

**DR. BREISETH: I AM HERE WITH JUSTIN (MIKE) BERGMAN AND BETSY CONDRON
ON THE 3RD OF MARCH 1992**

CNB We have just begun talking about Riverside Drive and just seeing if we can name the families that were in these houses in Mike's time in the neighborhood. Starting with where the Shapiros are now.

MB That was Levy. Next to that was Smiths.

CNB This is DeWitt Smith who lived . . .

MB His father.

CNB Ernest Gray Smith, who was part of the paper (the Wilkes-Barre Record).

MB And then Haddocks.

CNB And that's the house that Gus Genetti is in, the big house right on the bend.

MB Then there were two brick houses.

CNB Now we are going south.

MB We're going south.

CNB Along the river.

BBC We'll ask Corky.

MB Now wait a minute. It slips my mind. I don't know whether there was a Trethaway; I think there was a Trethaway in there. I might be wrong. There are two big houses in there and I am confused about which one it is but one of Corky's relatives lived there. It might have been the Kirbys. And the other one I don't remember who lived in that house. And then there were, on the corner, the Weitzenkorns.

BBC Ruthie Weitzenkorn. They had a mercantile . . .

CNB Now one of those was the Lyman Howe house.

MB There is a street and then there is the Lyman Howe house which is now the Thom Greco house.

CNB Were you around to know Lyman Howe?

MB He was there but I never knew him personally. They had a big extensive lawn there. And then my aunt and uncle lived in that white house which is 48 Riverside Drive, which is still there today. Now they probably knew him. Choppy Howe they called him.

CNB There is a family connection with Betsy.

BBC Pfifferling that would have been.

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CNB Let's take this opportunity to say a little about Corky and her family as part of the neighborhood, too. Give us her lineage.

BBC I don't know about Mr. and Mrs. Trethaway's childhood and growing up or the Kirkendalls. Obviously, the Kirkendalls . . .

MB Well, Corky was born and raised in Forty Fort.

BBC So she was on the other side of the river.

CNB That's where you started, too, but you didn't know each other then.

MB No, no.

CNB It's not like the Conyngham relationship that started in the baby carriage.

MB No. They lived over there and, of course, she went to the Institute and all that over there and later she taught at the Institute in the kindergarten.

BBC The Day School.

MB Well, of course, if you are going to get into that lineage then you go back to the Trethaways who had the tin factory in Parsons, five brothers, and then you go on the other side of the family to her mother's, the Kirkendalls, one of whom was the mayor Wilkes-Barre.

CNB Is this the Kirkendall Room at St. Stephens?

MB Yes, that's what it is.

BBC And I think they were one of the ones over here.

MB I think that's what it was.

BBC Because of Dee being great friends with Mother and Rachel and growing up together here.

MB But the Trethaway family all goes back to Trethewee and that goes back to Parsons and they had a huge tin factory and they used to make miners' buckets and lamps and all of this type of thing. And I think during World War I somebody blew it up (in 1918). They don't know whether it was sabotage or what the story was there. And where all the Trethaways went I don't recall. You know there are some of them . . . But Corky's father was one of seven brothers but he didn't go into the tin business. He went into the publishing business.

CNB Publishing what?

MB He put out a magazine. Now prior to this he was with the Rader Company. I'd have to get all this together from Corky to get it in the right analogy but he was with the Rader Company and I think he had something to do with Craftsman Engravers and then he was over here in the Brooks Building and for years put out a magazine called The Journal of Business Education, which was a magazine for commercial teachers. And that's what he did until he died. When he passed away we didn't know what to do with it so his secretary and I ran it for a couple of issues, for a couple of months, until we could get somebody to buy it. We wanted to sell because it was a going business, rather than just selling it out and we sold it finally.

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BBC Is it still going, Mike, in some way, in some form or another?

MB I don't know whether it goes by that name. People from Washington bought it. But I remember Corky's mother said why don't I run it, and I said I don't know anything about the publishing business. He had a unique system in that he knew people all over the country that would write articles and do a lot of the detail work as far as the articles they wrote. These people, when I looked over the list, were in their sixties and seventies, so to go in there and take over a business, and did that and lost these people until you learned the business you would be out of luck.

BBC Do you have lots of other questions to ask Mike?

CNB No, go ahead.

BBC I have two other things. One was to run down the people you remember in your class at the Academy and maybe you could do that, and then I have another question that is a little longer.

MB Well, I can give you some of them. I might have to go back and look at my records. There was Fred Kirby, Charlie Epstein, Joseph Koons, Billy Shoemaker, Bill MacLean, Russell Grebe. Would you let me look it up? I could give them all to you but . . .

BBC Sure. Yes, those were your actual class but all these other friends from the neighborhood were just behind or just above.

MB DeWitt Smith was in there, Harry Schooley, Slattery who was killed in the Marines, Bill Conyngham, Bob Goldsmith.

CNB Did you play with the Conyngham boys as a neighborhood venture because they were over on South River? But that was too far to really be part of the . . . I'm interested in how the patterns were in the whole neighborhood.

MB I can give you a whole list but I know there was a fellow by the name of DuBois but I can't remember what his first name was.

BBC That was a pretty good size class.

MB Yes, we had a pretty good size class. Fifth Intermediate or something it was called.

CNB Let me stay on that topic for a minute. I've heard it said that one of the differences between Scranton and Wilkes-Barre is the cohesiveness of the leadership in Wilkes-Barre because of Wyoming Seminary and the Hillman Academy among people who came back to the area and stayed and practiced their professions. Scranton Prep is the equivalent but did not play that role. It took a lot of schools from outside the area who then dispersed and went on to college elsewhere and dispersed. But what strikes me as I look at and get to know people here and I look at these reunions from Wyoming Seminary. They have a fervor that most college reunions do not have either. And as I look at how many of you are linked through that boyhood/childhood experience and who worked the community through the flood and helped into the new era after that, that school really played a very powerful role in how the leadership of this town works.

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- MB I never thought of it that way but you are probably right.
- CNB Betsy, how do you feel about it because you are part of this whole thing?
- BBC Well, I think it is unique probably because I am thinking of what we call Wyoming Seminary now but when you go back to the Hillman Academy and the Wilkes-Barre Institute preceded by the FemSem and then the Wilkes-Barre Day School and then Wyoming Seminary, it is that kind of a buildup in a community as small as Wilkes-Barre was, obviously the leadership had to play that important part, the friendships that were made, which will also eventually lead me into my next question.
- MB But when I look at those pictures today there are so many of them gone, and a lot of them moved away. Harry and I are really the only ones here. Charlie Morgan doesn't live here and he doesn't come here that often. DeWitt Smith, too.
- BBC Charlie Epstein.
- MB Yes, Charlie Epstein is still here.
- BBC The diversity of the backgrounds, particularly the tremendous diversity and the religious differences of all those who went to Wyoming Seminary compared to the Scranton Prep background of those decades is certainly one of the reasons that makes the Scranton Prep preparation and the Wyoming Seminary preparation different because they were primarily, if not all, Catholic backgrounds in Scranton.
- MB I didn't know that.
- BBC It isn't now but it was that way.
- MB Wilkes-Barre in a way was always unique when it comes to what you just mentioned as far as religions go. I mean here was a group of people who were brought up together, went to school together and, in my mind, I never recollect saying I didn't know what religion one person was from the other. I never thought about it really to my knowledge. Whether the others did or not I don't know. And you know when you are brought up in a situation like that it is quite different because I never realized anything like this until I went to college and went into the Army. There was the rude awakening. The first thing they do when you go to college they are going to segregate you. You've got to belong to a Jewish fraternity or whatever it is and I never had that here. We all assimilated together. And in the Army regardless of what anybody says there was a lot of hard feeling.
- BBC Well, that's what my next question was. This very, very unusual marvelous cohesiveness in Wilkes-Barre among people from different religions and I think we all know and I think Chris has been very aware of it since he has come here that the Jewish community and ties are one with all the rest of the backgrounds in Wyoming Valley, and I wondered, and you answered it pretty much, if you were aware of this at all or how your family fit in to other family groups.
- MB As I grew up I never heard my father or mother say anything about any other

religious group whether white or black or Catholic or Protestant. It was never mentioned in my home and I think this is where a lot of the problems lie today.

