

THE HOBOKEN HISTORICAL MUSEUM
ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

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TAPE 1, SIDE 1

PP: First of all, I'll just ask you a little bit about yourself. Where were you born?

PC: I was born in the Margaret Hague Medical Center in Jersey City, but I didn't live in Jersey City. I think I was probably brought home to Union City. My parents lived, at the time, either in Union City or West Hoboken, or West New York, or someplace, but at the time I have any memory of a home, it was Union City, a big house on the corner of Palisade Avenue and Monastery Place, across the street from the reservoir. That's my childhood home that I remember.

PP: Is the reservoir still there?

PC: I think so. I don't know how it couldn't be. I don't know what they'd do with all that water. And we had a clear view of Manhattan because the reservoir was there. There weren't buildings in front of us, so we had this view of the skyline of New York.

PP: And you spent your early childhood hanging out in Union City? Is that where you lived?

PC: Yes. I lived in Union City until, I would say, I was eleven or twelve years old. I hung out there with a group of kids. We were of all different nationalities and backgrounds then, I would say mostly Italian and Irish. They were my friends. I was the only one who was Jewish, but none of us knew about any of that then. We couldn't have cared less. We would play outside in the summer nights until the street lights would go on.

PP: Was there any sense of a Jewish community in Union City, then?

PC: I didn't have any sense of a Jewish community. I know that there was, but I don't believe it

was a Reform Jewish community. I believe further uptown there was Conservative and maybe Orthodox, but we were not part of that at all. Our social life was (social life. It wasn't a social life, as we have it now) around the temple, which was a Reform temple in Hoboken, so I don't really know about Union City. In Union City my friends were just my little friends on the block, and I certainly didn't live in a Jewish community.

PP: Were there a lot of Latinos, by the way?

PC: No, no. There were no Latinos then. In Union City, as I say, most of my friends were probably Irish and Italian. I remember one last name that, it seems to me, must have been Armenian. Maybe there was one other Jewish kid in the beginning, but it was not a Jewish community.

PP: What year were you born?

PC: I was born in 1937, and I went to public school in Union City. I went to Hudson School, it was called, in Union City, through the fourth grade.

PP: Okay. Then after that?

PC: Then my family had a pow-wow, and decided to whip me out of there. They had the brilliant idea to send me to Stevens Hoboken Academy, in Hoboken, and the minute I walked into the place I was home. I loved school, loved school, from then on. I loved the learning, loved the friends, loved the teachers, loved everything about it. It was a great place.

PP: So was that a grammar school then?

PC: It was a school that was grades one through twelve. It had been established, as far as I know, as a prep school for Stevens Institute of Technology, and at one time Stevens --

PP: -- for kids --

PC: -- no, no.

PP: -- to go there --

PC: -- for prep school, meaning you would go on. It was a preparatory school, which meant that you would go on to Stevens Institute. It was established, I guess, by the Stevens family -- maybe as was Stevens Institute, I don't really know. But I do know that originally Stevens Hoboken Academy was all boys. By the time I went there it was co-ed, but the ratio was, in a class of, say, twenty, there might be four girls and sixteen boys.

So that was the ratio of boy to girl, and it remained pretty much that way. A few more girls came in through the years, but there was always a majority of boys.

PP: Were the girls going on to Stevens Institute?

PC: By that point it was no longer considered a preparatory school for the Institute. It was just considered a good private school. It was a private school.

PP: Gotcha. So what year would this have been?

out; wait for another bus to take me home the rest of the way.

PP: So there was no organized school bus.
You had to --

PC: There was a school bus, but at the point that I got older, and was in a lot of after-school activities -- I was in plays and things like that -- I stopped taking the school bus --

PP: I guess you had to take public transportation.

PC: -- so it was either the parent driving, or public transportation.

PP: Now were a lot of people going from other towns to school?

PC: Yes. Because this private school was in Hoboken, my friends -- I had no friends from where I lived. My friends came from the surrounding communities. I was almost the farthest north. In fact, my one friend,

Sandy Schlesinger, who was a year ahead of me (she was in Bill's class; this was in high school, not in the lower grades), lived further north than I did. She lived in Fort Lee. I was about at the north end of the spectrum. My husband, Bill, who was also going to this school at the time, lived in Jersey City. A lot of the kids lived in Jersey City. Some of them lived in Hoboken. Probably some lived in North Bergen, Bayonne. There was a radius -

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PP: All around there.

PC: Yes.

PP: Was there a Jewish group or anything at the school?

PC: No.

PP: So this, again, was very eclectic.

PC: Absolutely. A great mix. There were some Jewish kids, but not a majority. Not a tiny minority, either -- very, very mixed. If I told you some

of the last names -- a boy's last name was "VandenKooy." He was Dutch. There were people of many backgrounds, but not Latino. At that time, really, there were not Latinos in the area at all.

PP: Interesting.

PC: That all came quite a bit later. Cuban people came to Hoboken, but that was way later.

PP: And did you ever notice any anti-Semitism at all, at the school?

PC: I did not. Absolutely not. Absolutely not. I know a couple of the teachers were Jewish. I cannot say I ever experienced a moment, an incident of anti-Semitism. Absolutely not. And it was not because we were hiding our Jewishness or anything. I would take off on -- In those days, schools did not give you time off for the Jewish holidays -- it just wasn't done -- but I would not go to school on the Jewish holidays, or I would go for half the time or something -- I don't remember. Yet, it was never an issue. I was always proud of be Jewish. It was a positive; it was never a negative.

PP: I wonder if that is reflective of Hoboken being a progressive, urban kind of place. Because my mother -- she's passed away, and she'd be older than you. She was actually born in '30 or something. When she was a kid, in the early '40s, in Bloomfield High School, they experienced a lot of anti-Semitism. So I don't know if it was just a few years later, or where you were and the type of atmosphere --

PC: I don't know. My sister did not go -- my sister was eleven-and-a-half years older than I was. She went to Union Hill High School --

PP: Where was that?

PC: -- which was, I think, really in Union City.

PP: Okay. That was a public school.

PC: It was a public school. As a child, I do not remember, in the family, ever hearing any discussion of anti-Semitism. I can say that in all my

years of going to school, once -- once -- in Hudson School, in Union City (and maybe that was why they whipped me out of there, I don't know. I don't even know if I came home and told), there was an epithet addressed to me by a little girl.

PP: What epithet?

PC: "Dirty Jew." I don't even know if she knew what she was talking about.

PP: That may have been the reason they took you out. Because they took you out, and not your sister.

PC: Oh, by this time my sister was in college. No. This is a whole different --

PP: You were the younger one.

PC: I was like an only child, almost, my sister being so much older than me. We weren't on the same track.

PP: Okay. And she was your only sibling?

PC: Yes. By this time she was probably in college. Also, I think the reason they took me out (see, it's a good thing you don't want this in good order, because I'm bouncing around here) -- to tell you the truth, I was getting all A's, and it was meaningless. I think they felt I needed a better education. I cannot even tell you that I came home and told them about this episode, because at that age -- I have a funny feeling I may not have.

But it's my only memory, I have to tell you, in my whole growing up years, that I experienced anything like that.

PP: And did you continue getting all A's?

PC: Close. Pretty much. It was a very different academic situation, and a very stimulating one. I had the good fortune, the first year I was there, to have one of the best teachers in the school.

PP: Do you remember who?

PC: I'll never forget her. Her name was Mary Evans Koch.

PP: Tell me about her. This is in high school?

