

## Linda Sacks Perlis

**Interviewee:** Linda Sacks Perlis  
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**Interviewed By:** Barry Kessler  
**Transcribed By:** Donna Williams, February 27, 2007  
Edited

Qt: "This is Barry Kessler. I am interviewing Linda Perlis for the Shady Side Rural Heritage Society, and today is January 7, I'm sorry, today is January 5, 2007. Linda..."

LP: "I am Linda Sacks Perlis. My parents are Evelyn Kamerow Sacks, and my Dad was Herbert Sacks. I am 63 years old at the time of this interview. I've been married nearly 40 years to Barry Perlis. We have three grown men as sons, three wonderful, fabulous daughters-in-law, two grandchildren and, God willing, another one coming in April."

Qt: "Fantastic."

LP: "So we're very fortunate."

Qt: "Can you tell me something about Shady Side? What was the essence of the Shady Side experience for you growing up?"

LP: "I think everyone of us who was fortunate enough to be a part of Shady Side experiences would say the same thing. It was the camaraderie, the closeness that formed among the whole group of us that were there. and we went ...my Dad worked half a day on Saturdays; so all summer long, we went the middle of the day on Saturday and came home on Sunday night. We drove a long distance, as I'm sure you've heard before and there was no Beltway in those days, and it was quite a schlep. But once we got there, we were in another world. The girls slept in the girls' dorm, where you probably already know that the parents had to come up and monitor us with our giggling. But we had a row...two rows of beds, we had to stick our clothes and whatever we had with us, stuff them under the beds. And below us was the boys' dorm which was much fun to know about. We didn't care a whole lot until we got to the age when we could bring boyfriends with us, and they had to sleep in the boys' dorm very often. But it was just the whole thing. The whole great big long kitchen where we ate meals...sometimes at the same times as other families, sometimes we, the Sacks family and the Kamerow family, Stanley and Helen Kamerow's family, just shared our meals at the same time; and others came and went in the kitchen. It was the feeling of a huge family. We loved it."

Qt: "When did you start going down to Shady Side? How old were you ?"

LP: "I don't even remember not going to Shady Side, but I'm sure I wasn't a baby. I'm sure I was probably an elementary school-age child; and I was born 1943, so sometime

probably during the late ... maybe early '50's. I really don't know when we started. Maybe my Mom remembered. I don't know."

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Qt: "Tell me what your life was like at home as opposed to Shady Side? What kind of home did you live in? What kind of activities did you do during the winter, during the summer?"

LP: "Well, until I was 16, we lived in Silver Spring near the old Montgomery Blair High School, and I had one brother, my brother, Louis Sacks; and I was a very bossy first child. I loved to be in charge of things and I loved reading. At some point in my life, I was a Pat Boone Fan Club member, and I remember having a whole lot of that stuff around. I had ... we had a recreation room that my father and Stanley Kamerow had finished in both our house ... this was our house in Silver Spring. We lived next door to each other in Silver Spring in those days, with a big, fenced-in yard for the two houses together and both of us had almost identical finished basements. We had a television down there. We had friends all the time coming over, and it was a nice place to grow up. There were lots of friends in the neighborhood, which was great. We did a lot of walking from there to the old Silver Spring for shopping, the Hecht Company and Jellofs (?), and things that were there ... and the movie theatres, we walked. It was about a 20-minute walk. My Mom did not have her own car when I was a kid.

And I loved school. I was a good student. I thought I was a wonderful student. You know, I seemed to be very comfortable socially. I had a lot of good friends, girls and guys. And I do remember first grade, when I had to be Gretl in a 'Hansel and Gretl' performance and I had to hold hands with a little boy – I couldn't even tell you his name. He had warts on his hand. And I did NOT, did NOT want to hold his hand! And the teacher said 'you are Gretl and you need to hold his hand.' And I don't know how she got me to do it. One day I was actually crying in the classroom, but I got to wear a wig with very long blonde braids and that won me over entirely, once I saw the costume. And I loved performing. I did it every chance I had. And with my cousin, Phyllis Kamerow Jaworski, I eventually belonged to some kind of drama group. I think it was through Montgomery County Jewish Community Center, which is now Ohr Kodesh, and we loved that. We got to be in all kinds of plays. For some reason, she got the glamour roles and I got the role as the...the character roles. I got to be the beggar or 'the whatever,' you know, all kinds of characters, but I loved it. It was a lot of fun.