CNB No question.

MB If you are brought up that way this is what you are going to learn.

CNB All that acknowledged, as an outsider and one who studies ethnic history in America this is an extraordinary Jewish community and is fiercely to this community in terms of the support of every good cause in the Valley. You talk to Gene Roth and he talks about his father's not only his example but the kind of admonitions that he gave Eugene about his obligation to give. There have been a couple of studies of Providence, Rhode Island Jewish communities known for being a really unusual one. Of course it was way, way back to the late 17th century, but some thoughts on the Jewish community as you recall, particularly thinking about it as a boy. Were you part of a temple, one of the congregations?

MB Oh yes. My parents were not extremely religious. I went to Sunday school and to temple at various times. It wasn't one of these type things where they were, you know. I always can remember my father saying to me when I was a kid and we were talking about religion, and he said, "It isn't whether you dress up and go to church or temple with cats (?). It's this that counts right here. How you live and how you believe. Do unto others as you would always have them do unto you. I'll never forget that. He said that a hundred thousand times. Follow the golden rule.

BBC But you yourself were part of, you and others, were part of the movement to start the temple B'nai B'rith or just move the building?

MB We just moved it; we didn't start it. That temple was over . . .

BBC Where was that temple?

MB It was on Washington Street.

BBC So that was quite reformed. That's the more reformed of the reformed.

MB Yes but reformed today and reformed then is quite different. In other words, there were many comments that I can remember . . . the German Jews, they think they are better than anybody else, so you even had a certain amount of that.

CNB In that case, your father who was a German Jew married a Polish Jew. Was your mother Jewish or was she a Gentile?

MB My mother was Jewish but my grandmother . . .

CNB But that bridged what is in many communities in that generation a tension. He bridged that by his marriage.

MB But then it depends upon . . . I don't know how religious my grandparents were. I never knew my grandfather on my father's side. He died at 36 years of age.

CNB In Germany.

MB In Germany, yes. And my grandmother on my father's side lived to be 92

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93 years old. Came over to this country. My father brought his sisters and brother over here after a certain period of time.

CNB Did they come here to the Valley?

MB No. She was quite a woman. And the funny part of it is, Chris, my father's three sisters, the last one died two years ago, all lived to be 100 and over.

CNB You've got pretty good genes to work on. Obviously, this is not a video tape but as you go, and with all due respect to the people you've listed as your classmates, you look five to ten years younger than most of those people. I had no idea you were part of that generation when we first met. I thought you were of Betsy's generation. So you must eat well and this retiring after the flood must have been good for you.

MB I don't think I retired from the standpoint of . . . I got out of the retail business but I didn't retire because the minute I got out of the business I got an office in town. Then I got investing in various and different things, in real estate and monkeying around and I still have an office here.

CNB Never rethought about going back into medicine?

MB No, not now.

CNB No, I mean after '72 because you were still a very young man.

MB I don't think I could put up with the grind.

BBC Do you remember discussion when you were moving to West River Street about why your family chose to build there.

MB I never heard. All I knew at that age was that we moved.

CNB You said something before we started taping and let me ask you again. The actual house was designed by whom?

MB Emerson Weaver (?) The builder was a man named Hildebrand, the contractor, I remember that but it was designed by Emerson Weaver (?).

CNB Do you remember its construction? Did you come over on the site with your parents from Forty Fort?

MB I don't remember. I was only about five years old.

CNB Do you remember moving in the house?

MB Not actually. I can't say.

BBC Did your mother and father entertain in the house?

MB Oh yes.

BBC Because it is such a wonderful . . . They used it probably a lot more than the Weckessers used this house. The Weckessers didn't but I imagine your parents would have.

MB They did. And then Charlie Waller moved next door and we used to have so much fun. Charlie was, you didn't know him did you?

CNB No.

MB Charlie was a great guy and he and my father were great friends and we

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would go over there and have a drink and something to eat and the next night he would come over to our house. He was a very, very friendly nice man and we got along very well together.

CNB A little bit of a contrast with Allan Kirby.

MB Yes. And Tansey would sit and have her cup of hot water and lemon.

CNB She lasted a long time. It's probably a pretty good tonic.

MB I don't recall how old Charlie was when he died.

BBC I don't know.

CNB It's their daughter who is in Summit?

BBC Peggy Waller Vreeland.

CNB We've got to get in touch with them.

BBC Do you have any particular memories about Peggy that we can use? Do you have any particular memories about Peggy Waller?

MB Oh, I remember her but she was much older.

BBC I think Grace Jessee and Peggy were of an age.

CNB But they wouldn't have known each other. One moved out and the other moved in.

MB The Wallers and the Kirbys were very friendly.

CNB Charlie Waller was a lawyer for what interests? Was he with the coal companies?

MB Bedford, Waller & Darling. He was tied in with Paul Bedford.

CNB Those are all of your father's generation. Since so many of those people were influential in starting BUJC and then Wilkes College, just reflect for a minute on that group of men--and Gilbert McClintock and . . .

MB Gilbert McClintock I didn't know that well. I knew him to see him but I didn't know him that well. Paul Bedford--once in a while I would go over to the Bedfords with Charlie Waller. I knew Mrs. Bedford better than I knew Mr. Bedford. He was a heavy set, jovial type man and we spent some time with him but I mean I wouldn't say that I knew him that well. Mrs. Bedford was the one that started the Wheel Chair Club which was taken over by Kiwanis. But she was a very, very lovely woman and very warm.

BBC She was so much easier . . .

MB Paul was alright but he was a little . . .

BBC Yes he was but I think he was quite shy, more than people realized.

MB He could have been.

CNB My sense is that that group of men was awesome to those who

MB to younger people.

- CNB *I talked to Charlie Miner about them.*
- MB *I think you put it right. That's a good way to put it. In those days you didn't . . . it's not like today.*
- CNB *Gilbert McClintock called a meeting of one hour from 12 to 1 and at one o'clock if you were in the middle of a sentence the meeting was done. You could learn a lot.*
- MB *I swear I didn't know Gilbert McClintock that well. I knew of him.*
- BBC *Something else just occurred to me. Back to the Morgan family. I am just a bit interested. Red would, of course, have been a bit older because he was Bill Conyngham's close friend I would gather.*
- MB *He was very close to Fred Kirby too.*
- BBC *They were of an age.*
- MB *DeWitt Smith, Fred Kirby and Red all went to Lafayette together.*
- CNB *This was a real Lafayette street. Now Hotchkiss came in but that was more the kids over on South River Street.*
- MB *Didn't Harry Schooley go to Hotchkiss? He went to Seminary but did he graduate from Seminary? Yes, he did. I guess he did.*
- CNB *The Conynghams went to Hotchkiss.*
- BBC *Some of them went to . . . Jack went to . . .*
- CNB *Taking the next street on West River going south and the apartment houses you remember when you were a little kid, what are some of your recollections about people on that block? We are beyond our scope. Annette Evans was in that block and I'm sure other people and just your memory on that will help us because we don't have a fix on it.*
- MB *Are you talking about Franklin Street?*
- CNB *No, I'm talking about the next one on West River, the Shapiro house, the Levy house, take that side of the street. How far down can you go?*
- MB *Spohrer lived in that next house. I can't remember who lived there.*
- CNB *Tell about the ones you do remember.*
- MB *Well the Berks lived down there, McCormicks, near Terrace.*
- CNB *Is this John McCormick?*
- MB *That was Peter, John's father and mother.*
- CNB *Was Peter McCormick a lawyer?*
- MB *Yes. And Skew Smith lived down there. Remember Seward Smith?*
- BBC *I've always heard people talk about him.*
- MB *With Auchincloss, Parker & Redpath. He lived there with his wife in one*

of those double blocks in the middle of that street.