PC: No. This is in fifth grade. It was my first year at Stevens Hoboken Academy. I went and got tested and got accepted, and entered school. I guess my teachers in the public school, at least the one I had the last year I was there, probably were not great teachers. I don't know. Because I came to Stevens, and I had this teacher, Mrs. Koch, who truly knew how to be a teacher. I mean, if you could give awards, I would have given her one. She knew how to relate to the children. She was strict but loving. Remember, we had a class of about only twenty kids, so it was very intimate. The teachers knew you, very intimately, and treated you absolutely as individuals. It was just fun for me to go to school. I loved learning.

PP: How long was she -- I'm sorry.

PC: I know she was still there when I graduated. I think she was, because I remember inviting her to my graduation. I lost track of her. There were other very good teachers there, too, whom I kept up with as I went up in the grades.

PP: Was there anyone else, who was maybe a famous principal, or a teacher, or was there for a zillion years?

PC: The principal who was there as long as I was there -- his name was Douglas Groff Cole. He was principal the entire time that I was there.

PP: Was he known for anything?

PC: No, I don't think so. I don't think so. In retrospect --

PP: -- he wasn't go great.

PC: I won't say he wasn't so great. At the time you go to school, when you're young, you don't realize everything the adults are doing, and you don't

realize the politics in a school. Only later on do you put two and two together.

PP: [Unclear]

PC: Well, no. I learned that there were politics, and that the principal probably had his own views of the teachers that would not have coincided with mine.

PP: Meaning that they would be more progressive teachers?

PC: You know -- well, there was one issue -- there was a teacher, whom I liked very, very much, who left the school -- I don't even know quite what the circumstances were. I think the principal was happy that he left, so did not forward him a letter that I had written on behalf of our class, saying that we weren't happy that he left. I found out later, when I met him once, that he had never gotten the letter.

So things go on with the grownups --

PP: Do you know what the story was? Why he -- ?

PC: I don't know. Maybe the atmosphere, what went on with the teachers -- I think also, because it was a small school, the teachers were very intimate with one another, and there may have been issues that you wouldn't have in a larger school. We were very naïve, then. We didn't really know what was going on. We just knew whether we liked our teachers or not, and I think our teachers were very dedicated. I think I learned an awful lot in that school. There was an English teacher named Howard Bennett, Howard H. Bennett. (These names, by the way, are all in my yearbooks. So we can corroborate spellings and things.) He was our English teacher, and quite a flamboyant character. In his class he had a platform that was sort of a stage, and sometimes you had to do what you had to do from the platform; or, if you were taking a test, the smart ones had to sit up on the platform, so nobody could copy.

PP: Did you ever have to sit up there?

PC: Yes, I always had to sit up there.

PP: Like a wooden --

PC: Yes, like a wooden platform. It was always raised about this much. I can still remember learning my punctuation from him, and the rules of grammar, and having these things drummed into us. So all those years, from the fifth grade on, through middle school, when we all had to take Latin -- In fact, that's when I had my first crush on the guy who became my husband, because we were in Latin class together, even though he was a year ahead of me. It worked out that way.

PP: Who was the Latin teacher? Do you remember?

PC: Yes. Walter K. Abell. Dr. Abell. Dr. Walter K. Abell. He was quite a character, too, with a mustache. He almost looked like Salvador Dali. He was a scholar of -- what's the word I want, those languages --

PP: Romance languages?

PC: Not Romance languages. Greek, Latin, and Hebrew. It's got a different title. The ancient languages. He probably was almost too scholarly for us. He would show us the roots of the words, with the Hebrew and the Greek, and the Latin. I don't think we appreciated that so much. But I remember every teacher very, very clearly. The science teacher was Simon Shapiro, Simon N. Shapiro. We used to call him Uncle Sy, behind his back.

PP: You did?

PC: Our math teacher was Harry Horowitz. Harry M., I would venture to say, Horowitz, although I don't really remember. I can't believe how all these names are coming back to me.

PP: Harry Horowitz was the math teacher?

PC: Harry Horowitz was the math teacher.

PP: For one second -- I'm just curious about the Latin. What grade were you in?

PC: When we were all in this school -- Lower school was first grade through sixth. Middle school was seventh and eighth. I think seventh and eighth, not ninth. And upper school was ninth, tenth, eleventh and twelfth. I think that way; ninth may have been middle or upper, I don't know.

PP: Was it all the same campus?

PC: Campus? It was all the same building. It was all the same building. When you went into seventh grade, you had to take Latin or French, and whichever one you didn't take, you had to take when you went into eighth grade -- which is why, when I went into seventh grade, I took Latin; Bill was in eighth grade, and he was taking Latin, so we were in the same Latin class.

BC: No, no, no, no. Can I correct that?

PC: Yes. Then you have to leave.

BC: You took Latin in seventh and eighth grades, then we had to take another language. I continued

with Latin after I took a year of French. You continued with Latin freshman year, and I took --

PC: He's right.

BC: -- high-school Latin in sophomore year.

PC: You know what? He's right. He's right.

BC: Did you say Harry Horowitz was the math teacher? No, he wasn't. He was the science teacher.

PC: He was the math teacher, before Mrs.Mouncey.

BC: No. He was the science teacher. Mrs. Mouncey --

PC: No. Shapiro was the science teacher.

BC: No. Shapiro taught high-school level. Horowitz taught seventh- and eighth-grade science, and music.

PC: Okay. He's right. He's right.

BC: Mouncey taught math from seventh grade on up.

PP: But you got the Latin teacher right, right?

PC: He's right.

BC: I had more years in that school --

PC: No, we all had to take Latin. They felt it was a foundation for all the other romance languages.

PP: Was that common across all schools?

PC: In private schools, maybe. I don't think in public schools. But everyone had to take two

years of Latin; then you could choose your romance language. As a matter of fact, you could take two languages. You took two languages in high school. So I continued with Latin (Bill's right), and took French. He took French and Latin, as well. They also offered German --

BC: -- and Spanish. That was Mrs. Caroline Clinch.

PP: She taught German?

PC: She taught German and Spanish. I never took either one of them. She was my homeroom teacher, though.

BC: We have pictures of all these people.

PC: She was rather elderly. Poor Mrs. Clinch. Nobody really loved her. She was rather stern and humorless. I think she retired while I was still there. I'm not sure.

PP: Where was your graduation?

PC: Up at Stevens Institute.

PP: At the college.

PC: Yes. What's the name of the building?

BC: That's the one that has the theatre company in it now.

PC: When we look at my documents, I have all my stuff from my graduation.

PP: It's an auditorium, right?

PC: It's an auditorium. It's now called DeBaun, but it wasn't called that then.

BC: I don't know what it was called then. But I remember when we went there for a show, you got that sense of déjà vu. I just wanted to clear up a few things.

PC: You're right. You're right. That's why I said he should sit in.

I'll tell you the name of that auditorium, because I have it written down. But it was up at Stevens Institute, and I remember rehearsing and going up there.

PP: Did you say you did plays or theatre?

PC: Oh, we had Mr. Bennett -- Howard Bennett -- who was the English teacher, directed plays. In the lower school, or maybe the middle school, we had operettas.

PP: Oh, wow.

PC: Absolutely. We always had performances. We had an auditorium with a stage, and that was definitely part of what we did at that school. We put on straight plays, we put on musical plays.

PP: And did you sing or act?

PC: I did, yes. I didn't sing. I can't carry a tune. My husband is very musical, and was in the

musical things. I cannot sing -- although they got me to be in them anyway, because they had no choice. When you only have four girls in a class -- I was in the operetta, *Robin Hood*. I was Maid Marian. I actually had to sing a solo, and I think it must have been terrible for the audience. When I got older, they and I realized that I couldn't be in musicals. I was in most of the plays.

