

***Edith Sinaiko Frank***

Interviewed by Marie McCabe on April 25, 1984 at an unknown location.

Oral history tape number: 9

*This is Marie McCabe, doing an oral history interview for Historic Madison, Incorporated, on April 25, 1984. I'm talking today to Edith Sinaiko Frank. Mrs. Frank, will you tell me about your parents?*

My father's name was Isaac Sinaiko. My mother's name was Sarah Goldberg and she was from Milwaukee.

*How long had they lived in Madison?*

They moved here in 1901, October of 1901.

*And came here then?*

She did, from Milwaukee. My father was born in Russia and came as a young man, a young boy. Then he looked for a wife in Milwaukee. There weren't any around Madison.

*When did he come to the United States?*

In 1890.

*And he lived in Milwaukee?*

No. He never lived in Milwaukee. He lived in Madison all his life.

*He did? He came right to Madison?*

Yes.

*Do you know why he happened to come here?*

He was one of several brothers and they all settled here.

*Had they known about it in advance?*

They had some cousins in Milwaukee and they came to Madison. I'm very happy they didn't stay in New York.

*What did he do here?*

Sinaiko Brothers Company. It probably was a partnership, in 1897, when all the brothers were here, and has since been sold. None of the brothers are alive, of course. Sinaiko Brothers Company. They had oil and gas later and a scrap metal company. The people who bought it still use the name.

*Where was it located?*

30 North Murray Street, along the tracks there.

*And what were the brothers' names?*

The oldest brother, who didn't come when the younger brothers came, was named Alex. He came in about 1906, I think, with eight children. Then the next oldest two were Sam Sinaiko and then my father was next and then there was Albert, Sol, and William. And one sister.

*And what was her name?*

Her name was Mrs. Sinagub. She only had one son, who has passed away.

*And her first name?*

Her name was, well, she had a pet name. Her Russian name was Yente, the same as Barbra Streisand. And then the old grandmother lived with her, as a young widow with all those children. The reason she came was that she didn't want her sons to go into the Russian army. That's why so many came in those days.

*And they got up this business right away?*

Yes. As far as I know, right away.

*So they had some capital.*

You didn't need much in those days.

*And they had ambition.*

They had ambition. They worked very hard.

*How did your father and mother meet?*

There was somebody who lived here who knew my mother's family in Milwaukee and she thought that would be a beautiful match. And it turned out to be very nice.

*Where did they live when they came to Madison?*

When they first came, they lived for a couple of years near where the Madison General Hospital and then they moved to [1117] Emerald Street. That's the only place I remember. There weren't hardly any houses there then. It was to the other side of Vilas Park. Emerald. It was a great big three-story house. It's still there. Made into apartments now.

*Did they live there alone, with the children?*

Yes. They had four children.

*Oh, they did. And who were they?*

I was the oldest. My sister Hazel Maryan. She died in 1969. She lived in the family house after her husband died. He was a doctor in Chicago. When he passed away she moved to Madison. My brother Jerome died two years ago. My brother Russell, the doctor in Madison, the baby [of the family], he's still here. You probably know him.

*I don't think I do.*

Russell. He's a surgeon.

*So the four of you children grew up here together. And you were born when?*

July 16, 1902. So now you know exactly how old I am.

*I expect you have some pretty happy memories of that area. Or did you move from there when you were little?*

We moved here, let's see, over sixty years ago, next door. On Emerald Street we had a barn, we had a cow, chickens, a horse, and a good carriage. And a pony for the children. It was really quite rural. A big garden. Nothing was here. One house was here.

*So you lived there until you were how old?*

Until I was in college. We moved here when I was in college.

*I see. So you really did grow up there. Did your mother have some help?*

Oh, yes. In those days you could all have sleep-in help, what we used to call the “hired girl.” There was always plenty of room. In fact, that house on Emerald Street was three stories with three bedrooms on the third floor.

*Is it a frame house?*

Yes. You can still see it. 1117. A big porch all around the side. A great big barn which, of course, is no longer there.

*Who did the gardening?*

Oh, my mother was a great gardener. And my father. I don’t know if they had help.

*And you got to ride the horse and the pony?*

No, I wasn’t allowed to. The younger ones did. You asked me about games. I never played games. I was always either reading or practicing.

*What did you play? The piano?*

The piano.

*Oh. Did you start very early?*

At four years old. My mother played the piano, [but of the children] I was the only one who really got terribly interested in the piano.

*Did you take lessons?*

Oh, sure! Yes.

*Who was your teacher?*

Well, I had a teacher in the neighborhood when I was a real little girl. Then when I was, I don’t know, little still, we had a Wisconsin School of Music, the first one, with Ada Bird, and she was my teacher. She was really a famous person. She had studied in Europe. I studied with her until she died. Then I went to the Wheeler School of Music, which was established by that time. I think we had a teacher come from Chicago once a month. I was supposed to be a professional pianist. That’s why when I was quite a small girl they bought that big piano for me. That piano is nearly as old as I am.

*Is it really? It’s in beautiful condition.*

Yes, I love it.

*Do you still play a lot?*

Oh, yes!

*I didn’t know that you played. Do you play for Bettina once in a while?*

No. I don’t play [unclear], but I do a lot of chamber music. I used to, anyway. I still play with a cellist once a week. I like chamber music. I love people. And I belong to the international chamber music players, which has a directory. When people come from out of town they call and we would play together. I would arrange a group. When I came back here after my husband died I did study with Gunnar Johannsen.

*I didn't know anything about your musical background.*

My degree was in journalism at the university here.

*But I knew you through the Taychopera.*

I'm very interested in all that.

*Nobody told me that you played piano. I'm happy to know that.*

It's a source of comfort.

*So your parents were pretty well-off then.*

Not really. Middle class. Middle-middle class, not upper-middle class. Not like the bankers. Just hard working people.

*And the business was going well.*

They made a living. You asked me before how we lived. I think my parents lived the same as I do now. Even on a tiny income it went a long way. Then later, of course, we had a car.

*But with four children it takes quite a lot.*

And we all went to school here. We all went to the University of Wisconsin.

*But even to buy clothes for growing children...*

People didn't have clothes the way they do now. I was talking to somebody the other day. There was plenty of room in the closets for all of us. Now you can't have enough closets. You had one pair of party shoes, one pair of school shoes. I don't know about tennis shoes. Play shoes and school shoes and party shoes, that's all. Now look in your closet...

*Did you go barefoot in the summer?*

Not me. I don't know if the kids did. I was not outdoors at all, ever.

*I just thought for comfort sake. It can get pretty hot here.*

I don't think I ever did. I think the other children did.

*And your father rode the horse to work, I presume.*

I don't know. It wasn't too far that he could walk. And we had a car very early. I can't remember the first one, but the second was a Buick. I drove when I was thirteen.

*But I don't know that they even had cars before about 1910?*

That was our second car, the Buick. I drove that. One of my uncles had a steam. He was a bachelor and he had a steam car. It must have been earlier. You know, the kind you see in the pictures.

*Electric car?*

It wasn't electric. I don't know what kind of car it was. But I remember it as a very young child. Of course, nothing was a closed car; they were open.

*That must have been a big thrill when the first one came along. You said you had a furnace and coal heat.*

We had a coal bin.

*You kept warm in the winter.*

Oh, yes!

*Did you have those big open registers in the house?*

Yes. Next door, when we built this house, over sixty years ago, that had steam heat. Then oil heat. It had radiators. I think the first house had registers.