BBC *Do you remember anything about Annette Evans living there?*

MB *I remember she lived there. I don't think she lived in the house where Spohrer lives.*

BBC *Maybe the next one.*

MB *I'm not sure.*

BBC *Mrs. Clift is in there too.*

CNB *We own, well now it's a parking lot but right behind what was the River Deli that lot was an Annette Evans lot. Was that something she owned but did not live on?*

BBC *That's right.*

MB *You're talking about on South River? Where the deli is? This side of it?*

BBC *This side of it, going north.*

CNB *A vacant lot until we developed it for parking.*

MB *There was an Oldsmobile place there years ago. That's where Ertley started out.*

CNB *Is that so?*

BBC *I didn't know that. I remember the laundry.*

MB *They went in afterwards.*

CNB *Now that's valuable to know.*

MB *There was an Oldsmobile showroom there, not a big building and is where originally Mr. Ertley started out.*

CNB *Now was this Ertley dealership and the one that Allan Kirby had, were they ever mixed?*

MB *I don't think so. I think this was, what was Ron's father's name? David Ertley. And then there was that big building in back there. I am trying to remember what was in there.*

BBC *Do you mean where the Lacy boy now has Design Systems? In that area?*

MB *Yes. You see Coons lived in back.*

BBC *When you said Coons, was that Koons?*

MB *Coons.*

BBC *Remember the store up here across from where the Julian Long apparel shop?*

MB *That was Leon Coons and Joseph was his son.*

CNB Now, as you come down Ross over this way from West River, we've got the houses that go back of the old, not Stark, Sharp . . . if you come down to that lovely house which is now a neurologist.

MB There was a doctor there

CNB And then start coming north on that street we have not got that all put together. Was that outside your . . . ?

MB I'm trying to think. There were two brothers, one was a doctor and one was a lawyer. What was the doctor's name? It's on the tip of my tongue but it won't come to me. Anyway, there were the Bermans and then there was the carriage house which was converted . . . [The converted carriage house (between West River and South River on Ross) belonged to Nate Hyman. His brother, Dr. Jake Hyman, built the house on the corner of Ross and South River (?) and had his office in the house.]

CNB Which is where the Salsburgs are now.

MB There was another doctor, not the one that is there now but there was another doctor who built that house with his office right there.

CNB It's a handsome old building.

MB And going north I know the Jackiers lived up near there.

CNB The Jackier house was the original Fred and Jessie Kirby house. That's where they lived before they bought the big house on the corner, which Allan didn't know and I am not sure he has yet seen that house. I keep telling him about it. Mrs. Jackier brought the deed in. There have been only three generations since the Kirbys. The Kirbys sold it to someone and they sold it to the Jackiers.

BBC That's the first one in from the corner?

CNB It's right next to our Sullivan Hall.

BBC Oh, you're going up that way. Okay.

MB I am trying to think. I can remember some of the people but they just won't come to me. Eric Feldman lives there now. I don't know how long he's lived there in one of those houses with his sister.

CNB I just had a nice conversation with him this morning. I didn't realize . . .

MB Eric and Elma Feldman.

CNB I know Eric well. I just talked to him this morning at Boscov's.

MB There were a couple of people. I don't remember their names, Chris, I really don't. And that doctor, I've got to find out his name. I know who will tell me what it is. I'll get the name for you.

BBC I am very confused about the Clifts. She worked hard for the beginning of BUJC and I always in my mind put her near the Hands but there is no house there.

MB I don't know whether she is in the one where Spohrer is now. That's a pretty big house.

BBC It was near Annette Evans.

- MB George should know, George Spohrer. If I see him I'll ask him.
- CNB Is he still in the same house that that family has been in for a long time?
- MB Yes, he's been there for quite a while.
- BBC That could have been the Clift house.
- MB It could have been the Clift house. I'm not going to swear to it because I don't remember. And Annette Evans lived either the next one to it or one down. I'm trying to remember
- CNB I never thought about this before. A lot of the original trustees of BUJC lived right in the neighborhood.
- BBC They sure did. They were Farley's friends.
- CNB You know, when I talk to presidents elsewhere and they say, "Tell me the most unusual thing about your situation," I say that 20 of my 32 Board members live in Wilkes-Barre or live in the area, which for a private college is really quite extraordinary. But in this case they were literally in the neighborhood. I mean in terms of Farley's role these were his neighbors, his bosses. This had to have been a most unusual situation. I never thought about it. As we start, Annette Evans, the Conynghams,
- BBC Mary Koons right down there
- CNB Bedford
- BBC Go ahead, up the street
- MB Did Mary Koons live down in that area?
- BBC No, across from my mother, next to the temple. Excuse me, but going on up, you have McClintock. But do you know the Clift I am talking about, her son married a Carpenter so there was that tie, too.
- CNB Which Carpenter?
- BBC Clift married Lansing Carpenter and Lan was a brother of Don's and Lucille's and then they moved to Connecticut so their whole family is up there but you have met some of them down at that party.
- CNB Right, right. I was thinking of the Carpenters as Kingston but they are not.
- BBC No. But that's right, Chris, and you look at the original . . . do you have that book, Essays of an Educator? You might get a kick out of taking it home and I'll get it for you before you go. It's kind of fun when you read about the beginning of BUJC it's just exactly what you are saying. It is unusual that women were involved in 1933, four, five, six women involved in this and all of them right here.
- CNB While we are thinking about that, where did Dorothy Dickson Darte live?
- MB Kingston I think
- BBC No. When they were Dicksons . . . that house and now it is a gorgeous, gorgeous house. It's there and that was the Franck Dartes. There is . . .

- CNB *Our Franck Darté who was on the faculty here for so many years is related.*
- BBC *He's related. It was a cousin or nephew or something and they gave him the same name as but not . . .*
- CNB *And the Darlings lived . . .*
- BBC *Well you mentioned the firm, the Bedford Darling. I don't know where Ned's father lived.*
- MB *Ned lived in Kingston.*
- CNB *But Ned's growing up place was right there by Stark*
- BBD *Probably next to the Annette Evans house.*
- CNB *Yes, I think it was.*
- BBC *Bill Conyngham tells us some. Ned Darling used to tell us.*
- CNB *Did we have that as a college building for awhile? I think we did.*
- BBC *Yes, all of them in there.*
- CNB *And what did we call that? We certainly didn't call that Darling Hall.*
- BBC *I think it was called Weckesser along there.*
- CNB *Do you remember the Weckessers?*
- MB *I remember Mrs. Weckesser. I don't remember Mr.*
- BBC *I don't remember Mr. either. I certainly remember her. But some of these were on the street there. One of these is the Darling. I don't know but this is one of the ones on Stark and there were three of them. Darlings was either this or next or next.*
- CNB *Is this one photo?*
- BBC *These are all superimposed*
- CNB *What we call Ross, whose home was that?*
- BBC *That was next to Harry Schooley's?*
- CNB *Yes*
- BBC *I don't know. Did Mike say?*
- CNB *Mike said that.*
- BBC *Mike, next to Temple Israel, going south.*
- MB *Harry Schooley's.*
- CNB *And then the next one.*
- MB *Schappert*

- BBC *Oh that was Schappert. Alice, I see her all the time up at our First Methodist Church.*
- MB *Dr. Schappert's house.*
- CNB *But not with his practice in the house.*
- MB *I don't remember his practice being in the house.*
- BBC *We should look carefully to see if there could have been. You know they all had side.*
- MB *I think his office was somewhere on Washington Street if I remember. He didn't have his office in the house.*
- BBC *Was he a doctor doctor?*
- MB *He took my tonsils out.*
- BBC *Eye, ears, nose and throat. That's what they called them then.*
- CNB *I would like to ask as kind of a last gambit . . . you may have some last things you want to talk ask . . . is your reflections on Wilkes over the years from the time when you were a kid. We started in 1933 and you were 14 years old. It was in the neighborhood. What do you recall about it, good and bad?*
- MB *I can't say I recall anything bad.*
- CNB *How about Dr. Farley?*
- MB *Dr. Farley I remember as a fine, fine man. I remember Gene very well because I used to walk when I would go to work (we're talking about later on when I was home and working). I lived in that house on West River Street and I would walk up to work all the time, and I would walk right along South River, cut over Northampton to the store on South Main Street. I walked home and I walked up and back.*
- BBC *Do you know where the Bergman store was on South Main?*
- CNB *Yes.*
- MB *Right where the Provincial Towers is. And I would see the kids. Of course remember in those days the school wasn't as large as it is now. We would see the fellows and gals walking back and forth.*
- CNB *Not hand in hand while Dr. Farley was here, if he could help it.*
- MB *Not hand in hand? I can't remember whether . . .*
- CNB *He would come up behind a couple allegedly and bring his hand down to break their two hands apart. I have met several couples who recall that.*
- MB *That reminds me of Seminary when we were there. They would put you right here but you couldn't touch them.*
- CNB *Very strict.*

