had a great time. They were all Jewish.

Q. I wonder—why do you think they moved away?

A. People move away.

Q. I guess they met people to marry and moved away.

A. Well, some of them, just came here, and hadn't always lived here like we did. They just came here, and then left.

Q. Did you ever want to move away?

A. Not really, uh-uh. Traveled around and I liked living here. And I was lucky, 'cause Norman liked it too. So we both—that worked out.

Q. Now did you go to college?

A. Yes, University of North Carolina. I went to Greensboro for two years, because you couldn't go to Chapel Hill in those days, until you were a junior, girls. So I went to Greensboro for two years and then to Chapel Hill.

Q. What did you take?

A. Journalism.

Q. And did Norman go to college?

A. Yeah, he went to UNCA now. It was AB—Asheville-Biltmore College.

Q. And what did he study?

A. I don't remember. Not much, probably. LAUGHTER. He was already working and established, you know. The war got him, so he went off during those years.

Q. Did you all go—did you go to Sunday school?

A. Yeah.

Q. Did you go to Temple regularly on Friday nights, or not really.

A. Not really. We'd go, but not necessarily always. Moses P. Jacobson, was our Rabbi when I was growing up. I liked him. And of course, Sidney.

Q. Were you confirmed?

A. Yeah. I was. But you know, I don't remember it. But I'm sure I was.

Q. So who was in your Sunday school class?

A. I really don't remember. But I did go to Sunday school. We had Sunday school over at, on Montford Avenue for awhile. In a house. I can't remember who was in my class, I really don't. Well, Leah Robinson is another one, we grew up together. I probably am going to think of people as I go along. She and I grew up together. She was another one of the girls I grew up with. Leah Carpin (sp?).

Q. Right, we know. Did you have friends in other neighborhoods? Like did you know people in Montford?

A. I guess through school, probably knew people.

Q. But were there Jewish people that lived in Montford?

A. That's where the Lipinski's lived. The Liktfels lived on Cumberland, which is close. That's right, Caroline Liktfels is another one I grew up with. The Lipinski's lived on Montford.

Q. One lived on Cumberland, that might have been June.

A. That was later, after the war. They lived on Cumberland for awhile.

Q. She was talking about Uncle Gus.

A. Oh Uncle Gus—well they lived on Cumberland. Yeah.

Q. So after you got married, were you active in the Temple when your kids were little?

A. Yeah, we did a lot with _____ and did quite a bit, yeah. We had a lot of dances and affairs. We were all pretty active in Sisterhood (?). Mostly at the Vanderbilt Hotel. That was the place to go, the ballroom at the Vanderbilt, the place to have parties. It went up a few stairs, but it was downstairs. They developed some nice shops in the Vanderbilt in those days, too. Nice little shops.

Q. You'd go to the radio station, it's not like that now.

A. Well, how old are you? I'm trying to put you in perspective.

Q. A year younger than Carrie. I definitely remember Battery Park.

A. Well Battery Park was really great. In fact I was married at the Battery Park.

Q. Upstairs?

A. Yeah, on the roof up there. I was married in one room and then we had the reception in another. We had that little ratty temple over on Spruce Street, and you know, nobody wanted to get married—that's where we went to services, but that isn't where you wanted to be married. So we went up to Battery Park.

Q. Who married you?

A. Sidney Unger.

Q. What year did you get married?

A. 1946.

Q. So do you remember when they were going to build the new Temple?

A. Oh sure.

Q. So were there activities that involved fund-raising?

A. I'm sure.

Q. Now Norman was president, wasn't he?

A. He was.

Q. Were you president of the Sisterhood?

A. No.

Q. Did you teach in Sunday school?

A. I taught one year. Boy, that was an experience. I think it was the second grade. I had Merrill, I had Glen Patton LAUGHTER, Barbara Gross. They were good, nothing wrong with the kids. I had a big class. But one year, yeah, I tried that. I discovered I was not a teacher. You have to have patience to be a teacher, and I don't have it. They were great, I mean the kids were nice. One year, that was about it for me. But I did try it. To my credit.