*Yes. They used to have it so when you came in you could stand over them. I suppose your mother wore long dresses, as they did in those days.*

Yes. I have some pictures. I really don't remember. She was one of the suffragists. She was one of the first founders of the League of Women Voters. She was very active. I do a lot of things but nothing like she did.

*What did her family do in Milwaukee, do you know?*

Her father had kind of like a shoe... they had many shoe factories in Milwaukee and he used to take the surplus and he would go to the shoe factories. As much as I remember. I remember he was a very sick man. He didn't work for many years.

*Did you go to Milwaukee to see him?*

Oh, I always used to go visit. Yes.

*I wondered if the whole family went?*

Oh, everyone went sometimes. I remember going on the train when I was real little. But then we used to pile in the car and drive.

*That was quite a long trip in the car.*

Well, you used to pack your lunch. Before we'd get out of the city limits my brothers wanted their lunch. "When do we eat?"

*But the train service was pretty good then.*

Oh, we had two lines, I think. Yes, the Northwestern and the St. Paul.

*You could get to Milwaukee fairly often.*

Oh, yes. I used to spend all my vacations there.

*You said you weren't much for games out in the barn and that sort of thing.*

No. I did ice skating and maybe roller skating, but I never even learned to ride a bicycle. I suppose I was protecting my hands. I don't know. I was brought up to be a musician.

*And if you're busy all the time you don't need some of these other things.*

But my sister, they used to play games: hide-and-go-seek and all those things. Oh, I played jacks, stuff like that. But none of the outdoor things. I didn't even play tennis.

*Who were your neighbors out around there?*

That neighborhood, Erin Street and Emerald Street, there were many Catholic families there. Of course, it was pretty sparsely... The closest neighbor's house was somebody by the name of Dyer. I think it was the son who started Dyer's Shoe Store. I'm not sure. Many of the children on

Emerald Street went to St. James School. And then the rest... we went to Longfellow until I went to Randall. I went to Longfellow. It was a very good principal they had. She was marvelous.

*That is the one near Madison General?*

Yes. But it wasn't that building. There had been, years before, a little tiny building. The one they just made into apartments over there on Wilson Street. This was a twin building of that. White. But that's been knocked down. That's where it was. A two-story building.

*But on that same location?*

Yes. But not at the hospital site. Closer to Mills Street. That's where that was. The rest was playground.

*There was kindergarten then, I suppose?*

I didn't go to kindergarten. There was kindergarten later. They didn't have a kindergarten when I went.

*So you started there in first grade. Did they have eight grades?*

Yes.

*You went there from first through eighth?*

One of my favorite teachers was Betty Kurtenacker mother. Mrs. [Kate Lyon] Gay her name was then. They lived right next door here. In fact, the Gays bought our house. She married Mr. [Leonard] Gay later. She was a young widow. She was a marvelous teacher.

*Do you remember others of the teachers?*

Yes, I remember a couple others. Miss Reichert was the principal. And another teacher, I think she was my seventh and eighth grade teacher, I can't remember her name. She died since I've been back, I think, in the last twenty years.

*And you were able to walk to school?*

Oh, yes. Everybody walked to school.

*In the wintertime wasn't it pretty cold?*

Well, you had boots. Nobody took you to school.

*You didn't have snowsuits, though. How did you keep warm?*

What did we wear? I can't remember, but we were always plenty warm. You wore long stockings. You didn't wear socks. And you wore boots and a long coat. I can't remember sheepskin coats, or the way they have now, down coats. But they had woolen.

*Did you go home for lunch?*

Yes, I think we did.

*Since you were the oldest, why then you sort of ushered the younger ones back and forth, I suppose?*

Oh, they were pretty self-sufficient. They always had a gang of friends. A lot of people that I went to school with are still around here. Do you know Florence Dvorak? Her husband [Raymond] was the [UW] band leader. They were our neighbors.

*What was her name then?*

Hunt. Florence Hunt. She was the youngest of all the sisters. They had one brother, that's all, who was my brother's best friend. And then let's see, who else? I see people... there was a girl from [unclear], I don't even remember her name now. I saw her at some music conference and she said "We went to school together."

*I suppose they stay around.*

Most of them stayed around. A lot have moved away, but once in a while you run into somebody. I run into a lot of people I went to high school with.

*Oh, yes. When we come to that, I'm sure you'll remember some of those prominent names in town.*

Yes. The day students. We only had one high school then, Central. Later there was University High School. My youngest brother went [to University High School].

*Did you enjoy school?*

Oh, yes. I liked school.

*You were a pretty good student, I imagine.*

I don't know. I never made Phi Beta Kappa.

*But you went through eighth grade.*

And then Central High. I always carried two subjects, with the music on the side. I had two degrees. I was married the day after I graduated college, so I never had a career.

*I see. I was wondering about your very earliest memories of Madison, about how big it seemed. Didn't they still have streetcars?*

I don't remember horse cars. I remember streetcars because they ran on Mills Street. I remember streetcars, of course, the streetcar tracks, before the buses. And Madison was... to me the Square and State Street, East Washington, West Washington, it's the same format. Of course, I was terribly interested in city planning and everything like that.

*When you were young did you get down to the Square very often?*

We used to go to the movies. And, of course, we went through the Capitol. My mother was very active in city affairs. For instance, I was just thinking [about this] the other day. I found some postcards. I don't know where they are. I should give them to the Historical Society. She was one of the founders of the first "safe and sane Fourth of July." There were so many people, children, hurt by firecrackers. Really terrible accidents. They had a parade and I have pictures of the floats.

*What year would that have been?*

It must have been awfully early. I don't know. Maybe 1910. I really don't know. The postcards might have the date, if I could find them. They had floats and got people interested in this. They called it a "safe and sane Fourth of July." It made a big impression on me, so I never forgot it.

*I didn't realize that they worried about it that early.*

They really did. That was one of my mother's projects. She had many projects like that.



*You said she had a hired girl.*

The girls used to want to come from the farms to work in Madison. They stayed at the house.

*The cooking and cleaning.*

They helped with the general housework. As long as I can remember we had a wash machine. We didn't have hand washing.

*What kind would that have been?*

I think the name was Speed Queen. A wringer wash machine. But no dryer. We had to hang our clothes outside.

*In the winter what did you do with the clothes?*

We had a great big basement. I don't know if they hung clothes there or not. I can't remember. I don't know if there were laundries in Madison. I didn't pay much attention to that kind of stuff.

*My mother-in-law used to always hang her clothes in the attic in the winter. But the basement was handier and warm. We always did that. Hang in the basement.*

I think that's what they did.

*You said you thought [your mother] had a cook stove in the kitchen.*

In the early days, I'm sure. I remember a gas stove, a big gas stove, with the oven on the side.

*And you had an icebox?*

Originally I remember an icebox, where the iceman put the ice in from outside. That I remember. We didn't have an electric refrigerator until we moved over here. It was a Western Electric with the motor on top and it lasted forever. Of course, there was no radio when I was a little girl.

*Was the park here?*

I don't remember too much of the park. Isn't that funny? I think they started the zoo... I don't know the dates when they started it. But, of course, the Vilases gave the land. Madison was a wonderful place. The Brittinghams gave that, and Tenneys gave the other park. In Charleston nobody gave a park at all. No parks were named after anybody. Nobody gave land.

*I remember hearing that there was a very active association in Madison.*

Park and Pleasure.

*And they proposed it.*

It really was nice.