- MB Schools were stricter in those days.
- CNB No question about that.
- MB And I don't think it hurt.
- CNB Do you think that the people in these neighborhoods right around here expected this institution to grow and to become a kind of dominant presence in these three or four square blocks?
- MB I don't think they expected it to grow as large as it is today. I really don't. Because I can remember when living in that area we went to some meeting, and I can't remember where it was, and it showed that our property that was on the proposed Wilkes campus.
- BBC It probably infuriated you.
- MB Well, no. When that happened, when that era was here the only problems were the beer cans on the streets on Sunday morning and stuff like that. And more traffic problems but other than that we didn't have any problems.
- BBC Did you and Janet live there in that house?
- MB No. Corky and I did though.
- BBC I know you and Corky did, after your dad died.
- MB I lived there with my father after my mother died and then we moved over to the second story when the Coons turned the house into an apartment we moved over to the second story in that on Ross and then after that moved out to the country. But that was the only thing, there was more traffic and more congestion and so forth.
- BBC Well I know you were concerned after we had the building and Doane Hall and not keeping it up as well as we should. I think in the last couple of years there has been a lot of change in the maintenance and care for the buildings on the campus and . . .
- MB Well it's a problem for you, too.
- BBC It's a big problem. There are a lot of buildings.
- MB There are so many buildings to keep up.
- CNB Fifty two.
- BBC And that one, of course, is a dormitory and the dorms are harder than a building like this.
- MB Naturally, because the kids are not as neat as they should be.
- BBC But I think they are taking more pride, Mike. I just feel this in the last couple of years, certainly not all the kids but a lot of them.
- CNB I think the kids in college right now are going through this recession are almost all hard pressed financially and they don't quite have the money to spend on frivolous things including beer. That doesn't mean they are not getting some of it but the money isn't there and I think it has created a

kind of seriousness that one associates with kids in the 30s. These kids have no guarantee they are going to get a job when they get out. It's a very different horizon for this generation even than three or four years ago. I think that affects how student life is.

- MB I think you are 100% right. It's more somber.
- CNB This has been a lot of fun. Do you have any final observations to make? Has it been fun to think back on all this?
- MB Oh, it's been lots of fun. Of course, some of the things I am still trying to recollect.
- CNB You will do that for a couple of weeks.
- MB I don't think I've ever done anything like that. It's interesting and surely I am going to talk to Spohrer and some of these other people and find out who lived in those houses.
- CNB Good
- MB But on the area on South River I can't remember some of those people. The two families I will also find out--one is a doctor and one is a lawyer.
- BBC Chris didn't say in the beginning the phrase that I think is such a good one for a kind of goal for these oral histories.
- CNB It is People in the Neighborhood.
- MB Are you going to write a book?
- CNB Well, we certainly want the data. Betsy's got a book in her. The question is how she is going to get it written because one of the unique things about Wilkes is that it really was created in a neighborhood by people who gave their houses or sold their houses to let this campus be where it is and, over time as I just said a few minutes ago, they were prominent on the Board so they gave it its directions, its resources. Typically, their own children didn't come here but for many of them it became more important than their own alma maters. So we have been the beneficiary of a community's generosity and as Betsy and I were looking at this we realized almost every house in the blocks we have talked about we either have owned or we thought about purchasing or whatever as different plans have evolved. I can tell you right now the buildings we would like to get in order to allow some things to happen on campus. And Wilkes has been doing that since '37. And to know who the people were and I am particularly interested in the occupations and how those were mixed in such an unusual urban residential area right cheek by jowl with the downtown. It probably gives the river valley a scenario that we did have intensely developed space but we kept the beautiful residential neighborhoods along the river which is, except for Harrisburg, I can't think of another river in the downtown area that kept beautiful houses. From coast to coast I just don't know of any other town that's done that. There are peculiar reasons why that has happened but we are the inheritor. One of the legacies of Wilkes is these gorgeous buildings. They are hard to keep up but on the other hand they really give us our personality and that is the personality of Wyoming Valley. So knowing what when on in these houses is important and I guess we were in Bill Conyngham's interview and well into Charlie Miner's interview we realized we had all these doctors,

scads of doctors. We must have identified 30 to 35 doctors. In a three block area, three blocks wide and three blocks deep, most of them had their practices in their homes. That's a major claim. And we talked a little bit more about lawyers today, but you had your lawyers, your doctors, you retail people, your industrialists, and some coal barons but they were very few.

BBC I think it was interesting today to talk about the mercantile backgrounds of so many people of Wyoming Valley. That was brought out a lot by our talk today.

CNB You see here you've got in this gorgeous house this is five and dime money, next door you have beer money, across the street is beer money and then you've got doctors' homes built by doctors either side of those.

BBC That was the Weavers, Mike, you remember Nancy and Jane Weaver.

MB I remember the names.

BBC Their family over there.

MB Very interesting.

CNB So that ends our interview as spring approaches in the year of 1992.

BBC Good. Thank you.

- MB In Germany, yes. And my grandmother on my father's side lived to be 92 93 years old. Came over to this country. My father brought his sisters and brother over here after a certain period of time.
- CNB Did they come here to the Valley?
- MB No. She was quite a woman. And the funny part of it is, Chris, my father's three sisters, the last one died two years ago, all lived to be 100 and over.
- CNB You've got pretty good genes to work on. Obviously, this is not a video tape but as you go, and with all due respect to the people you've listed as your classmates, you look five to ten years younger than most of those people. I had no idea you were part of that generation when we first met. I thought you were of Betsy's generation. So you must eat well and this retiring after the flood must have been good for you.
- MB I don't think I retired from the standpoint of . . . I got out of the retail business but I didn't retire because the minute I got out of the business I got an office in town. Then I got investing in various and different things, in real estate and monkeying around and I still have an office here.
- CNB Never rethought about going back into medicine?
- MB No, not now.
- CNB No, I mean after '72 because you were still a very young man.
- MB I don't think I could put up with the grind.
- BBC Do you remember discussion when you were moving to West River Street about why your family chose to build there.
- MB I never heard. All I knew at that age was that we moved.
- CNB You said something before we started taping and let me ask you again. The actual house was designed by whom?
- MB Emerson Weaver (?) The builder was a man named Hildebrand, the contractor, I remember that but it was designed by Emerson Weaver (?).
- CNB Do you remember its construction? Did you come over on the site with your parents from Forty Fort?
- MB I don't remember. I was only about five years old.
- CNB Do you remember moving in the house?
- MB Not actually. I can't say.
- BBC Did your mother and father entertain in the house?
- MB Oh yes.
- BBC Because it is such a wonderful . . . They used it probably a lot more than the Weckessers used this house. The Weckessers didn't but I imagine your parents would have.