Q. Were you involved with the JCC at all?

A. We use to go there a lot. On Saturday nights, we use to go up there, when I was first married. There was a whole bunch of us that use to go up there on Saturday nights. They had slot machines and dances. And we use to go a lot, on Saturday nights. I remember that I didn't much with the running of it, I don't think I did.

Q. Did they have beer or wine or alcohol?

A. You have to remember, that we were dry. You had to carry your own in a brown bag.

Q. Could you brown bag at the JCC?

A. I think so. I guess so. I don't remember that. Maybe not. I am not sure enough.

Q. Were—there was a Jewish sorority—

A. Oh yeah. That was fun. It was just a little club.

Q. What was that like? Was it high school?

A. Must have been, it was before college.

Q. And then it wasn't here when you got back?

A. I don't remember whether it was or not, any more. But it was fun. It was a nice little club.

Q. Now where did Tal Gamma (sp) meet?

A. LAUGHTER I don't remember. Probably in other people's homes. I don't remember. We certainly never had a building or anything. But it was a good little club. We enjoyed it.

Q. Did they have like dances and social events?

A. I don't know, what did we do? Ask some of the other girls. I don't remember. I just remember Tal Gamma (?) and we use to go to the meetings, and it was good.

Q. Well was there a boys' fraternity?

A. Not that I know of. This was just girls.

Q. And it wasn't just Jewish?

A. There weren't a whole lot of boys. We had Stanley Lipinski and Leon Roccamora. I am talking about Reformed. I think there were probably more Orthodox. But really, we had very few boys.

Q. Was it just Jewish?

A. Yeah. All Jewish.

Q. Now we are going to move back to when you were married and you had kids. So did you—I remember that your kids went to Sunday school, but did you think it was really, as a married couple, did you want to have your kids go to Temple?

A. Yeah, we did. We wanted them to go to Sunday school. We made them go. I don't think they went of their own free will. But it was accepted and they went. I mean you didn't get choices, in those days. Yeah, we went. We were active in the Temple, and you know, supported it. Went to Sisterhood meetings and normally was active in Temple. Yeah, we went.

Q. Now do you think that any of your kids ever experience anti-Semitic events or anything?

A. Probably. I can't remember. I remember that of course they couldn't go to the Biltmore Forest Country Club, and a lot of their friends lived out there. And that wasn't too great. And couldn't join the Asheville Country Club either, but, I don't remember—their lives, you know, most of their friends were not Jewish. My kids had very few Jewish friends.

Q. Why do you think that was?

A. I guess they just wasn't around. I guess just most of the kids they knew just weren't Jewish. I guess most of the kids they went to school with, there just weren't that many Jewish kids.

Q. So do you think there were fewer Jewish kids when your kids were growing up than when you were growing up?

A. I think so. Because they had very few Jewish friends.

Q. Did they go to the public school?

A. No, as a matter of fact, they didn't. They went to private schools.

Q. Did they go to Gibbons _____?

A. Yes.

Q. Well there were plenty of Jewish kids there.

A. Well, I didn't go there. A lot of the girls—some of them did, but I didn't. No, my kids went, and then Donald went off to print (?) school. Wilmington _____ Canady's, Springfield, MASS. They didn't go to public schools.

Q. Did you want them to stay in Asheville?

A. Not really, not really, I didn't see much of a future here for them, not in their fields. _____ an artist and—well, I guess Jeff could—if he's an engineer, he could work anywhere. Well, what happened to Jeff was, it wasn't a conscious thing. This is my oldest son. He went to Stanford and never came back. That happened to a lot of kids that went to Stanford. He's still there, 25

years later. He just stayed out there. It wasn't a conscious thing, it just happened. And of course, the others, you go away to get jobs, you know. And Donald, being an artist, was never going to live here. He went to school in Chicago, and then went to New York, which is where artists—you know, where the artists are. And my daughter is a curator—there's nothing here. Nancy, the little one, she's a professor in Greek and Roman studies. What would she do here?

Q. Where is she?

A. She lives in Bloomington, Illinois. She's kind of a Greek and Roman studies at a college called Illinois Wellesley (?).