*I don't remember just when it happened.*

[Many years later] I lived in Charleston, West Virginia. My husband was transferred there. They had so many really wealthy people, but there wasn't one park named after anybody. Nobody gave any land. They just used it for coal fields and stuff.

*You have to get somebody to sponsor those things, I think.*

My mother was very interested in all those projects. For instance, they started what was called the Community Union and they wanted a board. I remember this from when I was a little girl.

They had whoever nominated the people, they had their pictures in the paper, and then you had to vote for somebody. My mother was the only woman for that. That was really interesting. [Unclear] but they called it the Community Union. That was interesting.

*So you were impressed from very early on to do community service.*

Yes. And the cultural things, too. I always was interested in the historic.

*Did you swim?*

I wasn't a good swimmer. I really didn't do anything outdoors. The kids did. They used to swim.

*And boat? You were fairly close to the lake.*

But I really didn't do any of those things. I was, as I said, either reading or practicing.

*Well, those things are good, too.*

And I guess I wasn't the robust type.

*You were healthy, though.*

Well, I suppose so.

*You don't remember childhood illnesses?*

Oh, I had scarlet fever. My baby brother was just a couple of months old, so they sent me to... we had a Contagious Hospital on East Washington Avenue. There's something there now, some university psychological [department]. The building was there and I had to go as a little girl to the Contagious Hospital. But that's a long time ago.

*Anything else you remember having?*

Oh, everybody had tonsils in those days.

*Did you have measles and things, where they put the sign on the door?*

Yes. They used to put a sign on the door, I think. I remember that.

*A red sign or something to "stay away." I had that, too. Was your father home?*

He was a real homebody. But he would take us... we had the county fair in those days, which was really fun. [It was held out] where the [Dane County] Coliseum is now. They had both [unclear] horse races. He took us to everything. And he would let us try for prizes. We'd always win something. We always came home laden. That was a big thing. And when the circus came to town they would have a parade, you know. We'd always go to the parade.

*Did you have a parade on Memorial Day? Do you remember?*

I don't really remember.

*Do you remember ever marching in a parade yourself?*

I remember the school children used to march on Memorial Day to the cemetery and bring flowers. I remember watching. I don't know if that was from Randall or from Longfellow. We used to march. We had Memorial Day. Then we used to celebrate Arbor Day, too. We did at home, because my mother was a big believer in gardens. She was active [in many things]. We used to have a very active Woman's Club in Madison in the old days and she was very active in that and in better homes and gardens. She started the project in the old Ninth Ward to have the

[community] gardens. The seed companies gave them plants and seeds. She worked with that and with a state committee. That was very interesting. She was a great gardener. See, this is her yard. And along the back, I'll show you, the flowers are out. She loved wildflowers. She had these wildflowers. They're coming up now. After all those years! And the grapes in the back were planted by my father.

*Oh, that's marvelous.*

And now there's some little, not trillium but some little, flowers already out that she had planted.

*What about discipline in your house with the children?*

I don't remember anybody getting a spanking. I don't know. My father was pretty easy-going. And he was quite a bit older than my mother. Of course, I never got a spanking because...

*You were a good little girl.*

Maybe my sister and brothers were more mischievous.

*It sounds like your mother was a pretty strong-minded character.*

She was very gentle though.

*And she kept things in hand. Did you have any family games that you played together?*

I always used to like to play school. We would play school. That's what I did with my sister and brothers.

*I was wondering about your parents, if they played games with you.*

I don't know. What games would they have? Checkers? Oh, croquet. We always had croquet. In the side yard is where we had croquet.

*Any card games?*

Well, I can't remember them playing bridge, but they played casino and stuff like that. We used to do that.

*On winter evenings. And they belonged to a church or synagogue?*

The synagogue. Well, there wasn't any Sunday school when I was a little girl. They really didn't have [Temple] Beth El or any of those. They had a little Orthodox temple near the hospital in those days, with maybe ten Jewish families. I don't think there was more than that. When I was a little girl I think there were only two or three Jewish families.

*What about the Gates of Heaven? That was the earliest synagogue, I thought, in the state.*

Oh, that was already closed by that time. There was an 1848 German influx of Jews that came. But there were so few. In fact, the doctor who delivered me, Dr. Mack, belonged to that. Right after that it closed. There weren't any because they were all inter-married. The Thuringers. How long have you lived here? They moved it [the Gates of Heaven] over to the park [James Madison Park]. I worked on that, too, to save it. I still think it should have been left where it was and they should have used it the way they did in New York with a church. They could use it for a conference center or something. I think it should have been left and built around. I was sorry about that. But it's a good place.

*But you didn't go there?*

No, because it was no longer functioning. I don't think there were more than six German Jewish families. Mr. Klauber. I didn't remember him, but I knew his sister or his daughter, I suppose, Sophie Klauber. She never married but lived here. He was one of the presidents of the Historical Society.

*What were some of the other families?*

There was a family called Kalin. Did you know Elizabeth Link, Carl Link's wife? Her mother was a Kalin. They were a Jewish family who lived here about the same time. In fact, it was her grandmother who introduced my mother to my father. But there were very few. Rabbi [Manfred] Swarsensky did some research on the early Jewish community and he wrote a little pamphlet on it.

*The Sinaiko families went there.*

Yes. They all had several children.

*But you didn't have a Sunday school?*

No. That was many years later. Oh, we used to meet in Baron's Store. Mr. Joe Rothschild was active. They belong to one of the Quaker churches now, right here behind the bank, behind the Randall Bank. That was Beth El for a while. Then Beth Israel is conservative, not reformed. See, I pay dues but I never go. I shouldn't have that in the record, should I?

*That's all right.*

I'm very interested in genealogy, as you know. And I was interested in Taychopera, too, because I did that in other cities. Then they did put me on the board of the Wisconsin Society for Jewish Learning, to be their archives chairman. Their archives are here in the Historical Society. Do you know [unclear]?

*No, I don't think I do.*

She was the one who was president of this last year, of Historic Madison. She's at the Historical Society and she's in charge of those archives, partly. That's part of her [staff responsibilities].

*What did you do on the holidays? Did your family all get together? Or did you have family dinners?*

I suppose. I think we used to get together a lot, yes.

*Do you remember whether your parents entertained anybody besides the family?*

Oh, yes. I can't hardly remember a meal alone without company. My mother had four sisters and there was always one of them visiting us and staying with us.

*From Milwaukee.*

Yes.

*Oh, that must have been fun.*

In fact, one of them even went to school here.

*You had plenty of room.*

Oh, yes. It was such a big house. But even people who didn't have big houses always had relatives. I'm still of that tradition. I love to have company.

*What were the kinds of subjects you had in grade school?*

The three R's. Really. We had a good background. Spelling and reading and writing.

*And some history, I suppose.*

Yes. A regular curriculum of those days. It was pretty advanced, as I think now of my grandchildren's schooling. In high school, too. We put on Shakespeare plays and stuff. Now when I see my grandchildren's reading lists they're completely different. They have maybe one Shakespeare play or something. They do the modern, Salinger, which is all right. But I think if you don't do the classics when you're young, it's pretty hard to get involved later on. And nobody ever has to memorize poetry now.

*Oh, isn't that a shame.*

I remember we used to memorize poetry, but nobody does that any more. That was fun.

*Did you have sort of class days at the end of the year and everybody would recite?*

I can't remember that. But we used to march. I always used to play the piano for the children to march out at recess. I can remember. I can still play that march, the same march every time.