PP: Well, what was it like being in a school that had such a lopsided ratio of girls to boys?

PC: It really didn't matter.

PP: Were the boys always chasing a few girls, or were they too young for that?

PC: You know, when we were younger -- yes, even when we were younger, there was always an awareness that they were boys and we were girls. For the girls it was pretty good. The guys were my friends, but, you know, it wasn't quite like it is now. My kids grew up and went to school -- and my grandchildren, now, I see -- that socially they go out in gangs of friends, and don't necessarily have boyfriends and girlfriends. Their

male/female relationships, at least on the surface, seem to be strictly friends. But with us, there were always romances going on, notes being passed, and that was fun. That was good.

PP: So was it love at first sight, with the two of you?

PC: No. Because when I started at Stevens I was in the fifth grade, and Bill was in the sixth. So it wasn't love at first sight. As a matter of fact, to look at him now, you wouldn't know that he was rather chunky. He outgrew that in his early teens. We had our first date when he turned eighteen and could drive a car -- because he lived in Jersey City, and I lived in Cliffside Park. That would have been, for him, a three-bus ride -- which nobody was worth. So when he got his car, a month after he got his car, we had our first date.

PP: Do you remember the car?

PC: It was a Buick. He'll tell you exactly what it was. It was an old, green, Buick Roadmaster, I think.

PP: So this would have been like --

PC: No, it wasn't eighteen. At seventeen, you got your driver's license. February 21, 1954. Yes. Because it was when he had been seventeen for a month. So he was seventeen, and I was sixteen.

PP: And where did you go on the date?

PC: We went to the movies in Fort Lee, to the Lee Theatre. Now do you really want to hear something?

PP: Is that still there?

PC: No, it's not still there. As most of the things -- our school is gone. A few places are gone.

PP: Your school is gone?

PC: The school is gone. There's a bank there.

BC: [?] -- is gone.

PC: We had our first date (this shouldn't even be on the tape), we had our first date at the Lee Theatre. We went to a movie, and after the movie -- It had been raining. He carried me over a puddle. Then after we got home, he didn't kiss me goodnight. Now those two things --

PP: -- you've always remembered.

PC: -- are sure-fire winners.

BC: Short-lived.

PC: Yes, there were romances at school. We had dances. We had a lot of dances. Every holiday warranted a dance. There was a Valentine's dance, a mid-winter dance, a this dance and a that dance. As a matter of fact, I remember double-dating a few times. I went with a boy in my class, and he took a girl in his class, and we would hang out together. So from the time we were in the seventh grade, we were included in these dances.

So they really sprung this kind of social life on us pretty early.

We loved it. We had a great time. We would decorate the auditorium for all these dances. The teachers would be the chaperones.

BC: It was pretty innocent.

PP: Does this go on anymore?

PC: No, I don't think so. I think now, as I say, the kids all go en masse. Now I will say, being in the enviable position of being one of only four girls, I always had a date for the dance. But there were lots of kids who would just come and hang out, and dance with everybody, even then. But the scene then was much more boy-girl dating than it is now, I think.

PP: So the school was at Fifth and Willow?

PC: Yes.

PP: Okay. And that's a bank now.

PC: It has been torn down. Now I heard from someone that the bank they put up in its place is no longer there, and it's something else. We went back -- in fact, I have an article here for you about when they were going to tear down the school, and it seems a lot of people in Hoboken tried to prevent it from happening. It really was a shame, because it was at a time -- a few years later, Hoboken started to have a new life, and that school would have flourished. It was really a pity. I can't go past it, I can't look and see that it's not there. I loved that place so much. I had such wonderful memories. I don't even want to see it.

But we did go back. Howard Bennett, our English teacher, became the headmaster, way after we were out of there, and we went back down there when he told us they were going to close up the place, and bought a few items -- a scale we had actually used in chemistry class --

BC: A chemistry-professor's scale.

PC: -- and some globes that they had used in chemistry class --

BC: -- and a microscope.

PC: A microscope and a few other things.
We just brought them home to have them. I still have them.

PP: Does this school exist in another place?

PC: No.

BC: No, it's gone.

PC: It's gone. And I really felt at the time that if they had reached out to some of us alums, who felt so warmly and strongly about the place, maybe they could have saved it. You know, a lot of relationships were established there. Not only did Bill and I meet and get married, in his class Sandy Schlesinger, whose parents own Schlesinger Clothing Store up in West New York -- she was in the same class with a guy named Ted Moscovitz. They got married. Another guy in Bill's class, Julie Eisen -- who is, to this day, our

dearest friend -- so there were a lot of people whose connections went beyond -- went into the personal, and maybe would have saved the place.

PP: What year was that, that it -- ?

PC: I can't tell you offhand, but I have an article about it.

BC: This Julie Eisen's family owned the Eisen Furniture Company, which is right across the street from where the Tootsie Roll factory was.

PP: Oh, okay. In Hoboken.

PC: Now across the street from Stevens was a pencil factory, and in the warm weather, when the windows were open, you could smell the granite from the pencil factory. So that was a smell that we always associated with --

BC: -- and the park --

TAPE 1, SIDE 2

PP: Now let's see. What year would that have been. Everyone in Hoboken knows but me what year it would have been. (*On the Waterfront's* filming in Hoboken.)

PC: Actually, if I looked in my yearbook, I would know. Because there's a picture in the yearbook of one of my classmates with Marlon Brando. Of course, there was much excitement in the school. My yearbook, I think, will have a picture of Max Oeschger with Marlon Brando.

PP: Do you remember when you first heard that *On the Waterfront* was going to --

PC: Yes, we got very excited. It was across the street from us, in the park that we used to hang out in at lunchtime every day.

PP: [?] -- Park, or -- ?

PC: No. I don't know what the name of that park is.

PP: Was it the park across from the library?

PC: The park was on Willow Avenue, between Fourth and Fifth.

BC: They call that Church Park on one of the maps.

PC: Okay. I'm pretty sure it was in this book, which would have been -- Well, you were still there, so -- You were still there, right? So it couldn't have been my senior year. There it is. It was in your yearbook. So it was either in the fall of '53, or the winter-spring of '54. And there's Marlon Brando, and this guy who was in my class, Max Oeschger. It was hard to get near him, because the police and everybody were around.

PP: So this picture is --

PC: This was a guy who was in my class, and that's Marlon Brando.

PP: "Max and Brando."

PC: Yes. So it was very exciting. As I remember, it was cold weather. They tried to kind of keep us away, and this guy just kind of snuck over there and shook his hand.

PP: That was in the park then?

PC: Yes. That was in the park.

BC: Can you see where that park is?

PC: They don't want to do this now. They want to look at the documents later.

BC: I just want to see if the park and school --

PP: Yes, that is the one. Because certain scenes they filmed at Elysian Park; then the other ones, by the church.

PC: And they did some over by the waterfront. What park is that?

PP: That's the Elysian Park.

PC: No, this is not. This is over across from St. Mary's Hospital. It's a big park. If you look on a map, you'll see where the park is. Stevens was here, the hospital was there, and another public high school, I think, was on the border of the park.

PP: So would you go out at lunchtime?

PC: Yes, when we were older. When we were younger, we weren't allowed to.

PP: How old were you when *On the Waterfront* was made?

PC: This would have been when I was a junior in high school. By the time we were in high school, at lunch time we could go across the street, hang out in the park, socialize, have our romantic get-togethers.

PP: But do you specifically remember seeing Brando?

PC: I remember seeing him from afar. I didn't get this close.

PP: Was he like a hero, that he got that close and shook his hand?