Q. So, do all of them have children?

A. Not Terry. The others do.

Q. Are their kids being raised Jewish?

A. They are not being raised much of anything. I mean it's not that they have changed their religion or anything, they just don't seem to be much into religions.

Q. So they are not being raised Christians either?

A. No. Absolutely not.

Q. Does that bother you?

A. I don't know whether it should or not. But it doesn't. I don't care. As long as they are happy and they are good people. I mean they are not Christian, which I guess would bother me. But they are not, they are just not much of anything. They just know who they are: they are half Christian and half Jewish, and neither one of the in-laws, you know, they are not into religion. In New York City, it's pretty hard to be affiliated with temples and things. Although some are. They never really got into—they are Jewish, there is no question about that. They don't hide the

fact that they are Jewish, that's who they are. But they are not practicing. Is that the way to put it?

Q. You can put it however you want to put it. Now does Jeff have kids?

A. He has a daughter. She is 23 and lives in Seattle.

Q. Where is the one that is a curator?

A. She lives in Texas, Houston. She is a director of a gallery at the University of Houston, Blanford (?) Gallery. She was the corporate in D.C. for 10 years, she was a curator. Now she has no children. Her husband is a lapsed Catholic. So they are both so lapsed.

Q. She was in the Peace Corps, wasn't she?

A. Yeah, she was in the Peace Corps for two years; she was in Samoa. My children are a lot more interesting than I am.

Q. Now did you help your husband in his business?

A. No, I didn't know a thing about the tire business. There wouldn't a been anything in there—

Q. So what did you do all day?

A. Well, I had 4 kids, but I had help. I volunteered, you know. I am the best volunteer in the entire world. I worked with the Red Cross. And I worked out as a great lady out at Oak Team. Just one thing and another. It was all volunteer work, plenty of that. And then we use to play cards too, a lot. I guess we didn't lead such a great productive life, but—

Q. Well, you produced some pretty good kids.

A. We were involved in community things, and we did play a lot of bridge and canasta. But we did—you did have the kids, and even though you did have help, you still had—especially in the car pools, and you know, all that kind of stuff, took up a lot of your time. Just hauling kids

around and being involved in their schools and stuff, that took a good bit of time. Which I did a lot.

Q. Do you think being in Asheville gave them the idea to follow their life's path? I mean before they left, were they interested in the things that they became?

A. Oh yeah, I am sure.

Q. So was there a lot of opportunity in Asheville to be exposed to all different art and—

A. Not really, we took them around, to see that they were exposed. We took them everywhere to places, so they would be exposed to it.

Q. You mean like you traveled to Washington?

A. New York, we saw to it that they were. But then they went off to college, and from then on it was, you know, splits-ville for them, 'cause they never came back. But most people don't.

Well, some do. But basically, when they go off to college, that is pretty much it. And then they all went to graduate school. And Nancy went on and got a doctorate. They all went to graduate school, so they were in college a good bit of their time. They were all pretty much on a path, all of them. Jeff was always going to be an engineer. He was playing with wires when he was 5.

Q. What kind of an engineer is he?

A. Electrical.

Q. Do they come home very much?

A. Oh yeah. They like to come home. You see, this is their constant. They have all moved around. They have never had any place where they lived for a long time. Well Jeff's been there, and Donald too, for a good while. But this is sort of a constant. No, they love to come home, they love it.

Q. What do they think of what Asheville is like now?

A. Well, it's kind beyond them. Of course they are disappointed: it's not the Asheville they knew. You know, they go out to Gibbons Hall and it's gone.

Q. But do they like going Downtown, to all the restaurants and all the galleries and all that kind of stuff?

A. Well, they sort of miss the way it use to be, their memories are childhood memories. So this kind of stuff doesn't mean much to them. They would have liked for it to be the way it was.