*They marched out to music?*

They were so orderly.

*Then did they come back in the same way?*

I can't remember the coming-in part.

*Did you go out for recess then, yourself?*

I suppose. I wasn't playing on the playground very much.

*Oh. Did you have a gym?*

Oh, sure. I played basketball, believe it or not, but not very good. I can give you one reminiscence. We were playing another school – I don't remember which one, Draper or something – and our coach – I don't remember who she was, a nice young girl – said "You want our team to win, don't you?" I said "Of course." She said "Well, then, I won't put you in." It never bothered me. I remember it so well.

*I bet you were a little bit hurt at the time.*

No. I knew I wasn't very good. But I did play basketball.

*And I suppose you skipped rope.*

Oh, yes. That I did. And hopscotch. That I liked. We would make the design on the sidewalk. I think the children still do that.

*I imagine they do. I see a little bit of that. Not as much.*

The boys played with marbles.

*Did you fly kites?*

I suppose so. They did.

*And they played ball, I presume.*

Oh, yes! They played ball and all those games after school.

*And probably climbing in the barn, as you said, too.*

Oh. We had a big barn.

*Who took care of the horse and the cow? What did you do with them?*

I think my father used to leave... in fact, I think he used to leave the cow... this was all vacant here, the pasture, where people would bring their cows. That's why he fell in love with this place to buy the lot to build the house. Everybody did that.

*Then did you milk the cow?*

Well, I guess. I don't know if he did or these girls from the country. I suppose they could do it, too. We didn't have a cow too long. The horse was very small. I remember that we had chickens and a big vegetable garden.

*And you ate the chickens?*

I don't think so. I don't know. I think we had chickens for eggs. I don't even remember.

*You don't remember ever seeing a chicken killed?*

Chicken what?

*Have its head chopped off.*

No.

*I do. My mother used to do that.*

They probably did it, but I don't... I guess I was too squeamish.

*I didn't watch very often, but I can remember it.*

A little later we had a lovely farm lady who came in every week with chickens and eggs and vegetables. She used to come to the door here. I think her name was Mrs. Schroeder. I just remember that so well.

*Were there any stores around where you got your regular supplies?*

Well, there was a store down here on the corner where the Stop & Go is now.

*What street is that?*

On Drake and Randall. And on Emerald Street there was a little store and I think on Mills Street someplace. I think they used to call up and have groceries delivered. You would have a charge account and they delivered.

*So things were brought out. You didn't have to go and get them.*

No. You didn't have to go.

*Well, you didn't have freezers in those days, but I suppose you did canning from the garden.*

Oh, yes. They canned. We had a good basement. I was telling someone the other day that we used to have apples by the barrel. They didn't spoil. If I buy apples [now] I have to keep them in the refrigerator. We had a barrel of apples. And we had a place where you could keep carrots. And pickles. It was a big basement.

*Do you know what they called it? Was it walled off?*

Yes, it was a cold cellar.

*We used to call it "the cooler."*

Yes. Cold cellar. And we had carrots and celery, I can remember.

*And potatoes?*

And potatoes. And apples by the barrel. All that stuff.

*Things kept fairly well.*

Yes. You see, it wasn't hot. See, our basements [now] are too warm.

*Yes. And we don't have dividers in them to keep the heat out. So you didn't have any activities going on at the synagogue, besides just going to Sabbath, I suppose.*

There wasn't anything for children. Later on they had a Sunday school.

*Do you remember your graduation from grade school? It was a pretty big thing in those days.*

Yes. I think I had a white dress with a sash, a blue sash. It was pretty. I think I have a picture some place.

*It would have been a pretty long dress, wouldn't it? Almost to your ankles?*

No, no. They were short. I graduated grade school in 1916, high school in 1920, and college in 1924. I'll show you some pictures I have of me as a little girl. You might get a kick out of it.

*Yes, I would. So you went to Central High. How did you get there? It was quite a ways, wasn't it?*

You could walk, but it was far. But we had the streetcars. And I had to go downtown on State Street for my music lessons, too. We took the streetcar, I think.

*What sort of subjects did you take in high school?*

French, Latin, and English. We had wonderful teachers. At Madison Central High School we had very good teachers. We had good teachers in elementary school, but we had so many teachers at the high school.

*Do you remember the teachers' names? Some of them?*

Let's see. The man teacher I had in English was Percy something. I can't remember his last name. He was good. He was like some of our college teachers of today. He had come from the East some place. I don't think I had Miss Moseley. She was outstanding. From the Moseley book store, the sister. She was a wonderful teacher. I can't remember if I had her. We had a music teacher. I didn't play in the orchestra, though. I didn't play the piano in the orchestra, but I was always playing beside it.

*Do you remember the Latin teacher?*

To tell you the truth, I can't remember the Latin teacher's name. Isn't that funny?

*I think her name was Miss Wilson.*

Miss Wilson, yes. She was my teacher.

*I've heard about her. She was apparently very good.*

I only had two years of Latin.

*Now, Emma Glenz was teaching German there about that time.*

I didn't take German. I took French.

*And you were planning to go on to college?*

Oh, sure. I was either going to go after graduation into music... my teacher from Chicago that I had, Victor Heinze, took his class, some of them who could go, to Germany that year. That's when I decided to go into journalism. It was just too lonely to sit and practice by yourself all day. Mother agreed. She said "That's all right. If you don't want to go on with music, that's all right." I always took [piano] lessons, but I took journalism as my college course.

*Had your mother gone to college?*

Oh, no. I'm not even sure she graduated high school, because she got married before she was eighteen. I don't think she did graduate.

*She probably just assumed that you would go on.*

In Madison everybody went to college. Education was very important to my parents.

*And did all your sisters and brothers...*

My sister was in art school. She was a very good artist. Then she went on to the Chicago Art Institute. My brother Jerome graduated law and my brother Russell in medicine.

*Oh. And your cousins, too?*

No. I think there were more Sinaikos graduated from Wisconsin than any other name, I mean who are related, outside of Smith or Jones or somebody. There were so many of them. They all went and graduated here. You could live at home, and my tuition was fifteen dollars a semester.

*Did you live at home?*

Oh, sure.

*We better wait until we get through high school here first. Let's see. Do you remember there being plays given in high school?*

Oh, yes. We had wonderful plays in high school.

*Were you ever in any of them?*

No, I never was in dramatics.

*You played the piano, I suppose, for some.*

Not really. I was too involved with other things with my music that I didn't really do music in high school. All you would do with piano would be to play piano in the orchestra, but I didn't do that. I was always giving recitals. I was studying privately. I remember the plays were wonderful. I remember I went to several of them. You should interview her, Judy Hanks, whatever her name is now. She was always good in plays. She was marvelous. And then we all took dancing lessons from Professor Kehl. He had a place on Johnson Street.

*Kehl?*



Yes. He was a professor; he called it that. The grandfather of these girls. Judy Hanks was a marvelous dancer. Eleanor Roddy, did you talk to her?

*Who?*

Eleanor Roddy, who had Soup Sans Restaurant.

*She's on our list.*

They were three years ahead of me. They were just marvelous in theater.

*We weren't sure that Julia Naylor had gone to school. Were you aware in high school of a rather elite group who kept to themselves and were the leaders?*

I suppose there was, but I was always by myself. I was so busy that I really didn't feel left out of anything. I'm sure there were.

*Who did you go to dancing school with?*

A Saturday afternoon class by myself.

*But there were boys there, too?*

Yes, there were boys, too. I think so.