PC: Well, I think everyone was kind of pissed off, because if it had to be anybody, I don't think they wanted it to be him. He wasn't like the hero of our class. But he probably had more nerve than some of the rest of us, who followed the rules. He just somehow got himself over there. As I remember, everybody was pretty excited about that, yes.

PP: So when did you start coming to Hoboken to go to the synagogue?

PC: From the time I was a very little girl. Because, as I mentioned, my great-grandfather, Max

Konert, was one of the founding members of Congregation Adas Emuno. That was at 637 Garden Street --

PP: -- between Sixth and Seventh, right?
Is that still there?

PC: No. Now I was going to drive by it today, and I couldn't remember exactly where it was. My notes were in the trunk of the car; I didn't have them in my hand. When the congregation left that site and moved to Leonia, that site -- it's really funny, and what happened a lot at the time was the congregation left that site and moved into a church in Leonia, and a church moved into the temple, here in Hoboken. But the building, at the time I was a little girl, I thought it was rather an imposing building. It had a flight of stairs that went up, and it had been established -- I have a date here. It had been established earlier, but the building -- did I say 637? Yes. The building was dedicated on April 15, 1883. The congregation was established earlier than that, and this great-grandfather of mine was one of the founders and officers of the congregation.

PP: So even before the building was there.

PC: Probably, yes. Probably, the founders would have gotten together and decided to establish this congregation; then, eventually, gotten enough money to build a building. That's my guess. That's probably how it worked.

PP: Do you know where there was a shtetl, or whatever you call it?

PC: Well, a shtetl -- that would not be -- the only thing they might have met, as some congregations did, before they could go into their own buildings, would meet in some other building that they would rent, or some other room that they would rent -- maybe in a church, maybe in some kind of a public building in the town. I would say, if I read this article (which you will have at your disposal), it might say -- It says here, "The Jews of Hoboken worshiped in residences." Then, this is not this congregation -- here: "Adas Emuno" organized 1871, 1871. They met in private places. Here it is: For ten years, starting in the early

1860s, the Jews of Hoboken worshiped in residences. On October 22, 1871, a small group met at Oddfellows' Hall, then on Washington and Second Streets, to organize the first permanent congregation of Hudson County. They adopted the name of Adas Emuno, and established themselves at "Capps" Hall, near the corner of Hudson and Second Streets. Shortly after the incorporation in 1872, the congregation moved to a building at the corner of Bloomfield and Fifth, where the first religious school was established, and then, eventually, built a building.

So that's my heritage. This grandfather -- this great-grandfather was my mother's grandfather. My mother's father's father. This great-grandfather, Max Konert, had a number of children (and I have my family trees with me). He had a son named Paul Konert. He had my mother, Madeleine, who had me. He passed away before I was born, and I'm named after him. It's Jewish tradition to name a child after someone in the family who's deceased.

PP: So you're named after your grandfather.

PC: So I'm named after my grandfather, who was the son of this guy who started this temple.

So the temple was very much a part of our lives.

Now I have to explain something to you about Reform Jews at that time. Reform Jews -- I'm not going to go into the whole background of what Reform is, etc. That's like a whole other thing. But they came here to be Americans, to become assimilated, really.

PP: They're from Germany, right?

PC: Right. Now I don't know exactly -- my family, you would consider them German Jews, although in those days, the borders between Poland, Germany and Russia -- all that kept changing. So I don't think they came from the Germany that we know now. It would probably have been Poland.

PP: Do you know what city he came from?

PC: I know that some of my relatives (but it wasn't a Konert, it was a Jackson) -- My grandfather, Paul, married into a family named Jackson, and they came

from Posen, which is Poland, but on the border, and they probably spoke German. In fact, it was called Posen and Posnan. I don't know which is which, but one is the Polish way of saying it, and one is the German way of saying it. I know when I was very little my grandmother and my mother, if they wanted to speak and not have me understand them, they spoke German -- not Polish, not Russian. It was German.

PP: Not Yiddish?

PC: Not Yiddish. I never heard a word of Yiddish.

My family was almost schizophrenic. On the one hand we were very involved with the temple. As I say, my great-grandfather was a founder, and his son and the person his son married. My grandmother, Juliet, belonged to that temple. All their siblings belonged there. My parents belonged there. I belonged there. My mother was very active there, in the temple sisterhood. My father was on the board. We had all our holidays and things there. We did not have our holidays at home. We didn't do what I do now, which is have a Passover Seder in my house, and have a Hanukah party, and do all these things

in my home. But in those days, it was mostly centered down here in Hoboken, at the temple, and that's where I went to my first Seder. That's where I had most of my early (if not complete) Jewish education.

PP: So they would have it right in the synagogue?

PC: Yes. It would be in the social hall. It would be in the social hall. I went to Sunday School there, from the time I was in kindergarten until the time I was confirmed. In those days girls did not have Bat Mitzvahs. Only boys had bar mitzvahs. Boys and girls, at age sixteen, I think it was, got confirmed -- which meant that you were finished with your Jewish studies. I got out of it my last year, because they didn't have a kindergarten teacher. So they whipped me out of my class, and let me teach the kindergarten children -- which was really funny, because I don't really know too much to teach them, I assure you -- at that age.

My mother's friends were mostly her friends from the sisterhood, from the temple.

PP: Was the sisterhood called anything?

PC: It was called "the Sisterhood." It was just called the Sisterhood. There was also something called the Ladies Aid Society. There were some other organizations. There was the National Council of Jewish Women that my great-aunts were part of. On the other hand, in those days, you did not make a big deal out of being Jewish. You didn't make an outward show of it. I never wore a Jewish star, never owned one. We were taught not to be blatant about being Jewish, and we were not terribly religious. You know, there's a difference, I think, between being involved and being active, caring about being Jewish, and actually being a very religious and observant family -- which, I would say, we were not.

So it's kind of strange. It's a dichotomy, but I don't think it's unique.

PP: No. Now would you go to Friday night or Saturday morning --

PC: Yes. We never went on Saturday morning. In those days, Reform temples did not have Saturday morning services, or, at least ours did not. I can't say they all didn't, but ours did not. My father

didn't want any part of it, really. My father did not care too much about it. But my mother -- we always all went on the holidays, and my mother very often would go on a Friday night. I very often would go with her.

PP: Did the women sit together with the men?

PC: Yes, absolutely. They sat together. In fact, in that temple, in those days, you had your own pew, with your name on it. I guess maybe they gave a contribution or something. But I know we sat all the way up in the front, and that I didn't love so much, as a little girl, because the rabbi and the president and everybody could see everything I did, and sometimes they would frown at me, or smile at me, or whatever. I didn't like that so much. But we had our own pew, all the way up in the front on the right, with our name on it. Many of my relatives, older relatives -- my mother's relatives, really, my mother's aunts and my mother's cousins would be there, as well.

So it was very comfortable there, and probably the focus of most of my mother's social life. She didn't go out a lot. They didn't go out on dates.

PP: Did they play Mah Jong?

PC: No, they didn't do any of that. My mother didn't play cards. I don't know what they used to do, but they did used to get together, socially, and whenever there was an event, the ladies would cook. My mother and some of her friends would be cooking in the kitchen for a couple of days. That was also a very social thing, it wasn't just the food. People would be honored, and they would have a special dinner honoring somebody.

PP: So they would cook at the --

PC: They would cook in the kitchen, at the temple, downstairs, and I have pictures of some of them. I think I have pictures of some of the dinners, and some of the things that went on.

PP: Now do you know -- was this the first synagogue? Obviously, we would do an outside history, but do you know -- ?