- MB They did. And then Charlie Waller moved next door and we used to have so much fun. Charlie was, you didn't know him did you?
- CNB No.
- MB Charlie was a great guy and he and my father were great friends and we would go over there and have a drink and something to eat and the next night he would come over to our house. He was a very, very friendly nice man and we got along very well together.
- CNB A little bit of a contrast with Allan Kirby.
- MB Yes. And Tansey would sit and have her cup of hot water and lemon.
- CNB She lasted a long time. It's probably a pretty good tonic.
- MB I don't recall how old Charlie was when he died.
- BBC I don't know.
- CNB It's their daughter who is in Summit?
- BBC Peggy Waller Vreeland.
- CNB We've got to get in touch with them.
- BBC Do you have any particular memories about Peggy that we can use? Do you have any particular memories about Peggy Waller?
- MB Oh, I remember her but she was much older.
- BBC I think Grace Jessee and Peggy were of an age.
- CNB But they wouldn't have known each other. One moved out and the other moved in.
- MB The Wallers and the Kirbys were very friendly.
- CNB Charlie Waller was a lawyer for what interests? Was he with the coal companies?
- MB Bedford, Waller & Darling. He was tied in with Paul Bedford.
- CNB Those are all of your father's generation. Since so many of those people were influential in starting BUJC and then Wilkes College, just reflect for a minute on that group of men--and Gilbert McClintock and . . .
- MB Gilbert McClintock I didn't know that well. I knew him to see him but I didn't know him that well. Paul Bedford--once in a while I would go over to the Bedfords with Charlie Waller. I knew Mrs. Bedford better than I knew Mr. Bedford. He was a heavy set, jovial type man and we spent some time with him but I mean I wouldn't say that I knew him that well. Mrs. Bedford was the one that started the Wheel Chair Club which was taken over by Kiwanis. But she was a very, very lovely woman and very warm.
- BBC She was so much easier . . .
- MB Paul was alright but he was a little . . .

- BBC Yes he was but I think he was quite shy, more than people realized.
- MB He could have been.
- CNB My sense is that that group of men was awesome to those who
- MB to younger people.
- CNB I talked to Charlie Miner about them.
- MB I think you put it right. That's a good way to put it. In those days you didn't . . . it's not like today.
- CNB Gilbert McClintock called a meeting of one hour from 12 to 1 and at one o'clock if you were in the middle of a sentence the meeting was done. You could learn a lot.
- MB I swear I didn't know Gilbert McClintock that well. I knew of him.
- BBC Something else just occurred to me. Back to the Morgan family. I am just a bit interested. Red would, of course, have been a bit older because he was Bill Conyngham's close friend I would gather.
- MB He was very close to Fred Kirby too.
- BBC They were of an age.
- MB DeWitt Smith, Fred Kirby and Red all went to Lafayette together.
- CNB This was a real Lafayette street. Now Hotchkiss came in but that was more the kids over on South River Street.
- MB Didn't Harry Schooley go to Hotchkiss? He went to Seminary but did he graduate from Seminary? Yes, he did. I guess he did.
- CNB The Conynghams went to Hotchkiss.
- BBC Some of them went to . . . Jack went to . . .
- CNB Taking the next street on West River going south and the apartment houses you remember when you were a little kid, what are some of your recollections about people on that block? We are beyond our scope. Annette Evans was in that block and I'm sure other people and just your memory on that will help us because we don't have a fix on it.
- MB Are you talking about Franklin Street?
- CNB No, I'm talking about the next one on West River, the Shapiro house, the Levy house, take that side of the street. How far down can you go?
- MB Spohrer lived in that next house. I can't remember who lived there.
- CNB Tell about the ones you do remember.
- MB Well the Berks lived down there, McCormicks, near Terrace.
- CNB Is this John McCormick?

MB That was Peter, John's father and mother.

CNB Was Peter McCormick a lawyer?

MB Yes. And ~~Skew~~^{ie} Smith lived down there. Remember Seward Smith?

BBC I've always heard people talk about him.

MB With Auchincloss, Parker & Redpath. He lived there with his wife in one of those double blocks in the middle of that street.

BBC Do you remember anything about Annette Evans living there?

MB I remember she lived there. I don't think she lived in the house where Spohrer lives.

BBC Maybe the next one.

MB I'm not sure.

BBC Mrs. Clift is in there too.

CNB We own, well now it's a parking lot but right behind what was the River Deli that lot was an Annette Evans lot. Was that something she owned but did not live on?

BBC That's right.

MB You're talking about on South River? Where the deli is? This side of it?

BBC This side of it, going north.

CNB A vacant lot until we developed it for parking.

MB There was an Oldsmobile place there years ago. That's where Ertley started out.

CNB Is that so?

BBC I didn't know that. I remember the laundry.

MB They went in afterwards.

CNB Now that's valuable to know.

MB There was an Oldsmobile showroom there, not a big building and is where originally Mr. Ertley started out.

CNB Now was this Ertley dealership and the one that Allan Kirby had, were they ever mixed?

MB I don't think so. I think this was, what was Ron's father's name? David Ertley. And then there was that big building in back there. I am trying to remember what was in there.

BBC Do you mean where the Lacy boy now has Design Systems? In that area?

MB Yes. You see Coons lived in back.

friend of
Allan Kirby
(Allan Kirby's
father)

BBC When you said Coons, was that Koons?

MB Coons.

BBC Remember the store up here across from where the Julian Long apparel shop?

MB That was Leon Coons and Joseph was his son.

CNB Now, as you come down Ross over this way from West River, we've got the houses that go back of the old, not Stark, Sharp . . . if you come down to that lovely house which is now a neurologist.

MB There was a doctor there

CNB And then start coming north on that street we have not got that all put together. Was that outside your . . . ?

MB I'm trying to think. There were two brothers, one was a doctor and one was a lawyer. What was the doctor's name? It's on the tip of my tongue but it won't come to me. Anyway, there were the Bermans and then there was the carriage house which was converted . . . [The converted carriage house (between West River and South River on Ross) belonged to Nate Hyman. His brother, Dr. Jake Hyman, built the house on the corner of Ross and South River (?) and had his office in the house.]

CNB Which is where the Salsburgs are now.

MB There was another doctor, not the one that is there now but there was another doctor who built that house with his office right there.

CNB It's a handsome old building.

MB And going north I know the Jackiers lived up near there.

CNB The Jackier house was the original Fred and Jessie Kirby house. That's where they lived before they bought the big house on the corner, which Allan didn't know and I am not sure he has yet seen that house. I keep telling him about it. Mrs. Jackier brought the deed in. There have been only three generations since the Kirbys. The Kirbys sold it to someone and they sold it to the Jackiers.

BBC That's the first one in from the corner?

CNB It's right next to our Sullivan Hall.

BBC Oh, you're going up that way. Okay.

MB I am trying to think. I can remember some of the people but they just won't come to me. Eric Feldman lives there now. I don't know how long he's lived there in one of those houses with his sister.

CNB I just had a nice conversation with him this morning. I didn't realize . . .

MB Eric and Elma Feldman.

CNB I know Eric well. I just talked to him this morning at Boscov's.

MB There were a couple of people. I don't remember their names, Chris, I really don't. And that doctor, I've got to find out his name. I know who will tell me what it is. I'll get the name for you.

BBC I am very confused about the Clifts. She worked hard for the beginning of BUJC and I always in my mind put her near the Hands but there is no house there.

MB I don't know whether she is in the one where Spohrer is now. That's a pretty big house.

BBC It was near Annette Evans.

MB George should know, George Spohrer. If I see him I'll ask him.

CNB Is he still in the same house that that family has been in for a long time?

MB Yes, he's been there for quite a while.

BBC That could have been the Clift house.

MB It could have been the Clift house. I'm not going to swear to it because I don't remember. And Annette Evans lived either the next one to it or one down. I'm trying to remember

CNB I never thought about this before. A lot of the original trustees of BUJC lived right in the neighborhood.

BBC They sure did. They were Farley's friends.

CNB You know, when I talk to presidents elsewhere and they say, "Tell me the most unusual thing about your situation," I say that 20 of my 32 Board members live in Wilkes-Barre or live in the area, which for a private college is really quite extraordinary. But in this case they were literally in the neighborhood. I mean in terms of Farley's role these were his neighbors, his bosses. This had to have been a most unusual situation. I never thought about it. As we start, Annette Evans, the Conynghams,

BBC Mary Koons right down there

CNB Bedford

BBC Go ahead, up the street

MB Did Mary Koons live down in that area?

BBC No, across from my mother, next to the temple. Excuse me, but going on up, you have McClintock. But do you know the Clift I am talking about, her son married a Carpenter so there was that tie, too.

CNB Which Carpenter?

BBC Clift married Lansing Carpenter and Lan was a brother of Don's and Lucille's and then they moved to Connecticut so their whole family is up there but you have met some of them down at that party.

CNB Right, right. I was thinking of the Carpenters as Kingston but they are not.