*What did you do there?*

I took both kinds. There was social dancing. I think I took the one that you had to be in recitals, dance recitals.

*Ballet you did?*

Yes. I wasn't too talented, but the costumes were nice.

*You were always small, weren't you?*

Yes. I was very thin, too.

*You didn't have long graceful legs like you wished you had, I'm sure.*

I'm five feet two and that's what I was when I was in eighth grade and in high school.

*That's tall enough for playing a piano. Do you remember sports activities? Did you go to any of the basketball games or anything?*

I suppose I did, but not as many as my sister used to go to. She was real active in sports and interested. I used to go to the football games.

*Where were they held?*

Gee, I don't even remember. All I can remember now are the university football games. We all went to football games at the university.

*I wonder if they were at Breese Stevens Field?*

I can't even remember that. I don't think I went too often.

*You don't remember homecoming celebrations?*

In high school, I can't remember much about that. But, of course, university homecoming I remember.

*Was it Wisconsin High?*

Not then, but later. My brother went there. My youngest brother went, mostly because my other brother was in college and [would have] the same vacations. My mother thought that would be great that they would have the same vacations.

*Were you aware of any particular ethnic groups in high school?*

Everybody thinks I should have been aware, you know, since I was a minority, but I never even thought of it.

*You said that the Italians in town came later.*

Yes, they came after. There were some already in Madison, but not a lot like later. In high school I suppose I was a minority. I know I was a minority but it never bothered me. Never bothers me now. I never think of religion.

*I know when I was in high school the Jewish kids had certain days off.*

No, I never was religious. I never took holidays off. We didn't have any temple or anything to go to.

*You didn't mind that they had Christmas stories and that?*

Oh, no! Something just happened the other day, somebody said something about something and I said that at Christmas time on my stationery I have a little Christmas wreath. And they said "Oh, well. Jewish people don't do that." I said "Well, I have friends all over the world that I send Christmas cards to." I don't know. It was in connection with something from the university that she told about my Christmas wreath. I'm different than most people, I guess.

*Did the high school go over to the Capitol? It was finished about that time, wasn't it? Did the glee clubs go over and sing there?*

No, they didn't have that then.

*That was much later.*

I love Christmas carols! That doesn't bother me. Music is music.

*True. Well, I suppose you don't remember what sort of clothes you wore in high school.*

Yes, I remember very well a coat that I had. It was a green coat with a little black seal collar. It was so cute. I just remember that coat so well.

*How long would it have been?*

I'm not sure it was real seal or just black velvet. Then I don't think in high school I had a raccoon coat, but later in college I had a raccoon coat. We used to wear sailor, naval suits: pleated skirt with a middie blouse. We used to order them from Newport, Virginia, from a supply store. I had a checked one that was gorgeous. I wish I had it now. It was so pretty. And ones in cotton. Summer or winter, we wore those middie blouse dresses. The girls all ordered them from Newport Virginia, from a naval supply store.

*From a regular Navy [store]?*

I loved them. They were made beautifully.

*How did you wear your hair? You had brown hair?*

I had blonde hair then. I had long hair, but then I had it cut when everybody had it cut. I can't remember when I had my first hair cut.

*I was wondering if you wore braids or put it up when you were a young lady.*

I'm trying to think of my high school graduation picture. Our high school book was called *Tychoberahn*. I know for that picture I wore my checked middie blouse. I don't remember how my hair was. I think I wore it pinned back with a barrette in the back, like what you call a ponytail now.

*Yes. I see. That sounds like a school girl in those days. Well, did you have boyfriends when you were in high school?*

Well, not one boyfriend. No. We were friendly with boys.

*Did you go to parties?*

Some.

*Did you have parties at your house?*

We always had company at my house, yes. I can't remember the high school days as much as the university days. In those days I had a lot of musical friends. They would come and play music, the violinists, saxophonists, and things like that. Now that I think about it, I did go to dances in the summer at Esther Beach, across the lake [Lake Monona]. Then they had a couple of places in town for the students. They had mixers. They had afternoon dances, I think, too, after school. At high school. I can't remember if I went too often.

*Who were some of the other students that you remember? You did say Walter Frautschi was one of them.*

Oh, here. I just got this list of the class... another girl who took piano lessons with me is Mrs. what's her name. She doesn't live too far from you. Margie Rozelle, her name was before she was married. We took piano lessons together. And another person [unclear] mother was in my class. Of course, she's not living. She was a musician, too. And a journalist. You should talk to Josephine Hirsig Martin. You said you had Myron Stevens. We had a good class in high school, the class of 1924. It was very good.

*Who was the valedictorian?*

Gee, I can't remember. Walter was our class president. He always has been our class president. University, too.

*You graduated from high school in 1920?*

1920.

*You were there during the war. Did it affect the students in any way that you know of?*

The war was over in 1918. I suppose some of the boys went who were older. I remember Armistice Day with the parade and all the excitement.

*I know they quit teaching German all of a sudden.*

I never did take German. That was the reason, one of the reasons.

*Where was the commencement held?*

In the auditorium there.

*Did you wear caps and gowns then?*

No, I think we wore dresses. In high school we wore dresses. I don't remember what I wore.

*Probably white? Probably something pretty with lace on it? What did you do summers at this time? I know you played the piano. But as a family, did you take vacations and go anywhere?*

Not much. I can't remember. We never went traveling to far-away places.

*Even in Wisconsin?*

Not far. We'd go maybe around, but come home to sleep, within state trips.

*Oh? Your father didn't take a couple weeks off?*

No. He worked hard. He never took a vacation.

*You didn't have a summer cottage then?*

Not then. We had it later.

*A lot of people did, I know.*

It was too bad we didn't have one. Later we had one across Lake Mendota.

*In the Maple Bluff area?*

No. Now where all the apartments are. Sunrise Court.

*In that harbor village area?*

Yes. Farther, a little farther out.

*I see. When you say later, when do you mean?*

Oh, we didn't have it until my parents died. Then the four of us bought it.

*So you just pretty much stayed at home?*

Stayed at home. I used to go and visit friends, when I was older, and I would go to my grandmother's, of course. But we stayed at home. I know I didn't go to any long trips like the kids do now. Go to Europe and everything! We just didn't do it.

*No. I thought maybe you just drove up to northern Wisconsin.*

No, we didn't do that. To Milwaukee, of course.

*So when you graduated from high school you just planned to get ready to go to the university?*

In fact I went to summer school after graduation, in Madison. I thought it would be a nice thing to do, to get used to it. And I recommend it now. My granddaughter is graduating high school. I said "Why don't you go to summer school and get acquainted with the college and use it as a vacation? Or come here for summer. It's so good here in the summer."

*You went to the university?*

Yes, I went there.

*What did you take there?*

I can't remember what I took in summer school.

*Just something to get used to it. It makes you feel grown-up then.*

I'll get that transcript sometime and look at it. It's been so many years. And when I came back [to Madison] I went to post-graduate for so many years.

*Did you buy your clothes, except for your middy blouses, around the Square?*

When I was a little girl – this is something I think everybody did – a dressmaker used to come to the house for a week and make our clothes.

*A fancy dress.*

No, just plain clothes. She would make our clothes.

*And your mother's clothes?*

I suppose so.

*What about the boys? Probably not.*

I don't know. Probably some, I suppose. I don't know. I don't think so. But I remember the dressmaker. She used to make our clothes.

*Did she live at your house for that week then?*

I can't remember.