PC: It says in this article, which I didn't know, that it was the first permanent congregation of Hudson County. It doesn't say "Reform," it says "the congregation." I think you maybe need to do other research, but right here it says "Adas Emuno was the first organized congregation -- "

PP: -- in Hudson County?

PC: At the time, I didn't even realize that, of course.

PP: So, now, your great-grandfather -- do you know anything about -- did he come to the U.S. -- where he arrived? Did he immediately settle --

PC: I think I have some documentation here that shows him in a census, after he was here already.

PP: Did he live in Hoboken?

PC: I think he may have lived in West Hoboken. Would you like me to try to find it?

PP: Now West Hoboken -- is that actually part of Hoboken?

PC: No. When I was a kid I used to hear people say "West Hoboken." By the time I was a kid, it wasn't really called West Hoboken; it was called Union City. But I think that that was when some people moved up the hill, and they called it West Hoboken because it was west of Hoboken. Then, at some point, I think it became Union City, and I think that is documented in books about Hoboken. I'm sure you can find that out.

PP: Sure. I'm sure Bob probably knows that.

PC: What am I looking for here?

PP: Your grandfather -- where he settled.

PC: Let me see Konert.

PP: Now your grandparents -- when you were actually coming to Hoboken as a kid, who lived in Hoboken, of your relatives.

PC: Okay. First of all, my grandparents - - my grandfather was gone. My grandmother, Juliet Jackson Konert, lived with us, in our house, in Union City. Her sisters -- she had a bunch of maiden sisters, who all lived in Hoboken -- Isabel, Marian, Emma -- lived in Hoboken.

PP: Did they stay maiden the whole time?

PC: They all stayed maiden. I understand there were a few marriage proposals, and they were either rejected or broken off at the last minute. This was a bunch of interesting women. They were all school teachers.

PP: Did the three of them live together in Hoboken?

PC: No. They all lived alone, separately. I have their addresses. They all lived alone, separately.

I remember going to visit all of them. As well, there were some cousins of my mother's, children of other aunts or uncles, who lived here. So except for one cousin of my mother's who lived in Union City, she had two cousins living here in Hoboken, and three aunts and one uncle -- married. He was married to Ella, who had Beth, and Beth Jackson Berman, is a person who is involved with this museum now --

PP: Oh. Okay.

PC: -- who lives in Durham, North Carolina. It's really kind of because of her that I found out about the museum.

PP: Gotcha.

PC: She's my only living relative, that I know of --

PP: -- from here.

PC: -- from my family - Jackson/ Konert family.

So I didn't have grandparents here, but I had all these great aunts. They were sort of like grandmothers to me, especially one of them, of whom I was very fond, who lived on Washington Street. That was Emma Jackson. There was also Isabel Jackson and Marian Jackson. Then there was Edith Jackson MacNamara. She was a cousin of my mother's who married an Irishman named John MacNamara. There was Harriet --

PP: Where did they live?

PC: I have all their addresses. I have all their addresses. William Jackson married a woman named Ella von Minden, German, probably; not Dutch, I don't think. They lived at 1212 Park Avenue. Emma lived at 1025 Washington Street.

PP: So Emma was your aunt.

PC: All right. William was -- When I show you the family tree, it will be easier. My grandmother, Juliet, had a brother, William; a sister, Emma; a sister, Isabel; a sister, Marian; then she had other siblings who were already gone. William and his wife, Ella, lived in

Hoboken and had one son, William, Jr. Emma was a maiden lady. She lived at 1025 Washington Street. This was an Art Deco building, by the way --

PP: Is that still there?

PC: I don't know. I meant to look today. I would recognize it very well. At first I was thinking it was one of these orange brick buildings, but it wasn't. It was an Art Deco building, and she lived in a front apartment overlooking Washington Street.

PP: It was 1025 Washington, did you say?

PC: Ten-twenty-five Washington. I used to go there as a little girl, a lot. I used to go to my Uncle Willie's house very frequently. They would take care of me. There was no such thing as baby-sitters in those days. If my mother wanted to go to temple and I didn't want to go, or she didn't want to take me or something, she'd leave me with Aunt Ella and Uncle Willie. Isabel Jackson lived at 106 Eleventh Street, in an apartment upstairs with a bay window. She had a rocking chair and she always sat in the bay window.

Marian Jackson lived for many years at the Mayflower Hotel in New York, on Central Park West. But in her last few years, she lived at 834 Hudson Street.

Harry "Cohane" Cavanaugh was the son of another sister named Leonore (my middle name is Leonore). Leonore Jackson married a guy named James "Cohane." They had Harriet "Cohane," who married a guy named Cavanaugh, who fell off a roof or something and died. She lived alone, with her brother, at 1114 Bloomfield Street.

PP: Did he fall off a roof in Hoboken?

PC: I think so. I think it might be in some article.

Millard Jackson was the son of another brother, Millard, before him, and his sister, Edith Jackson MacNamara, lived at 1020 Bloomfield Street.

PP: So were you coming down to Hoboken --

PC: I was coming to Hoboken constantly, because I got dragged along with my mother when she would visit all her relatives -- which ladies did, I guess, in those days, fairly frequently.

PP: But were you going to the synagogue because of these relatives?

PC: No, no, no.

PP: Because it was one of the few around, or because of your grandfather?

PC: We went to the synagogue because it was in the family. My great-grandfather had founded it, and as far as I can remember, we were members of the synagogue. The fact that all these great aunts lived here -- it wasn't because of the synagogue; it was because that's where everyone settled. It came at the same time. They probably settled here for the same reason that my great-grandfather settled here. And it wasn't that they were all so religious, or so involved in temple life. Some of these aunts never set foot in that synagogue.

But we were coming to Hoboken constantly, because between the synagogue and the relatives, that's where our life really was. What was really funny -- I just wanted to tell you, because I think it's a little piece of Hoboken -- is that my one great-aunt used to sit

in her rocking chair up in her bay window, and my other great aunt had a window on Washington Street. They always knew what everybody else was doing --

PP: Could they see?

PC: -- because you know, they would sit at their windows and watch people go by. Then, when we would visit them, and my mother would be talking with whoever, they would always know everybody else's business.

PP: Those bay windows!

PC: So it was a time when people weren't watching television. They were only able to listen to the radio, and they were looking out the window. They had a different kind of leisure, and it was much more like a community.

PP: Was there a lot of street life? Were there a lot of people out on the street, walking around the sidewalk?

PC: I don't remember that, but I assume so. Yes. Because people walked places, they didn't drive. If they lived in Hoboken -- none of these ladies had cars. They walked everywhere.

PP: You were going to see if you could find something about your great-grandfather, how he came over, or whatever.

PC: Yes. Max Konert. Okay. "Farmer in Prussia." This is the Hoboken 1860 census. Max Konert was here already, but he was listed -- when it says "Profession," or "Occupation," let me just see what this says. I have to take off my glasses here, actually. "Trade of each person over fifteen," and "Place of birth." So he was listed, at the time, as a farmer. The value of his personal estate was \$500, and at that time it was called Prussia.

PP: This is a page from --

PC: -- from the 1860 census, Hoboken.

PP: Is it in alphabetical order?

PC: This is Max Konert, and these are all his children. Here's my grandfather, Paul.

PP: So in 1860 they were already living here.

PC: Yep.

PP: What I'm trying to see is his birth date.

PC: I might have that on something else. Well, sure. In 1860, he was age forty-eight.

PP: Do you know how old he was when he came over?

PC: No. I don't know how old he was when he came over.

PP: Or how long he might have been in the States. You don't know whether he settled in Hoboken immediately or not.

PC: That I don't think I can find out,
but I might. I may be able to.