Q. What about you? Do you feel like—

A. No, I think it's fine. I'm all for progress. There's some things you miss. You know, like you said, you miss the personal touches of going to shop where people knew you, but then there are things that you don't miss. Things that are better. Now we have restaurants; we never had a decent restaurant, as you can attest. We have good restaurants now; we have art museums; we have symphonies. There is plenty here. So I don't. But see, this is their childhood. So when they come home, they would like for it to be the way their childhood was. So when they roam around, it is kind of hard on them. Especially when they go out to their school—it's gone. No more. A lot of the places that they knew, aren't there any more. It's just big changes. But they only come to visit. They don't stay long enough, you know—but they do all love to come home. I think Nancy most of all, the little one. She loved the mountains.

Q. And she lived here for a little while, in between grad school.

A. Not really. She was here for a few months. But she never really stayed long. She went to college, then she went to Minnesota, then she went to Harvard for 6 years and got her Doctorate, so she was never really here that much. There was some little spell in there where she was here for a few months. But not too long. And of course the others have been gone for so long.

Donald seems to know his way around pretty well, which surprises me. He is the one that seems

to know it best. When he comes, he is pretty much can get around. And of course Jeff has gotten better at it, but—and Terry's lost.

Q. The streets are exactly the same.

A. Well, she doesn't think so; she thinks everything is different. She is totally lost. When she goes out with me and I have someplace to go—and I have such a terrible sense of direction—and bless her heart, she is driving and I am trying to navigate her, and I can't—we're always lost. They love to come home. They all do. Not a lot, but they usually come home at least once a year, and I usually go up there about once a year. But we are on the phone all the time, and you know, you don't have any feeling of distance. The closeness is there. They don't see as much of each other as I wish they could, 'cause they are so scattered.

Q. They are literally in the four corners. One in the upper Midwest, one in Texas and one in California and one in New York. All over.

A. Nancy lived in California for a couple of years when she taught at Stanford. So she and Jeff did see each other. They had some great pictures of a couple of parties, but I don't know where in the world they are, but they are around here somewhere. Two pictures probably in the '20's. They use to have these costume—they partied all the time. There were this little bunch of them, just party party party. So they had a great time, even though nobody had any money. Everybody was broke, but it didn't matter, 'cause everybody was broke. They had a good time.

Q. Do you think most of them owned their own business?

A. Yeah, most of them did. Seems like most Jewish people did, didn't they?

Q. Yeah. Do—was there any question that your kids would go into the tire business?

A. Not really, Jeff I thought—when he was a kid he showed interest in it, but then he was born to be an engineer, which we encouraged, because that was really his thing. And so he went in

that direction. But he might of, at some point, been interested. We didn't discourage, but we also didn't encourage. We could just see that he was definitely bent, that was always his thing, always. When he was a teenie little kid, other kids had guns, and he had wires. He just always had that bent, and we knew it; and we just thought that was the direction he should go. So we encouraged it, but we never stopped them from doing anything, they wanted to do. Sometimes you have to give them some kind of guidance, because, you know, for better or worse. I guess I was lucky, 'cause all of mine seemed to have direction. They all did.

Q. Now what happened to your father's business?

A. Well, that business went by the wayside. That was a middle-man thing that went out. Everybody was buying direct, now, which is what they do.

Q. So was he sort of put out of business?

A. Of course he died. And my mother ran it for a while. But she was never a business-woman. No, he died. He would have probably stayed for awhile. But it was inevitable, that that business was going to go. But he died before that happened.

Q. What year did he die?

A. He was in his 50's. He had a brain tumor.

Q. Were you out of school? Married?

A. I was married. Donald was like 8 months old. Around 1950. Jeff is the only one that can vaguely remember him. He was like 2 or 2 ½, and he has he has some kind of vague memory of seeing him sit out on the porch. Of course Donald was like 9 months old when he died.

Q. Did you ever see Thomas Wolf or know his family or anything?

A. No. I knew who they were, but never really knew them.

Q. So no Thomas Wolf experiences?

A. No Thomas Wolf experiences.

Q. He introduced Wilma to her husband.

A. Oh, I didn't know that. He was not a very nice person. Don't put this on there please. I never knew him. He wasn't around that much. He took off, went (TAPE OVER)