*But then I suppose you used the stores around the Square?*

Yes. There was Manchester's. Not Manchester's. It was Keeley, Neckerman and Kessenich in those days. They had a nice store.

*And Burdick & Murray?*

Yes.

*It wasn't Baron's then?*

No. That didn't come until later. The big store was Keeley, Neckerman and Kessenich, which is the Kessenich family of today.

*Do you remember going to movies or plays on the Square?*

Yes, I went to movies. And later on when I was older I even went to the Fuller Opera House for wonderful productions.

*What were the theaters then?*

The Fuller Opera House was...

*I meant where the movies were.*

Oh, they had movies at... I think they had the Strand. I don't know. In the early days I think there was a neighborhood movie. It seems to me there was a neighborhood movie. But we used to go downtown to the movies.

*It was then.*

Oh, sure.

*And pretty cheap.*

Yes. Children went for fifteen cents, I suppose. I don't even remember. Saturday afternoon you'd go to the movie. That's when we went. You didn't go at night. Serials and stuff. *The Perils of Pauline*.

*So your younger sisters...*

One sister and two brothers.

*They were going to high school when you were.*

I was a senior and my sister was a freshman, and I was off before my brother came in.

*Your mother was still busy with her community [activities]?*

Oh, yes. Until the very end.

*Right around that time was when they passed that amendment for the women's suffrage, wasn't it?*

Yes. I remember her parading. Then they started the League of Women Voters. I think she was vice president at one time of the League. I remember a picture of her later. You would know Anna Lloyd Strauss. She was president.

*No. I don't know her.*

That was later. I was already married by that time. It was the 1920s that Anna Lloyd Strauss was the president. I was president of the Charleston League of Women Voters. I was on three state boards. I went to the convention in Chicago. That must have been the Wisconsin state convention. They had a big picture of Anna Lloyd Strauss and my mother on the front page. I remember that picture. In those days they gave women's activities a lot of space in the papers.

*Oh, yes. And the social page then, too. Where did you live while you were at the university?*

Home.

*And you walked or took a streetcar back and forth?*

It wasn't too far to walk.

*You decided to go into journalism, you said.*

I don't think I was such a talented writer or anything, but I wanted something that would get me out of being by myself, and journalism was the most interesting thing. I was in journalism when Professor Beyer was the head of it. I've been taking journalism under every head, up to today. Yes. I still take a class if there's something I can take in the journalism school.

*You still go to journalism [classes]?*

I've had everything by now.

*So you didn't join a sorority?*

No.

*There were quite a few girl students, weren't there, at that time? Where did they stay? The girl students?*

Well, Chadbourne was there. That was the only big dormitory that I knew of. I had friends who lived at Chadbourne. But they had a lot of rooming houses on Langdon and Murray. All those streets had rooming houses. They had university rules. They had to comply, be in at ten o'clock and all those things.

*Where did you go to register? Do you remember?*

Oh, registration wasn't such a big problem as it is today. And there weren't too many students either. I think maybe we went to the Red Gym. I can't remember. It might have been there.

*You mentioned the Administration Building.*

That's where you paid your fees. It was a little, tiny one-story building. On Park and Langdon, on the corner.

*There were some big apartment houses right behind there. I remember the Varsity and a couple of others, where students lived.*

Yes. But the students didn't live in apartment houses in those days. Faculty.

*And maybe graduate students. Who was the president when you were there?*

[Edward] Birge.

*Was he pretty well thought of?*

He was pretty elderly. I don't think he was so old now. He had white hair. He was pretty elderly. I had no contact with him at all.

*Where were your classes held?*

For the J school? South Hall. I've been in every building with the journalism school. South Hall. Then when I came back to graduate school they were over where the Helen White Library is, the old mechanical engineering, the art building. And they moved over to Henry Mall, where the Wisconsin High School was. Now, of course, they're in their own building, the Vilas Communications [Hall]. I've been in every building in journalism school.

*Did you enjoy the school right from the beginning?*

Oh, yes.

*You must have had to take some basic courses, too.*

Oh, sure. I took a lot of English and history and political science.

*Any more language?*

Spanish.

*Who were some of your other teachers?*

In journalism or others?

*Any that you remember.*

Oh, I had [William] Kiekhofer for economics. Everybody took him. And history professors, I had Bob Reynolds' father. He was a student teacher. I remember him more than the professor; I can't remember who the professor was. It was American history, I think. Oh, I know. Carl Russell Fish. His wife [Jeanne L'Hommedieu Fish] was a singer. She had to sing for some

organization my mother belonged to and I accompanied her. They had a cute little house off Langdon Street. A darling house.

*I was wondering if you kept up your music all through.*

Not at the university. The only musical course I took at the university was organ.

*But you were still playing?*

I was taking from a professor who came from Chicago, a professor of music. I always took lessons. If you don't take lessons, you don't practice.

*So you found the courses reasonably difficult?*

I wasn't a straight A student by any means, but I had a good enough average to go to graduate school. I think you have to have a B average, so I could go to graduate school.

*You enjoyed it?*

Oh, yes. I liked school.

*Who were some of your friends that you palled around with?*

Mostly people from out of [town]. Quite a few girls from Milwaukee. When vacations would come I'd go visit them. They were always at our house too.

*Were you dating when you were at the university?*

Oh, yes.

*Do you remember any of the boys you went with?*

Oh, sure.

*Any local ones?*

Madisonians?

Yes.

Oh, no.

*Just ones you met in class.*

Yes. Just get to know them.

*So you'd go to movies or dances?*

They had dances. There used to be a dance place on State Street. I can't remember the name of it. We didn't have the [Memorial] Union then. The military ball was at the Capitol. Wouldn't dare have a military ball now, would they! They would be picketed.

*That must have been exciting.*

Yes. You dressed up and it was like prom.

*Do you know what kind of dress you'd wear?*

Ordinary dresses or?

*To parties. The shorter dresses...*



The dresses were longer at the time. Lengths changed. I think in 1923 or 1924 the dresses were kind of long because I can see it in some pictures I have. They were kind of long.

*Did you have your hair cut while you were still at the university?*

Oh, yes. Everybody had their hair cut. They had what was called a switch. They had it done by the beauty parlor or whoever cut your hair. They made it so in case you wanted to you could wear it. My hair got so dark and the switch was so light that I couldn't wear it anyway. I don't know what happened to it.

*It was real hair, wasn't it?*

It didn't cost much. They combed it out and had it tied on one end. Then you just could make a bun or something in the back.

*I think my sister had a switch. I can remember it, now that you mention it. Did you go boating particularly?*

No. I never did the outdoor things. Still didn't.

*Wasn't there dancing over on Esther Beach?*

Yes, Esther Beach. We used to go there. We would drive our car. I remember going on some of those boats that they had, a passenger boat. Wirka, I think it was Wirka Boat Company.

*Did you go out to Picnic Point at all?*

Sometimes, but not much. In later days they did that more.

*The Ag campus was there, wasn't it?*

Oh, yes.

*But you probably didn't have much contact with it.*

No. Later on I did go horseback riding. That's where the horseback paths were, along in the Willows.

*The Willows were there. And I guess they had crew.*

Yes, they had crew.

*And football games. You went to the football games.*

Yes. Gangs would go. That was fun.