- BBC No. But that's right, Chris, and you look at the original . . . do you have that book, Essays of an Educator? You might get a kick out of taking it home and I'll get it for you before you go. It's kind of fun when you read about the beginning of BUJC it's just exactly what you are saying. It is unusual that women were involved in 1933, four, five, six women involved in this and all of them right here.
- CNB While we are thinking about that, where did Dorothy Dickson Darte live?
- MB Kingston I think
- BBC No. When they were Dicksons . . . that house and now it is a gorgeous, gorgeous house. It's there and that was the Franck Dartes. There is . . .
- CNB Our Franck Darte who was on the faculty here for so many years is related.
- BBC He's related. It was a cousin or nephew or something and they gave him the same name as but not . . .
- CNB And the Darlings lived . . .
- BBC Well you mentioned the firm, the Bedford Darling. I don't know where Ned's father lived.
- MB Ned lived in Kingston.
- CNB But Ned's growing up place was right there by Stark
- BBD Probably next to the Annette Evans house.
- CNB Yes, I think it was.
- BBC Bill Conyngham tells us some. Ned Darling used to tell us.
- CNB Did we have that as a college building for awhile? I think we did.
- BBC Yes, all of them in there.
- CNB And what did we call that? We certainly didn't call that Darling Hall.
- BBC I think it was called Weckesser along there.
- CNB Do you remember the Weckessers?
- MB I remember Mrs. Weckesser. I don't remember Mr.
- BBC I don't remember Mr. either. I certainly remember her. But some of these were on the street there. One of these is the Darling. I don't know but this is one of the ones on Stark and there were three of them. Darlings was either this or next or next.
- CNB Is this one photo?
- BBC These are all superimposed
- CNB What we call Ross, whose home was that?
- BBC That was next to Harry Schooley's?

CNB Yes

BBC I don't know. Did Mike say?

CNB Mike said that.

BBC Mike, next to Temple Israel, going south.

MB Harry Schooley's.

CNB And then the next one.

MB Schappert

BBC Oh that was Schappert. Alice, I see her all the time up at our First Methodist Church.

MB Dr. Schappert's house.

CNB But not with his practice in the house.

MB I don't remember his practice being in the house.

BBC We should look carefully to see if there could have been. You know they all had side.

MB I think his office was somewhere on Washington Street if I remember. He didn't have his office in the house.

BBC Was he a doctor doctor?

MB He took my tonsils out.

BBC Eye, ears, nose and throat. That's what they called them then.

CNB I would like to ask as kind of a last gambit . . . you may have some last things you want to talk ask . . . is your reflections on Wilkes over the years from the time when you were a kid. We started in 1933 and you were 14 years old. It was in the neighborhood. What do you recall about it, good and bad?

MB I can't say I recall anything bad.

CNB How about Dr. Farley?

MB Dr. Farley I remember as a fine, fine man. I remember Gene very well because I used to walk when I would go to work (we're talking about later on when I was home and working). I lived in that house on West River Street and I would walk up to work all the time, and I would walk right along South River, cut over Northampton to the store on South Main Street. I walked home and I walked up and back.

BBC Do you know where the Bergman store was on South Main?

CNB Yes.

MB Right where the Provincial Towers is. And I would see the kids. Of course remember in those days the school wasn't as large as it is now. We would see the fellows and gals walking back and forth.

- CNB Not hand in hand while Dr. Farley was here, if he could help it.
- MB Not hand in hand? I can't remember whether . . .
- CNB He would come up behind a couple allegedly and bring his hand down to break their two hands apart. I have met several couples who recall that.
- MB That reminds me of Seminary when we were there. They would put you right here but you couldn't touch them.
- CNB Very strict.
- MB Schools were stricter in those days.
- CNB No question about that.
- MB And I don't think it hurt.
- CNB Do you think that the people in these neighborhoods right around here expected this institution to grow and to become a kind of dominant presence in these three or four square blocks?
- MB I don't think they expected it to grow as large as it is today. I really don't. Because I can remember when living in that area we went to some meeting, and I can't remember where it was, and it showed that our property that was on the proposed Wilkes campus.
- BBC It probably infuriated you.
- MB Well, no. When that happened, when that era was here the only problems were the beer cans on the streets on Sunday morning and stuff like that. And more traffic problems but other than that we didn't have any problems.
- BBC Did you and Janet live there in that house?
- MB No. Corky and I did though.
- BBC I know you and Corky did, after your dad died.
- MB I lived there with my father after my mother died and then we moved over to the second story when the Coons turned the house into an apartment we moved over to the second story in that on Ross and then after that moved out to the country. But that was the only thing, there was more traffic and more congestion and so forth.
- BBC Well I know you were concerned after we had the building and Doane Hall and not keeping it up as well as we should. I think in the last couple of years there has been a lot of change in the maintenance and care for the buildings on the campus and . . .
- MB Well it's a problem for you, too.
- BBC It's a big problem. There are a lot of buildings.
- MB There are so many buildings to keep up.
- CNB Fifty two.
- BBC And that one, of course, is a dormitory and the dorms are harder than a building like this.

- MB Naturally, because the kids are not as neat as they should be.
- BBC But I think they are taking more pride, Mike. I just feel this in the last couple of years, certainly not all the kids but a lot of them.
- CNB I think the kids in college right now are going through this recession are almost all hard pressed financially and they don't quite have the money to spend on frivolous things including beer. That doesn't mean they are not getting some of it but the money isn't there and I think it has created a kind of seriousness that one associates with kids in the 30s. These kids have no guarantee they are going to get a job when they get out. It's a very different horizon for this generation even than three or four years ago. I think that affects how student life is.
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- CNB Good
- MB But on the area on South River I can't remember some of those people. The two families I will also find out--one is a doctor and one is a lawyer.
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- MB Are you going to write a book?
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CNB You see here you've got in this gorgeous house this is five and dime money, next door you have beer money, across the street is beer money and then you've got doctors' homes built by doctors either side of those.

BBC That was the Weavers, Mike, you remember Nancy and Jane Weaver.

MB I remember the names.

BBC Their family over there.

MB Very interesting.

CNB So that ends our interview as spring approaches in the year of 1992.

BBC Good. Thank you.

BBC I don't know about Mr. and Mrs. Trethaway's childhood and growing up or the Kirkendalls. Obviously, the Kirkendalls . . .

MB Well, Corky was born and raised in Forty Fort.

BBC So she was on the other side of the river.

CNB That's where you started, too, but you didn't know each other then.

MB No, no.

CNB It's not like the Conyngham relationship that started in the baby carriage.

MB No. They lived over there and, of course, she went to the Institute and all that over there and later she taught at the Institute in the kindergarten.

BBC The Day School.

MB Well, of course, if you are going to get into that lineage then you go back to the Trethaways who had the tin factory in Parsons, five brothers, and then you go on the other side of the family to her mother's, the Kirkendalls, one of whom was the mayor Wilkes-Barre.

CNB Is this the Kirkendall Room at St. Stephens?

MB Yes, that's what it is.

BBC And I think they were one of the ones over here.

MB I think that's what it was.

BBC Because of Dee being great friends with Mother and Rachel and growing up together here.

MB But the Trethaway family all goes back to Trethewee and that goes back to Parsons and they had a huge tin factory and they used to make miners' buckets and lamps and all of this type of thing. And I think during World War I somebody blew it up (in 1918). They don't know whether it was sabotage or what the story was there. And where all the Trethaways went I don't recall. You know there are some of them . . . But Corky's father was one of seven brothers but he didn't go into the tin business. He went into the publishing business.

CNB Publishing what?

MB He put out a magazine. Now prior to this he was with the Rader Company. I'd have to get all this together from Corky to get it in the right analogy but he was with the Rader Company and I think he had something to do with Craftsman Engravers and then he was over here in the Brooks Building and for years put out a magazine called The Journal of Business Education, which was a magazine for commercial teachers. And that's what he did until he died. When he passed away we didn't know what to do with it so his secretary and I ran it for a couple of issues, for a couple of months, until we could get somebody to buy it. We wanted to sell because it was a going business, rather than just selling it out and we sold it finally.