We went to Hebrew school three days a week. We got schlepped to Ohr Kodesh from Silver Spring and made friends there. We flirted with our teacher. We had one teacher who was a very, very handsome and cute young medical student from the Baltimore area when he was going to school in Baltimore ... whose family eventually merged with our family when his ... I guess it was his first cousin ... married one of my first cousins. So ... but I ... there were a lot of happy times. I remember I bit my finger nails, and I remember wearing gloves. Somebody gave me those 'see-through', horrible, ugly nylon

gloves. And that helped me. I wore those to Hebrew school and school and everywhere. I bit the gloves.”

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Qt: “What about your summer? What did you do during the course of an average summer?”

LP: “Well, it’s interesting looking at today’s generations, where my little 2-1/2 year old granddaughter’s already been to Italy with her parents – when she was 1-1/2; incidently, I think they won’t do that again so soon. But we didn’t have real vacations other than Shady Side. I don’t remember ...I do remember once going to Williamsburg with the Kamerows. I think I was in 8<sup>th</sup> grade. But we didn’t really go ... we went to the beach at some point, I remember being at the beach when Annette Kamerow Gould was very little, very young...and my brother, Louis. We were very young. But basically, we went to Shady Side, all summer long. We didn’t go off season. We didn’t go in the winter; I guess there was probably no heat there. But we went every weekend, all summer. At some point, we started going away to Camp Louise; I think I was nine, and Phyllis and I went together, and that was a wonderful experience for us. Although the first...very first day, our trunks did not arrive in our cabin. We did not get bunk beds next to each other, in our bunks, although, we were in the same bunk. It was a very traumatic beginning for camp. But we went for a lot of years, I think about six years we went back every year. And other than ... and when we went to camp, our parents took over-night trips on the Chesapeake Bay in the *Sac-Kam*, their boat, which we couldn’t do as whole families; but the four of them, the parents, my parents and the Kamerows, could go together and do that. We never got to do that. I think very rare occasions we got to sleep overnight on the boat for one night of our weekend. And that was what we did for vacations. In terms of ... we didn’t know from ski vacations, or vacations to California, or Seattle, or island cruises. Even my parents didn’t know from vacations like that.”

Qt:: “Did you go to Shady Side for the whole summer or for an extended period of time?”

LP: “I don’t remember ever staying there for an extended period of time. My Dad worked five and a half days a week. He used to leave the house at 6:00 or 6:30 in the morning, I remember, and come back when it was dark. And Saturday morning, he would go to work and we’d pick him up in downtown Washington and then drive to Shady Side. I don’t think we stayed any extended periods because in those days, my mother probably wouldn’t have done that if my Dad couldn’t be there. Today, I might think differently.” [Chuckles a bit.]

Qt: “Do you remember any preparation for going down to Shady Side during the course of the week? I’m sure you were ... how did you feel about being at home in Silver Spring during the course of the week and looking forward to the weekend? ”

LP: "It's interesting. We made our own fun, of course, during the summers. Then when I got a little older, I took typing lessons or we took different kinds of lessons and things during the summer. And eventually, I even had a job at the National Institutes of Health as a secretary in the summers. But when I was a kid, we did things like ... I, of course,

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liking to be the leader, or the bossy one, whatever, would do things for the kids in the neighborhood. We would teach them things, or we would do a play or a show of some sort and round up a bunch of kids and work on that for days at a time...either in one of our basements, mine or Phyllis' or in the backyard. And we just made very good times.

I don't remember, until I was a teenager, it sort of didn't matter what we wore at Shady Side, so I don't remember thinking about it much except we always had to make sure we had a sweatshirt just in case it got nice and cool. And we had to have bathing suits. To this day, I still don't like to wear a bathing suit, but we wore them there. It didn't matter among that group of friends. And if we didn't feel like we looked great in the bathing suit, no one cared there. It was just really a lot of fun. It was like having a whole lot of cousins.

As we got to be teenagers, and we started inviting more of our friends to come for a day on the boat or a day at Shady Side and a boat ride on our parents' boat, it did matter. And we had to think about, during the week, you know, 'well, what are we going to wear for the weekend?' and make sure it was clean, that kind of thing. I confess. I don't think I ever washed any clothes myself. My mother had very little cleaning help; but the cleaning help, or my Mom, did the laundry and whatever I needed was always ready to pack. And we couldn't pack much because we didn't have, in this girls' dorm, much space to put things; but, of course, we took things like hair dryers and lots of toiletries so that we could look good." [Giggles].