*Was the Field House there? Did they have basketball games?*

I don't think so. I think they played basketball in the [Red] Gym. An interesting thing when I was younger, I just recalled, in the Red Gym the Minneapolis Symphony would come here once a month, and the next month the Chicago Symphony would come, with the wonderful Frederick Stock and other wonderful conductors. They would have after-school children's concerts at the Red Gym at four o'clock. Very few would go from each school, but my mother always had me go, of course. That was really wonderful! I remember the gorgeous orchestras. Nobody mentions that any more. I don't think anybody remembers that. I don't know if they came for more than one year or not, but it was at the Red Gym.

*Was the Stock Pavilion there then?*

Well, the Stock Pavilion was there, but I don't think they had any... I don't know where they had the big concerts for the grown-ups, because I went to the children's concerts.

*Well, they probably had some at the Fuller Opera House, too, didn't they?*

I can't remember any concerts being there. Maybe they had the concerts in the Red Gym at night. I don't know. That's where we went.

*Music Hall wasn't big enough.*

Oh, no! That was too small.

*I wonder what auditorium they had? Of course, the Capitol Theater was there and the Orpheum.*

Later.

*Yes, that would be interesting to find out. Maybe it was in the Gym. They had good acoustics there.*

Yes, that's where we had the children's concerts for those two orchestras. The university must still have them. I don't know under what auspices.

*So you graduated in 1924?*

And I got married the very next day.

*Where did you meet your husband?*

He was here in the engineering school. But I didn't meet him until his last year of school.

*And your last year? Was he in your same class?*

No. He graduated the year before me. Then he got a job in a refinery. I had to go to Chicago to get married. He couldn't even take a day off to get married.

*How did you meet him? Just on campus?*

I knew his sister. She stayed at Chadbourne.

*Another matchmaker.*

No, I just knew him.

*So did you go to parties and dances with him?*

I didn't meet him until six months before he graduated.

*Oh, I see. Didn't he have a chance to come back and go to prom and things with you?*

He couldn't take time off like people do now. He did come a couple of times to Madison.

*Did you go down for the homecoming festivities on campus?*

I can't remember. I suppose so.

*I've heard about the big bonfires.*

Yes, I remember in the early days they had the tug of war on the lower campus between the engineers and the law students. I remember all that.

*So you took part?*

Oh, yes. I was very much involved, but not as much as I would be if you lived on campus, because I came home every day.

*Did you have to go down to the library to study at night?*

Yes, I studied at the library. It was in the Historical Society in those days.

*Oh, yes. Well, it's always hard work. You have to study if you're going to get through.*

I never minded that.

*You didn't have to do housework and things at home?*

No, I didn't have to do that. And I didn't work outside. My husband earned his way through school, but I didn't work any place. I did teach some piano. I did do a little piano teaching.

*In the summer, I suppose.*

No, within the year. Not a lot. I may have had eight students or six students, just a few.

*It sounds like you had a pretty good time at the university.*

Well, not the way the youngsters do now.

*Oh, no. Not quite. But I think you enjoyed yourself.*

Oh, yes. I have very fond memories. It didn't bother me living at home.

*You didn't go to the taverns and that sort of thing.*

No, it was dry. Some of my friends would go to Middleton where you could get it, but I wasn't in that scene at all. And if some of my friends wanted to stay they'd come over and stay at my house overnight. I didn't have those rules, you see, because I lived at home. And I wasn't that social.

*Oh, yes. That's always fun to stay at a house where you can stay out later.*

I had a lot of friends who would come and stay overnight at our house.

*So your husband's name was...*

David. And he was from Sparta, Wisconsin.

*I see. And then he got a job with the oil company.*

After he graduated. In fact, I typed his... it wasn't really a thesis, but it was like a thesis. I typed it for him. He worked so hard to earn his way through school.

*And so you planned to get married the day after graduation?*

Yes. I wasn't going to look for a job. We only had one car. I always tease my sister and brothers. I would say "We have only one car and I am the oldest so I got a chance to have it." So they got up first so they could have the car. He was living in a rooming house and he wanted to get married.

*What would you have done if you hadn't gotten married?*

I would have looked for a job.

*In journalism?*

Yes. But they were hard to get in those days. The Depression was coming along. It wasn't like 1930, but...

*I suppose quite a lot of young ladies got married right after school.*

Yes. I wasn't the only one.

*Where were you married? What kind of wedding?*

In Chicago. I didn't have any wedding. A cousin of mine was going to drive me to Chicago. Dave could only get half a day off to get married. He was afraid to ask for more. Then my mother and father decided to come along, so that was nice.

*You got sort of cheated out of a wedding then.*

That was all right. We just got married.

*Where?*

Well, it was very funny. We came to Chicago. I don't really like this on the tape, but I don't care. We checked into the hotel that was popular with Madisonians in those days, the Morrison Hotel, right on Madison Street. It's no longer there. We checked in there and my husband met us there. We went to the City Hall where you get a license. It was across the street but we didn't know about it. We took a cab. He didn't say "It's right across the street." He went around the block, you know. It was an Illinois license. Dave lived in East Chicago, Indiana. It wasn't South Chicago, it was East Chicago. South Chicago is Illinois.

We went there to see the little apartment he had rented because the next day we were going to go buy some furniture and things for the place. Just a one-room apartment. No bedroom. A kitchenette and a bathroom and a living room with, I guess it had a hide-a-bed. "In-the-door-bed" they called it in those days.

*Murphy bed.*

Murphy bed, yes. So then we went to look in Hammond, which is right there, where they have a very nice temple. He said "You can't use this license. It's Illinois." So he said "Just drive a few miles. You'll be in South Chicago. There's a rabbi in South Chicago." It started to pour. We found the place where this rabbi was, an Orthodox rabbi of all people. I'm sure he thought it was a shotgun wedding. It was pouring rain. He married us. Then we went back to Chicago.

*And your parents were still with you?*

Yes, they stayed until the next day.

*What about his parents?*

His parents were in Sparta. They didn't come. In fact, I didn't originally even expect my parents to come. My cousin was taking me. That was funny. Then we bought what I needed [for the apartment]. We knew what would fit. Then my parents went home the next day and I went to East Chicago. Then I realized I didn't have to live there. I could move to Chicago, the south side. In a few months I moved to Chicago.

*You were there for how many years before you went to [West] Virginia?*

Well, 1924 to 1942. We lived on the south side near the University of Chicago.

*So you had your children there?*

I only had one child.

*Only one!*

Yes. She was born in 1930.

*What did you say her name is?*

Suzanne. She got married before she graduated, but then she came back. She only needed one semester and she came back to two summer schools and got her degree. I said "You can get married but you've got to get your degree," which she did.

*Did you do anything with your journalism in those days?*

All volunteer. They wouldn't hire anybody if you were married in those days. I did an awful lot of public relations and publicity for every organization. You name it! Especially the League [of Women Voters]. I did the state League publicity. We had a very good League in South Shore.

*You joined those, the League of Women Voters.*

Yes, right away. Of course, my mother was so active. And the AAUW, I joined that and was active in that. And a lot of music groups and art groups.

*You kept up your music? You didn't have a piano there, though.*

I had a little piano. With the money I got for graduation we went and bought a piano in Hammond, a little one. I didn't take this big piano until I was in a big enough house to put it in.

*So you continued to play.*

I sent my little piano to my mother. Then I had another grand, a small grand. Then she sent this to me on the same truck. This piano has been around, and now it's back right where it came from. I had to have it redone, of course.

*It looks beautiful. You had a very active, pretty liberated kind of existence.*

Without having a paid job, I really...

*You did a lot of good things.*

I kept very, very busy.