PP: So he was a farmer. Do you know where
he --

PC: No. I think maybe -- I wonder if he
was -- it's strange that he's listed as "farmer." And one
also has to wonder --

PP: Paul's your grandfather, right?

PC: Yes.

PP: So in 1860, he was already living
here. He was born here, obviously, and --

PC: Yes. He was four years old by then. I
don't know.

PP: He was obviously one of the earliest
Jews.

PC: Yes. I would say he must have been. Unfortunately, my mother passed away when I was only thirty-five, and you know, when you're that age you're not thinking about this stuff, and I didn't ask her so many questions that I should have asked her, about all this. A lot of this research has actually been done by my brother-in-law, my sister's husband. His name is Jerry Spiro. He also lived in Hoboken, and he became very interested in genealogy. He did a lot of this research that I've got here. He lived at 939 Washington Street. His father and mother and he lived at 939 Washington Street. His father was a dentist in town. 939 Washington Street. You went in the side door, to go to the dentist's office.

PP: At the same building?

PC: Yes. They were here for a number of years. They were also members of our congregation.

PP: Do you know what his father's name was?

PC: Yes. J. Wilber Spiro, and his mother was Mildred Spiro. They lived for many, many years at 939 Washington Street, where they lived and had a dental office. My brother-in-law, Jerry Spiro, met my sister, Janet Millenthal, at temple, at Congregation Adas Emuno. I think my great-auntie Em (Emma) fixed them up. She wanted to make that a shiddach, and I think she succeeded. It's a Yiddish word. It means "made a match."

Now, also, Jacob Jackson, my other grandfather, it also says "Prussia." So my mother's side, both my mother's side and my father's side have a similar story.

PP: You don't know if Max went through Ellis Island.

PC: No, I don't.

PP: I'm sure I've probably asked you that before. Sorry.

PC: You know, in some of my documentation, now that I know what questions you're asking me, it's possible that I can find out more.

PP: Do you remember, beyond the synagogue, what Hoboken was like in terms of Jewish community? Or were you more or less centered on it?

PC: No. To tell you the truth, I didn't know about the rest of the Jewish community. Here we go. I just wanted to show you something else. Now it says here -- this is another census, and I don't know -- I'm trying to see what this is from. Because this lists Max Konert as a "dealer in cattle," and it has my grandfather, Paul, as a "bookkeeper." By this time --

PP: "Dealer in cattle." I wonder where that was.

PC: Now I'm trying to see what census this is. I'm going to see my brother-in-law, Jerry Spiro, in another week or so. I'm going to ask him some of these questions. This must be later than the one I showed you, because it has more detail.

PP: Okay. So he got here, somewhere around 1860 --

PC: Yes --

PP: -- he was a self-proclaimed farmer,
and a dealer in cattle.

PC: -- so in one place it says he was a
farmer, and in another place it says he was a dealer in
cattle.

PP: Do you know anything about how they
raised the funds to build the buildings, or anything
about that? How they actually got the synagogue built?

PC: No, I don't.

TAPE 2, SIDE 1

PC: -- pretty much in terms of the Jewish
community, was really at the synagogue.

PP: And you had your aunts here, your
maiden aunts.

PC: My maiden aunts. Outside of the Congregation Adas Emuno, at that time -- unlike myself now -- I did not have an outside Jewish life, and I didn't think my family did either. I think it was all centered around Adas Emuno.

PP: Do you recall that there were any other synagogues in town, or you just really weren't -- ?

PC: As a child, I didn't. I know later, as an adult, that there were other synagogues. There was probably an Orthodox synagogue, and a Conservative one. I don't know when that would have come. But I just wasn't aware then.

PP: You said there was a Reform synagogue, and sort of a German/Prussians came over, more or less assimilating.

PC: The Reform movement was started by people from that part of Europe.

PP: This is the last I'll ask you about him -- but do you remember anything else about Max, or his wife, or anything about their life?

PC: His wife was Minna, I think. Just a minute. I'll tell you. Yes. His wife's name was Minna. Minna, I think, is probably a Yiddish name. I don't know. I really don't know anything about them. As I say, you're inspiring me to look through a lot of this material I have, and see if I can pull something out of there. But I was never told about them. Unfortunately, it wasn't in a time of my life to ask the questions.

PP: Okay. So you would come down -- like, obviously, you would go to school during the day. Then on weekends and different evenings and things, you would come down to the --

PC: Well, when I was a little girl and we lived in Union City, we would come down to Hoboken. We never went out to dinner here.

PP: Did you go to the movies?

PC: We didn't go to the movies.

PP: So it was mostly visiting.

PC: It was mostly visiting and temple. I know that my Aunt Emma (we used to call her Auntie Em), who never married and never had children but was very grandmotherly to me, would take me, sometimes, to the park -- the park that you mentioned.

PP: The Elysian.

PC: Yes. She would take me to that park. She knew some people in Hoboken who had children, and sometimes she would invite me to have dinner with them. But I remember Lackawanna Station.

PP: You do.

PC: When we lived in Union City, my sister was going to college at what was then called Montclair's State Teachers' College. She would very often come home on weekends. Once in a while, if my mother decided she wasn't going to drive her home or back, we

would bring her down to Lackawanna Station and put her on the train. I used to love to go into the railroad station.

PP: Do you remember the station?

PC: Yes, I can remember -- I don't know what it looks like now. I can remember a round front, maybe some of it glass. I just know it seemed to me it was on a corner, sort of; that there was a round entrance. Then you would go inside, and go over to -- Ah. Now this is bad. So Lackawanna Station I remember --

PP: But you remember it being -- how do you remember it, as a child?

PC: To me, as a child, it was wonderful. First of all, I think railroad stations are fabulous, and I remember loving to go there. It seems to me it was very dramatic looking, big, and exciting to go there and see all the trains, and the steam. I used to love to go there.

PP: So you would drop your sister off to college --

PC: We would take my sister -- we would take her into the train. I remember walking into the trains. She wasn't going very far. She was only going to Montclair. But it was fun for me. I used to like that. And I'm trying to think -- I know we used to walk along Washington Street, but I can't remember doing anything else in particular, Hoboken-y. When I was in high school, we used to walk up to Washington Street, probably between either Fifth and Sixth or Sixth and Seventh. There was an ice cream parlor called Umland's. I remember after the first dance I ever went to (I was only in seventh grade, with a boy in my class), some of the kids were going to go up to Umland's for ice cream. I thought I'd better call home and see if I was allowed to do this, and yes, I was allowed. We went up to Umland's for ice cream after dances. Then right near the school, just the next corner, was a place called Pop's. Every school must have it's "Pop's," a little hole in the wall candy store with a pinball machine (Bill used to love to play the pinball machine), and where you could go to get candy or soda or something. I didn't like to hang out there too much --

PP: -- but kids would stop in.

PC: -- but kids would hang out there a little bit. It was too small to really hang out in.

PP: Was there a person who was "Pop?"

PC: You know, we don't even know.

PP: And what about Umland's?

PC: Umland's, we didn't even know. You didn't know that. You would go for great big ice-cream sundaes.

PP: Did they have good ice cream.

PC: Yes. We used to get these big things that you had to share. It was sort of "the" ice-cream parlor, that you would go to after a dance or something.

PP: So there were places to sit down in there?

PC: There was a soda fountain, and booths. An old-fashioned ice-cream parlor.

PP: I haven't heard about that. That's neat.

So you'd go there after school. Any other places you would frequent in the area?

PC: That's what I'm trying to think of. Not really. Not really.