Qt: First question: "What was it like to arrive at Shady Side?" Before that question could be answered, the sound level improved and this question was then asked: "So, what was it like to arrive at Shady Side? What were your feelings as you pulled up?"

LP: "Arriving at Shady Side was this wonderful experience. You would pull up into that back yard and there would be other cars and, of course, we knew whose car was whose, in some cases. But more than that you didn't really see too many people walking around back there, unless there were men cleaning fish, which was rare on a Saturday afternoon. But that's where the fish-cleaning table was and bordering that yard. And you would be very anxious to go see who's here already ... did anybody bring friends? What is everybody doing? ... really needed to get into our weekend. I was always very anxious to get my stuff upstairs where my bed was and get moving. It wasn't that we had such major activities to do. 'Who was in the hammock? Who was on the swings? Who was in the kitchen? What were people ... where were they sitting around and talking?' When the swimming pool was constructed, that could change the nature of a lot of things, because we sat around the pool even if we weren't swimming and just talk to whoever was there, and it was all ages, which I think was unique. I think a lot of people that I

know grew up with groups of their own age or over-lapping young people, elementary school age, maybe junior-senior high school age, college age people, but not so much with the parents sitting around. You sort of avoided your parents. At Shady Side, we didn't do that. In fact, at some...you know, at some point, you realized when you pulled

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up to Shady Side, you're just entering a whole different world, not better, not worse, just really different, and we loved it. And it connoted to us relaxation, in a different way from lying around taking a nap. And it wasn't that we were so busy doing anything that was so significant. Many times, you'd get there and it would be very quiet and everybody was sitting around reading in different places. Those rocking chairs on the screened porch were always full. It was hard, as a kid, to get to be in one of the rocking chairs. Usually adults claimed them first, but we enjoyed that. We played board games. There was, of course, no such thing as video games. You'd get there and you'd think 'is anybody playing a board game?' and who's playing?, and where are they?, and it was a good world."

Qt: "What about your father? What was ... what were his activities during a typical weekend at Shady Side?"

LP: "My Dad loved Shady Side. There were few interests my father had outside of his major, major career working in his business, and one of them was Shady Side and the boat, which he liked the mechanics of. But Shady Side was a place where my father's world changed, and he had very good friends there, some very close friends: the Foers the Sheinbaums, the Kamerows were one sort of group of four-family group that held beyond Shady Side but in all kinds of their socializing. And he would get there and connect with his friends, and it was interesting to see him in a different life. And of course, in those days, people smoked. I think my father even smoked his pipe at Shady Side. I don't remember, but I just remember they had a good time. They played poker in the Big Room. The Big Room was sort of a center for lots of things going on. There might've been poker, somebody might be sitting some place else knitting and gossiping with the women, the kids might've been playing a board game or avoiding the parents, knowing they were all in the Big Room. We could go someplace else and whatever we did, it was not the kind of mischief you would think of among a whole group of young people in today's world. And I think this was a wonderful escape for my Dad, which is why it was so important to make that trek every weekend."

Qt: "What about fishing? It was a fishing club?"

LP: "And they fished. I never fished except off the dock, if they would let us fish, or sometimes they would give us a fishing rod when we were out on the boat. The men, in different clumps, got up very early. I remember it was dark out when they would get up and they would go out in these little outboard motor boats and go fishing. Probably it was 4 or 5 o'clock in the morning and they would come back with fish. They always caught fish of some sort, and then they would have to clean them. I didn't like fish, but we would have to eat what they caught. I do have...there's one picture... I don't know when it was taken, probably in the 1950's, of my father, I think Uncle Stanley Kamerow,

and I can't remember who else, with very large rockfish they had caught; and it was either fall or winter, probably late fall but they went, 'cause they're bundled up in warm clothes. Yes, it was a fishing club but I don't know that that was the central activity, but

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the guys fancied themselves major athletes going out in these boats early in the morning and bringing in the fish. And I can imagine that it was a relaxing time for them, just sitting in a boat, waiting for the fish and talking with each other. I don't know if men talked with each other then or not, but I'm guessing that that's where they did."