- BBC Is it still going, Mike, in some way, in some form or another?
- MB I don't know whether it goes by that name. People from Washington bought it. But I remember Corky's mother said why don't I run it, and I said I don't know anything about the publishing business. He had a unique system in that he knew people all over the country that would write articles and do a lot of the detail work as far as the articles they wrote. These people, when I looked over the list, were in their sixties and seventies, so to go in there and take over a business, and did that and lost these people until you learned the business you would be out of luck.
- BBC Do you have lots of other questions to ask Mike?
- CNB No, go ahead.
- BBC I have two other things. One was to run down the people you remember in your class at the Academy and maybe you could do that, and then I have another question that is a little longer.
- MB Well, I can give you some of them. I might have to go back and look at my records. There was Fred Kirby, Charlie Epstein, Joseph Koons, Billy Shoemaker, Bill MacLean, Russell Grebe. Would you let me look it up? I could give them all to you but . . .
- BBC Sure. Yes, those were your actual class but all these other friends from the neighborhood were just behind or just above.
- MB DeWitt Smith was in there, Harry Schooley, Slattery who was killed in the Marines, Bill Conyngham, Bob Goldsmith.
- CNB Did you play with the Conyngham boys as a neighborhood venture because they were over on South River? But that was too far to really be part of the . . . I'm interested in how the patterns were in the whole neighborhood.
- MB I can give you a whole list but I know there was a fellow by the name of DuBois but I can't remember what his first name was.
- BBC That was a pretty good size class.
- MB Yes, we had a pretty good size class. Fifth Intermediate or something it was called.
- CNB Let me stay on that topic for a minute. I've heard it said that one of the differences between Scranton and Wilkes-Barre is the cohesiveness of the leadership in Wilkes-Barre because of Wyoming Seminary and the Hillman Academy among people who came back to the area and stayed and practiced their professions. Scranton Prep is the equivalent but did not play that role. It took a lot of schools from outside the area who then dispersed and went on to college elsewhere and dispersed. But what strikes me as I look at and get to know people here and I look at these reunions from Wyoming Seminary. They have a fervor that most college reunions do not have either. And as I look at how many of you are linked through that boyhood/childhood experience and who worked the community through the flood and helped into the new era after that, that school really played a very powerful role in how the leadership of this town works.

- MB I never thought of it that way but you are probably right.
- CNB Betsy, how do you feel about it because you are part of this whole thing?
- BBC Well, I think it is unique probably because I am thinking of what we call Wyoming Seminary now but when you go back to the Hillman Academy and the Wilkes-Barre Institute preceded by the FemSem and then the Wilkes-Barre Day School and then Wyoming Seminary, it is that kind of a buildup in a community as small as Wilkes-Barre was, obviously the leadership had to play that important part, the friendships that were made, which will also eventually lead me into my next question.
- MB But when I look at those pictures today there are so many of them gone, and a lot of them moved away. Harry and I are really the only ones here. Charlie Morgan doesn't live here and he doesn't come here that often. DeWitt Smith, too.
- BBC Charlie Epstein.
- MB Yes, Charlie Epstein is still here.
- BBC The diversity of the backgrounds, particularly the tremendous diversity and the religious differences of all those who went to Wyoming Seminary compared to the Scranton Prep background of those decades is certainly one of the reasons that makes the Scranton Prep preparation and the Wyoming Seminary preparation different because they were primarily, if not all, Catholic backgrounds in Scranton.
- MB I didn't know that.
- BBC It isn't now but it was that way.
- MB Wilkes-Barre in a way was always unique when it comes to what you just mentioned as far as religions go. I mean here was a group of people who were brought up together, went to school together and, in my mind, I never recollect saying I didn't know what religion one person was from the other. I never thought about it really to my knowledge. Whether the others did or not I don't know. And you know when you are brought up in a situation like that it is quite different because I never realized anything like this until I went to college and went into the Army. There was the rude awakening. The first thing they do when you go to college they are going to segregate you. You've got to belong to a Jewish fraternity or whatever it is and I never had that here. We all assimilated together. And in the Army regardless of what anybody says there was a lot of hard feeling.
- BBC Well, that's what my next question was. This very, very unusual marvelous cohesiveness in Wilkes-Barre among people from different religions and I think we all know and I think Chris has been very aware of it since he has come here that the Jewish community and ties are one with all the rest of the backgrounds in Wyoming Valley, and I wondered, and you answered it pretty much, if you were aware of this at all or how your family fit in to other family groups.
- MB As I grew up I never heard my father or mother say anything about any other

religious group whether white or black or Catholic or Protestant. It was never mentioned in my home and I think this is where a lot of the problems lie today.

CNB No question.

MB If you are brought up that way this is what you are going to learn.

CNB All that acknowledged, as an outsider and one who studies ethnic history in America this is an extraordinary Jewish community and is fiercely to this community in terms of the support of every good cause in the Valley. You talk to Gene Roth and he talks about his father's not only his example but the kind of admonitions that he gave Eugene about his obligation to give. There have been a couple of studies of Providence, Rhode Island Jewish communities known for being a really unusual one. Of course it was way, way back to the late 17th century, but some thoughts on the Jewish community as you recall, particularly thinking about it as a boy. Were you part of a temple, one of the congregations?

MB Oh yes. My parents were not extremely religious. I went to Sunday school and to temple at various times. It wasn't one of these type things where they were, you know. I always can remember my father saying to me when I was a kid and we were talking about religion, and he said, "It isn't whether you dress up and go to church or temple with cats (?). It's this that counts right here. How you live and how you believe. Do unto others as you would always have them do unto you. I'll never forget that. He said that a hundred thousand times. Follow the golden rule.

BBC But you yourself were part of, you and others, were part of the movement to start the temple B'nai B'rith or just move the building?

MB We just moved it; we didn't start it. That temple was over . . .

BBC Where was that temple?

MB It was on Washington Street.

BBC So that was quite reformed. That's the more reformed of the reformed.

MB Yes but reformed today and reformed then is quite different. In other words, there were many comments that I can remember . . . the German Jews, they think they are better than anybody else, so you even had a certain amount of that.

CNB In that case, your father who was a German Jew married a Polish Jew. Was your mother Jewish or was she a Gentile?

MB My mother was Jewish but my grandmother . . .

CNB But that bridged what is in many communities in that generation a tension. He bridged that by his marriage.

MB But then it depends upon . . . I don't know how religious my grandparents were. I never knew my grandfather on my father's side. He died at 36 years of age.

CNB In Germany.

~~MB~~

addendum to Mr. Bergman's
Oral History: 3/1992

Houses on Riverside Drive from
SW corner on around:

Ernest G. Smith (W-B Record) ✓
(Jack) Haddock ✓

* Richard Trethaway
(grandfather of Cordelia
Trethaway Bergman)

? — Smith & Vulcan Iron

* 1 of 7 brothers - Had a tin factory
burned by sabotage in 1918
WW I

Mike's Memory notes:

* George Spohrer's live
in Mrs. Clift's house.

3 owners only —

(orig. a weekender house
according to Geo. Spohrer)

Yes - p. 44 of "Essays..."

O. Roberts was w.
Woolworth stores

101 W. River St.

2/3/92

Memo From:

BETSY B. CONDRON

Director of Community Relations

Please add to Mr. Bergman's oral history tape... he remembered that:

The converted carriage house
(^{between} W. River & S. River on Ross) belonged
to Nate Hyman. His brother
Dr. Jake Hyman, built house on
corner (of Ross & S. River ?!) and
had his office in the house.

~~at least~~

Betsy

Max Rosem - Early Childhood - Dec. 21st, 1992

Introduction

Early life

Max's Ed. + life + Family Origins -

Jewish Community

Cult. level of care w. advent of community

Early W + B + C + Flood Recovery...

+ Ser. of Pub. Affairs

Joseph -

Jenny -

Wohl

Born in Plains (Midville section "The Farmhouse" - cattle etc. -

Dad rented pastures fr. Hellenback Estate - 1908-9: parents m. + to Plains

Max 1st born - typical farmhouse -

Moved to another house 4-5 yrs. later w. inside plumbing + steam heat. - Slovak^(Poles) coal miners lived in his neighborhood.