PP: I wanted to ask you -- with the synagogue -- did you have any -- like with the sisterhood -- did they do anything with the community at all? Did they do any kind of --

PC: They may have. Or, that may have been the associated organization there, and I think I have some records of it with me. I think it was called the Hebrew Ladies Aid Society. Maybe it was called that before it was called Sisterhood. I'm not sure about the development of that. I think they did do some community

service, but I wouldn't know what it was. They were all older ladies when I was a kid. I don't know.

PP: You said that that building eventually became a church?

PC: It was built as a synagogue.

PP: Did it look very Jewish on the outside? Like, could you describe it a little bit?

PC: I was looking to see if I had a picture of it. You must have pictures of it. But I remember that there was a flight of stairs that went up, so it looked like it was up above. It wasn't at street level. It definitely didn't look like a church. I don't know why I'm thinking it might have been brick, but who knows. I'm sure it had a Jewish star on it. It had stained-glass windows, because there were memorials to a lot of my relatives in the stained-glass windows. That's what you did then.

PP: I'm sure there was a memorial to your great-grandfather.

PC: I'm sure there was. There was a plaque, I think, about his having been one of the founders, and when people died you could put their names in the windows. Then when the windows got filled up, you would put their names on a plaque on the wall.

PP: Okay.

PC: But the temple -- When you went in, there was a little hallway. I think they called it the vestry. I think a lot of the terminology, in Reform Judaism, especially, in those days, was Christian. Because even in our Union prayer book, which was the Reform prayer book at the time, the very early ones didn't say rabbi, they said minister.

PP: You've looked at those.

PC: I have an old one at home. I didn't bring that. I can bring that another time. But a lot of the terminology was the American Christian terminology. I think a lot of the Reform temples that were built then (I'm just thinking this now, and remembering this

temple), I think that while there were certain guidelines you did because you were Jewish, with the arc and with certain things, the stained-glass windows and some of these things were taken, I think, probably from American Christianity. We had stained-glass windows along the sides, and pews -- a row of pews down the middle and a row on each side; a little choir loft up in the back. That was really a Reform Jewish thing, because Orthodoxy doesn't have that. Then there was the pulpit, which we call the "bema." You walked up a few stairs, and there was a lectern for the rabbi. We didn't have a cantor, so there was not, as in temples now -- usually there are two lecterns, one for the rabbi and one for the cantor. There was just one lectern in the middle, in front of the arc.

PP: Was everything wood?

PC: Yes, I think a lot of it was wood, and there were big, carved wood chairs, where the rabbi and the president and a few dignitaries might sit.

PP: Who was the rabbi? Do you remember?

PC: Well, the very, very first rabbi I remember was David Sherman. David Sherman. That's when I was a child. I don't know how I dredged up that name just now. Amazing.

PP: Well, you have a great memory.

PC: There were a number of other rabbis. They kind of came and went. The one who was the rabbi when I was going to Sunday School there -- in fact, I brought a prayer book that was given to me at my confirmation, and it has an inscription in it by him -- was J. Max Weiss. I remember the names of some of the families. There was a family named Marx. There was a family named Engel, a family named Tucker, Toffler, Newman -- I can remember a lot of the names. Some of the kids were in my class in school.

PP: And most of them lived in Hoboken?

PC: Most of them lived in the area. People had kind of migrated. There was kind of a migration from Hoboken to, maybe, Union City, West New York, Weehawken, North Bergen. The next stream of

migration went up further -- Cliffside Park, Teaneck, Tenafly -- and for a long time people still came, until finally they didn't anymore. The next generation moved away, moved further away -- whatever -- and that's when the temple could no longer sustain itself down here, and moved to Leonia.

PP: Do you know what year?

PC: I don't know offhand, no.

PP: In the '60s, maybe?

PC: See, I was away. Bill and I got married, and we lived in California for a while. He was in the Air Force, in medical training. When you're not around when these things happen, you don't click into when it happened. But I believe I might have documentation with me, that would tell you when that happened.

PP: And you say you think the building is still there?

PC: The building was still there when I was here in Hoboken and looked for it, maybe twenty years ago. We meant to look for it tonight, on our way over here, and maybe we will when we leave, if it's not too late. But I know it had become a church.

PP: Now when you graduated high school, you were living in Cliffside Park?

PC: I was living in Cliffside Park, and I went off to Cornell.

PP: And what did you study?

PC: I majored in psychology -- Well, first I majored in zoology, which was an error. I switched, my last two years, to psychology.

PP: At that point were you married?

PC: No, no. Not yet. Not in college. After college, Bill and I were married, and we lived in Jersey City, because he was going to medical school there.

PP: Where was he going?

PC: He was going to New Jersey College of Medicine, which, at the time, was in Jersey City, with the Medical Center.

As a matter of fact (another funny coincidence), he and I and my daughter were all born in the same hospital -- the Margaret Hague Medical Center -- because we lived in Jersey City, and I was pregnant with my daughter, Juliet -- named after my grandmother, Juliet -- and we had her while we were in Jersey City. When he graduated from medical school, in 1962, he was at that time in the Air Force, and we went to California, where we had our second child.

PP: So you were going to the synagogue all during high school. You graduated -- or did you stop, pretty much --

PC: No, most of my memories of going there are earlier because I probably went more when I was a kid. Once we moved to Cliffside Park, and some of the relatives maybe were gone or something, we probably

didn't go to Hoboken as often as we used to. When we lived in Union City, it was almost like being in the same town. To go from Union City -- we used to take the bus, my sister and I, sometimes. We would be told we had to visit one of these aunts or something, without my mother, and we had to go wait on a chilly corner in Union City, for a bus to take us there, to Hoboken, to go and visit them.

PP: Do you remember what number bus?

PC: Probably the Twenty-one.

PP: The Twenty-one?

PC: I think probably the Twenty-one.

So when my sister got married, in about 1948 or so, soon after that we moved from a big house in Union City to a smaller house in Cliffside Park. We still went to Hoboken. I was still going to school there. I'm sure we still went to functions. As I got more involved with my school -- school dances and my social life -- I probably didn't go to the temple as much.

PP: But your mother was there.

PC: My mother probably continued, but probably not as much as she used to, when she lived nearer by.

PP: So you went off to college, you came back and you got married. You were living in Jersey City, you had your first daughter. What happened after that?

PC: We went to California, where Bill was in his training. We lived in California in a couple of different places. I'm sure that's not pertinent here.

PP: I just figured I'd go full circle.

PC: I had my son, Geoffrey. Then we kind of lived everywhere, because my husband was either -- between the Air Force and medical training, we were constantly moving. So we lived in a couple of places in California. We lived in Center City, Philadelphia. We lived in Newton Centre, Massachusetts, outside of Boston. We lived in Cherry Hill, New Jersey. Finally, when all his training was done, we were ready to settle down after

all these moves, and we moved to Woodcliff Lake, New Jersey, where we have been ever since -- 1970. We moved to Woodcliff Lake, New Jersey and we've been there ever since.

PP: Do you have any relatives now, living in Hoboken?

PC: No, they've all passed away. All gone. What is rather touching is that our congregation, Adas Emuno -- which I always felt sad about not being part of anymore, but I just wasn't; it wasn't convenient for us, in Woodcliff Lake, to join Adas Emuno in Leonia. Besides that, the connections at this point were very tenuous. The old families were gone, and most of the children of the old families were not members -- but my daughter, after graduating from college and getting married --

PP: Juliet?

PC: This is Juliet. Very good.

PP: Not compared to you, believe me.

PC: My daughter is a Jewish educator, and for quite a few years was teaching at Congregation Adas Emuno, in Leonia. She had this wonderful moment one day, toward the beginning of her years of teaching there, where they opened the Arc, and there was the Torah backdrop, dedicated by my parents in honor of her birth.