*You used your mind and your talent.*

Even in Charleston – I was only there three years – if they found you were a willing volunteer you were just overwhelmed. I was even a Girl Scout leader because they couldn't get anybody. And head of the whole Community Fund drive. I was only there three years and there were all kinds of... It was war time, you know. I recruited for WACS, for nurses, the Civilian Defense. I did the fingerprinting, was in charge of that. When I went to Toledo, I got into the same. You got on the state board of the Ohio League and I was on that. I was there six years, and I was on the board of the Music Association.

*They were all glad to have you come to town.*

I was young and ready to work. Of course, when I moved back to Chicago I was home again.

*Did you and your husband do any traveling?*

We only went to visit my daughter in San Salvador as a vacation. That's why, when he passed

away and we had planned so many trips, I went right away on trips. Mostly with the University Extension. All over.

*He died quite suddenly, you said.*

Yes.

*Then you came back?*

I had another operation coming on. I had an eye operation. I had cataracts that were supposed to be done in Chicago, and then my other operation took precedence. So my daughter thought I should move to Madison.

*Where was your daughter at that time?*

In San Salvador.

*Oh, that's right.*

She was married in 1950.

*You said she met this boy.*

At Wisconsin.

*In the university, and finished her degree and then went right to San Salvador.*

She went before she finished her degree, but she came back for two summer schools and took the correspondence course. She promised me she would get her degree.

*I bet you were sorry to have her go so far away.*

It was far, but I had my husband then. And then we'd go there and she'd come here. She had her children in Chicago; stayed with me and had her children there. So I had her for three months while she had the babies.

*You came back to Madison?*

Back to my primary roots.

*Yes, right to the same area.*

I couldn't find a place to live. That's why I built this house. The neighborhood is very good, don't you think? This neighborhood has stayed very nice. Being inner city, more or less. But it needs watching.

*Did you find Madison quite changed when you came back?*

I didn't have any old friends. All of my friends are new. Maybe one or two.

*It had gotten built up quite a bit?*

Oh, yes. It's changed. But it's the same to me around here, and the downtown.

*The atmosphere is pretty much the same?*

The same. It's always had a non-provincial way, and with many cultural things.

*And the academic community.*

Without the university it wouldn't be the same, of course. That's why I went right back to school

to do graduate work.

*Did you get a graduate degree then?*

No, I didn't finish it. I did the thesis for my professor. I did what he wanted. In journalism. I should have really probably gone to music school. I was in music school too though, here. I studied with Johannsen and then I took chamber music. Now I go for nothing. As a guest student.

*You have belonged to a lot of organizations here, too.*

Oh, yes. Many. I keep my affiliations with Chicago, too.

*Name a few.*

Here?

*Yes.*

Well, any of them. You mentioned them. Of course, I got involved in the State Historical Society and I was on the Civic Center Commission for a long time, from the beginning. I belong to the arts groups and the music groups and [unclear] groups, and Taychopera.

*You were on the Taychopera board, I remember.*

I was one of the charter members of that.

*That's just about as busy as you can be.*

Yes. I could go every day to a meeting.

*And I know you go to all the concerts.*

The concerts I go to.

*And art receptions and things.*

Not all of them. There are too many.

*Were you on the Civic Center board back when they were considering the Frank Lloyd Wright plan?*

I didn't live here then.

*That's too bad. You could have made a difference.*

It wouldn't have done any good, I don't think. There were so many people that were so much for Frank Lloyd Wright, which I would have been too, of course, like Dr. Potter. He was on the Civic Center [Commission]. I'm on the Foundation, too, to raise the money, and I'm still on that. I'm not on the Commission any more. Usually you're only on for three years and I was on for three terms. He said "Well, if you couldn't have the other, you might as well." I thought this was a very good solution.

*It was a solution.*

In fact, I was still on the board at that time and I thought, "Gee. That would be a wonderful place for the Art Center and the Civic Music to have the Capitol Theater." I was one of the first people to think of that. I think it's a wonderful place.

*The Art Center has worked out very well.*

Yes, very well.

*So you're going to go on in all your organizations?*

I don't have time to go to the League. I go to a few things with the AAUW. I still belong to it. But I'm learning to say no to things. Let the young ones do it.

*Do you stay here during the winter?*

Yes. I never go away. There's a lot going on.

*You could go to Sarasota now.*

I could have gone, but I didn't go. I was going to go, but it was always the wrong time.

*Well, you'll probably get there sometime. In these severe winters, it's kind of...*

This winter the icy streets were worse than any. I use a lot of taxis. Now tomorrow I don't go with anybody on the trip I'm going to, so I can take a taxi, out to Hilldale. But you usually go with somebody who has a car. I buy two tickets for all the concerts and I take somebody. Everything was two by two when I first moved here. I thought, "Why do I have to buy two tickets? I'm going to buy one ticket." I was so used to being with my husband.

*You didn't realize you couldn't get just one.*

Life isn't one. It's two by two. Like Noah's ark. Most of my friends don't have season tickets and they all have cars. I don't mind. Now, I'm going to the Academy tomorrow night, Friday night, and I'm going alone. I want to go to the dinner. The Wisconsin Academy. So I thought, "Well, who do I need?" You can call a cab from the Concourse Hotel. I've taken somebody to the Madison Civic Orchestra on Saturday nights and she has a car.

*It sounds to me like you have a very, very full and interesting and busy life.*

All these people that interview me from the university, in geriatrics, they're writing papers, some of them have been pretty awful, some of those questions. They said "Loneliness. Isn't that your worst problem?" I said "Oh, heavens no." My first problem is health. The second is that you have enough money to live on. And the third, to me, is transportation, especially for grocery shopping and stuff like that, but you can overcome those.

*Well, I think you've managed those very well.*

Health is really the first problem. I think it is with all people. But loneliness... I never. You should have enough inner resources to keep you busy.

*I think there are people who are lonely, but they don't have your background.*

You have to be interested in widening your horizons. That's what I tell them. A cousin of mine, she's been in Florida all winter. She can't drive a car any more. She's older than I am. I said "I've been without a car for twenty-two years. You'd be surprised. You can manage." It's hard.

*I'm not sure that this is true, but that Madison is a little bit easier than some places to manage.*

To get around.

*Things aren't so far away. And it's a small enough city so you can get to know quite a few people. Of course, in Chicago I expect you managed, too.*

I had so many friends from organizations. We worked together. Many of my best friends were



from the League, of course, in Chicago.

*A mind that functions...*

You just can't be in a little rut. You have to want to know what's going on in the world. If you look at my pictures you'll see I like modern art. Not having pictures of the Greek statues or anything. You have to know what's going on in the world. If you don't...

*Was your father in organizations, too?*

Not too many.

*It was mostly your mother.*

He was a wonderful husband, my husband. He was in organizations, professional organizations. He was very active in the Society of Mechanical Engineers nationally, and all those things, the American Petroleum Association. He held offices. And he had conventions and meetings and conferences. He didn't mind me doing these things. In Chicago when Suzanne was little I had help, too, then. In those days you could get help. But on the days that I couldn't have help, I'd get a sitter for Suzanne so I could go to my activities. You have to do it when you're young. You can't wait until you're sixty-five years old to say "Now I want to know how to play bridge" or "now I want to volunteer." It's very hard. You have to do these things when you're young. Don't you think so?

*Well, true. But I wouldn't put it past you to start anything you wanted to right now.*

A new project, yes. But these things, like Historic Madison, I don't get to very often. I really don't know when they have meetings.

*They don't have very many meetings.*