• Miffett St. school thru 8th ... went to Coughlin - Junior^{stud.}

• Then, 'cuz his mother insisted, he went to college Cornell^{Ant Sch} - Dad wanted him to keep working

• Parents came here age c. 14 yrs. (sep. - (on to U. of PA Grad school)

Mom born Hungary

He born Austria-Hungary (Poland) - Czechoslovakia - Budapest

to school (his grandma)

• 5 kids (Bernie died age 2)

• Max - age 14 in Kingston - where others went to U. of Michigan -

Quality of schooling here .. Quite good 'cuz of teachers, but system not good

• (Went to Cornell very young - too young!) 'Came to our store' - Grad. at age 19 - class of '30 but '29 was out

• Dad lost A.H. in depression

• Met Tillie on Kirby Park Tennis Court -

• Tillie born-raised in Avoca - Valley View Park -

• Then she to Wyo. Sem. "Vale of Tears" after loco. accident + 12% killed - + to Wilkes (same at Penn)

+ Ser. of Pub. Affairs

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• Tillie born-raised in Ayoca - Valley View Park -

• Then she to Wyo. Sem. "Vale of tears" after loco. accident + 126 killed -
+ to Wilkes (same at Penn)

Why to a law school? - Unsure

Law led to service to people + story of heifer hunt + he age 7 or 8 - license plate written in sand. -

John ^{Dando} Dando - court reporter - trial lawyer - he was good +
Max apprenticed to a preceptor (6 mos) + he did for Max -

(2)

Taught him how to try cases + he started trying cases early on - murder ^{max} case.
Argued case (age 23)...

Family operated a meat-grocery etc. store (mom) - Dad ran cattle business.
An abattoir there too

3rd Ave. - Kingston (Darrancourt) - Family lived -
Kirby Park...

Coal Co's dominated community its educ. Never gave anything back to community - Exploited area dreadfully - So
Kirby's gave park (not coal company - Nesbitts too) -
Coal co's splintered regions into many regions - ^{purposefully} - ^{political} device
used for polit. control - divide + conquer - manipulate state
hosp's so state had to pay for injuries not coal co's. -

WB - city of coal barons - Kingston = a dormitory community.
good educ. system. - Dr. Grover, Bill Brewster (hist. of West Side)

Top notch Supervision + educ. →
UP Bank on down to Ross - Franklin + River - Patrician Streets

Doctors - Bucknans, Minors etc.

Lawyers: Great ones = Frank McGuigan -
Paul Bedford - most.

also Gaskins -

John Morris - tried cases in formal clothes

Evan Jones (Ben's bro.)

Charlie Waller (corp. lawyer)

Neil Chrisman

McLean - Wm. (6 ft. 3 or 4)

McLean George -

Pre-Max Greats

Henry Fuller

Judge Woodward

Judge Valentini - good (D.A. too)

Jim McQuay → no real lawyer
not a good lawyer

John Bigelow (DA)

Rich'd Bigelow - not grt. judge

Arthur James - not grt. trial lawyer - (DA)
Sup. Court + 139 Severn

... a solo practitioner -

Kirby Park...

Coal Co's dominated community its educ. Never gave anything back to community - Exploited area dreadfully - So Kirby's gave park (not coal company - Nesbitts too) - Coal Co's splintered region into many regions ^{purposes - political} - device used for polit. control - divide + conquer - manipulate state hosp's so state had to pay for injuries not coal co's. -

W.B. - city of coal barons - Kingston = a dormitory community. good educ. system. - Dr. Grover, Bill Brewster (hist. of West Side) Topnotch Supervision + educ. ↗

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Arthur James - not grt. trial lawyer - (D.A.)
Sup. Court + '39 Governor

- Career pre Army. a solo practitioner -

- stratification in commun. + no space available in law practices so solo. Tom Lewis befriended him. + part of Judge McDowell Judge Pinola, J. Harold Fleming) a group; Max joined group (not as partner)

③

Timberius rep'd Marty Coach Co. + Max drawn into a strike labor-union but - "closed shop" - pro Bond case (Max's 1st chair. case + Max tried it + won)

Frank Slattery Sr.

+ 2 others →

→ opposed Max

Became a labor lawyer - PG + W Co + others came to him

FL CIO - Shoe workers

all this time wanted to form a law Co. w. specialties (+ his practice growing fast)

Bedford, McCuizen etc an ultra family WASP firm

Doran + Reynolds - Bankruptcy only -

But he was not successful 'til after war -

Mitch. Jenkins (DA) + Max got talking + Max convinced him to assoc. w. him - 1953 (1954 Jan. 1st) - started firm (largest in NE PA) - Henry Greenwald came along, too. - Harold Rosen had started a co-op firm first) - Joe Savitz from orig. office. 1965-66 leave of absence to Sec. of Public Affairs (Bill Scranton)

He was married at time he went to war

Carson Adams Sec. of Welfare and Max to finish his term *

1942-3: Max in DA's office w. Ben Jones. wives were pals. Both on Army draft list (could've gotten out but decided not). Navy recruited who they wanted i.e. who they knew)... Tape changed (no Jewish wanted by Phila. Navy office - found excuses to keep Max out). Enlisted in Army together. (ROTC service got Max into Army but Ben to Navy + was a menial job). (last officer to leave mindanao)

adjutant Schol U. of Mich - South Pacific - 2 yrs. there - Exciting time w. Genl. MacArthur's H Q. - 1st to Legte (Mindanao) ^{these known} si manila - (law work claims by Phil: ppines - Genl. Forby of. guerrillas (Rebels) + Max went to him to get 15 officers w. legal exp. Commander Wheeler worked w. MacArthur - Then civilians - Had own operations!

Leadership: How'd he get it? - Was on his own for so long. Had to help w. younger kids - deposit \$ in Heights Banker lunch hour - Fed cattle - worked in store - Stimulated initiatives.

Law = partial success of ...

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help w. younger kids - deposit \$ in Heights Banker lunch hour -
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War = fortified sense of confidence... up to 1st Lt. -

* Gov. Shafer asked him to stay on to July 1st

- later Chair of PA Human Relations Comm.

- Task force for Develop. of Human Services PA. later: Reform of
Labor Relations State Employees - (Needed guides to workw. unions)

1840's

(4)

Jewish Community in Valley:

mid 19th c. 1st migration of Jews (German) to W.V. following polit. upheavals (1848) → Germany. Italy - Liebed etc.

Germans came here (Orthodox Jews) - as Reformed Jews grew - Pogroms in E. Europe Russia (Kiev Massacre) - Early 19th c.

Came to W.V. small business - ^{grocery - meat = small markets.} stores peddlars
To outlying dist's to deal w. coal miners (Exeter = Sturmer^{village})
Swagerville, Leysburg, Plymouth, ^{each w. own synagogues} each w. own synagogues
(all orthodox - couldn't ride on holidays so → close). Kids got educated + didn't want to come to the sm. village ones - A + P's + mktg. changed - kids didn't want to op sm. stores, so sm. synagogues faded out -

8000 = height of Jew. pop. - larger pop's

4500 = Jews now

Early 30's = Conservative Religion

Four synagogues now = all (1 Haystack) Temple Israel

B'nai Brith 1844-45 - Shav Zedek - United Orthodox on Hancock St.

1930's ② Rabbi Samuel Weisk - idea for United Jewish appeal
① Marcus Salzman 1st, Rabbi there
He was very ecumenical in tho't...
→ led BB Lodge Revival here
Abe Gallen
Seligman Strauss - 1st Jew Judge here
B'nai B'rith
Judge
Community Chest
bro't the 3 sects together here

Phenomena happening now w. 2nd/3rd generation Jews
Interests are to general community vs. Jewish community
↓ + #

Part of evolution + change

* BB a human services org. - During Hitler area involved w. ed. v.s. subversive activities.

(Max affiliated w. all 3 temples (His mother was a ~~total~~ broad-minded Jew)
Very non-sectarian in his thinking! -

Logans w. 2. large Russian (Kiev Massacre) - early 19th c.
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