PP: Was it like etched in?

PC: No, no. It's traditional, in many congregations, to commemorate (it especially used to be; it's not quite as much anymore) an occasion, you would give some decoration for the arc or something. Finally it got so that every temple had all of that, and I don't think they encouraged that anymore. But in those days, a Torah cover might have the name of someone on it. You would go pick out a Torah cover, give it to the temple, and it would have someone's name embroidered into it, embroidered in gold or something. So here she saw this backdrop.

So it was very poignant, really. And there in the lobby is the plaque, about Max Konert, and she's

teaching there. She's not teaching there anymore now, but she had been for about five years.

So talk about full circle -- that was really neat. I'm sorry that it's not in the cards for me to be continuing with that congregation, and carrying on the tradition of my great-grandfather, and my mother and everybody. But that's what happens in this modern world, where communities change. Jewish communities change, and Hoboken became quite Cuban. None of the Jewish families were around anymore, and it (the Temple) just couldn't sustain itself anymore.

PP: But it's still in Leonia?

PC: It's still in Leonia, although I understand it's really struggling. It's small, and it's struggling.

PP: Do you know anyone who still goes to that temple?

PC: I knew a couple people who have died. There was a guy named Tucker. I can't remember his first name, but his son, Burton, was in my confirmation class.

The last time I went to the temple in Leonia, a few years ago, to see something my daughter was doing, this gentleman was there. But I know he's passed away since then. There might be a couple of people, I might recognize a name, but that would be it.

So it's kind of sad, but that happens to a lot of other synagogues, as well. I hear that a very beautiful, big one in Paterson is closing down. Communities just change.

PP: Do you go to a synagogue where you live?

PC: Yes. I belong to a congregation called Temple Beth Or in Washington Township. We've belonged there since we've lived in Woodcliff Lake -- a Reform congregation.

PP: So is there any other area I didn't ask you about, that you think you wanted to talk about, or that's relevant?

PC: I'm trying to think if there's anything else about Hoboken. I can remember that there

was a library next to Stevens, a public library, and the librarian's name was Nina Hatfield.

PP: I think I saw it. It's the same one that's still there.

PC: It's not the same Nina Hatfield. Oh, the same library. She was an old lady then.

PP: At Park and Fifth?

PC: Fifth, maybe.

PP: A very old library.

PC: Yes.

PP: But you remember her?

PC: Yes. She was a little lady with a white topknot, and, you know, a typical, little, old-fashioned -- even then, she was a little, old-fashioned lady. I think of lace and violets or something. She was a typical little old-fashioned lady. They took us there

once for her to talk to us about the library, and we all just kind of -- *then*, she was a throwback to another era.

PP: Did you go to the library much?

PC: We had our own library in the school, but I think they wanted to teach us -- what would you call it? -- how libraries catalogue, and how libraries do things. They wanted to give us a little course in that. But we did have a library in the school.

PP: Anything else about that little area there?

PC: No, not that I can think of. We didn't go that far afield, because we didn't have a lot of time. We had a very long school day. And because we had such a long school day, and I went home on the school bus; or, when I wasn't going home on the school bus, I was staying at the school, usually to rehearse a play or something, there wasn't much else. Everything was centered in that school. It was sort of a world unto itself. You ate lunch -- they had a lunchroom. It was on line in the lunchroom that my then-to-be husband, on line

in the lunchroom -- so I must have been a junior in high school and he was a senior -- and he said, "You know, someday I'm going to marry you."

PP: Wow. And what did you say?

PC: As he said, our witness was the lunchroom lady, Mrs. Persich. I looked at him like --

PP: Who's Mrs. Persich?

PC: Oh, she was the lunchroom lady. She stood behind the counter, ladling out the spaghetti. Bill says she was a witness, although I don't think she heard him. And I just kind of went --

PP: And what did you say?

PC: I know I didn't say anything. I didn't say anything.

PP: Did you think that would be?

PC: Well, he said it so assuredly that,
who knows? Maybe.

PP: You were already dating?

PC: We were dating. We dated other people
in between, after that. But, yes.

PP: What year did you get married?

PC: We got married in '58.

PP: You might have told me that already.
All right. Anything else?

PC: Well, I'm sure that, as soon as you
turn this off and I go home, I'll think of two-zillion
other things.

PP: Well, we'll find out from [?] --
whether we can have permission to --

PC: You're a good interviewer, and I think you dragged out of me -- I'm sure I'm going to think of other things. But at the moment --

PP: But I think it's probably richer than you think.

PC: I have another nice memory of Hoboken. Not of Hoboken exactly, but Hoboken-involved. When my sister was being courted by my brother-in-law -- my sister, Janet Millenthal, being courted by Jerry Spiro, who lived in Hoboken, and we lived in Union City - - so this was in the late '40s, and there was a big heavy snow then, and you couldn't drive a car. Nothing was running, and Jerry walked all the way up the viaduct to our house, to see my sister.

PP: Oh, my god.

PC: So that's a Hoboken moment, I guess. He walked from 939 Washington Street.

PP: So where was the viaduct?

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PP: Oh, my god.

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PP: So where was the viaduct?

PC: The viaduct was at Eleventh -- if I look at a map. The viaduct, I think, was --

PP: Is that still there?

PC: The viaduct is still there. Yes.

PP: Is that the bridge?

PC: It's not the bridge that goes over toward the tunnel. It's the viaduct, that goes up the hill. I know it's still there.

PP: I think years ago, they had something they used to go up on --

PC: I'm not talking about the trolley car. The trolley car used to go --

All right. I have another memory. See. This is what happens. The trolley car went from all the way down at the end, where the trains are and everything, all the way down -- you know where Lackawanna Station is. Right. The trolley car went on a trestle, up to Jersey City. Because I remember once in a while taking the

trolley car. My aunt Ella, the one who lived at 1212 Park Avenue, took me once to Palisades Amusement Park, in Cliffside Park, two blocks from where we eventually moved to and lived in Cliffside Park. For a treat, for an outing, my mother brought me down to her, and she took me down to the trolley, and we took the trolley up the trestle, and all the way up to Palisades Amusement Park.

PP: It went all the way?

PC: It must have, because I have this memory of it. The only thing I can think of is that possibly it stopped at "Nungessers," which was sort of the central area where a lot of buses and everything stopped. Maybe we took another bus from there. I can't remember. But I remember sitting with her on the trolley, and being so excited that we were going.

PP: That's great. So the viaduct --

PC: This is my brother-in-law. The
viaduct --

PP: He walked all the way --

PC: I think the viaduct is at Eleventh Street.

PP: Where's the viaduct?

BC: It's at Fourteenth.

PP: So he walked all the way.

PC: He walked all the way from Washington Street to the viaduct, up the viaduct, and to Palisades Avenue and Monastery Place, to come a-courting.

PP: That's nice. Well, on that note -- the end. [Interruption]

PC: A big treat was for my mother to take me up to the monastery at Christmas time, and show me the crèche and the poinsettias, and the decorations. Oh, I used to love it.

PP: Where was that, in Union City?

PC: When I was in Union City, as a child, I lived at 2001 Monastery Place, which was the corner of Monastery Place and Palisade Avenue, across from the reservoir.

PP: Okay. And at Christmas, you would go to the [?] --

PC: Oh, yes.

PP: So was that something that everybody went to see?

PC: I'm sure all the Catholic people went. I don't think the other Jewish people went, but I loved it. I loved it. My mother had many Christian friends, as I did, and there wasn't a separation.

PP: That sounds beautiful.