Qt: "Besides the four families that you mentioned that were so close, who were some of the other people that you remember at Shady Side?"

LP: "I remember the Danheisers being older than we were. I did not know ... and, really, any of their family except the senior Danheisers. And I remember there was a Colman family. I remember the Colkers. Oh my gosh, there were, and, of course, the Goldbergs, because Eddie Goldberg was a little bit older than we were and a very handsome young man. And the Freedmans were there, the Yochelsons. I'm sure I'm leaving some out...it'll come to me. But there was also Jerry Yochelson, who was another handsome young man just about in our age range, maybe a little older and his sister, Susan. I mean, it was a collection of people from different walks of life that, I guess, all knew each other or overlapped each other somehow 'cause you did not come to the Fishing Club if you were not connected to someone. You did not just say, 'I think I'll join the Fishing Club.' I have no idea how you got to join the Fishing Club, but I know you had to know somebody."

Qt: "It was a membership club, and, interestingly enough, all the members during the time you were there were Jewish. Is there...and you described a little bit about your family's connection with your synagogue ...was Shady Side itself in any way, shape or form a Jewish experience?"

LP: "I don't remember if there was even a Mezuzah on any of the doors, to tell you the truth. It would be interesting to know because, of course, if it were my vacation place now, I would want a Mezuzah at least on my bedroom door if not on the door of the building. But I don't remember that. I do remember that on the very rare occasions we could be there on a Friday night, we would light candles there because we lit candles at home; but not everyone did, and not everyone joined in to that or made a big deal of it. We kept Kosher at home and so frequently my Mom and Aunt Helen Kamerow would bring ... they would have cooked brisket or they would've cooked chicken, and that meal or those meals, would be Kosher on the paper plates or whatever, but we did not really keep Kosher in Shady Side. I don't remember their ever bringing in shellfish or pork to our part of the kitchen. But I do remember the Goldbergs cooking eels, so I'm sure people cooked things that, you know, we weren't used to. I don't remember a Jewish tenor there. And it's interesting, because I think there's something about "our people"

Jews tend, even today, to feel comfortable among other Jews. That doesn't mean 'only' among other Jews but there's always been that comfort level."

Qt: "You mentioned Friday evenings, but you were there rarely on Friday evenings, what about Saturday nights when you were there? What activities took place?"

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LP: "I know we had Bingo, but we didn't have ... I'm sure we didn't have prizes. I can't imagine what we would have had for prizes then, but somebody had a Bingo set and because I remember it had one of those baskets that you cranked it and turned around. That was very cool. But I think we all did our own things. It wasn't like sometimes we'd actually go out and eat in a restaurant but it wasn't like there was a party or a specific... I don't remember anyone ever showing movies. It would have been the perfect place to show movies, and maybe we did, but I don't remember doing that. And we didn't have a stereo in that Big Room, I don't know. Maybe people had radios but I don't remember, even as kids, blasting music. I did have a turquoise plastic radio at some point that ... a little portable, not like a little 'WalkMan' size... much bigger than that. But I do... I'm sure I must have brought that with me to Shady Side because I would've been cool. I could've played music there. But I don't remember what we did Saturday night that was different from what we might have done Saturday afternoon or Sunday afternoon, except very often people had guests on Sundays."

Qt: "During the course of a summer, were there any special occasions, holidays, special activities that would come up?"

LP: "We had fireworks on the Fourth of July. I don't even know if it was 'legit' then or legal then to do that, but I do remember we would buy fireworks on the way down and other people would. And the big thrill was to hold sparklers. But I remember my Dad lighting the fireworks and then making a run for it to get away from the danger of it, and that was a fun thing. Memorial Day heralded the beginning of the summer for us, so that was a big weekend, and also we had Monday. It was a longer weekend than we were used to; and of course Labor Day was pretty much the end of summer because school started. And once you were back in school, you really didn't go to the summer activity of Shady Side that I recall. I'm trying to think ... other holidays? I can't think of any."

Qt: "Maybe you could tell me a little bit about the friendships with the other women, or really with the other girls. What was it like to be in the girls' dorm, say getting ready for bed?"

LP: "We giggled a lot. I don't have any idea what we giggled about. I'm sure we gossiped ... or you'd call it gossip today. We talked about other people or we shared whatever our feelings were at that time. My cousin, Phyllis, and I, of course, slept next to each other. I'm sure Annette was probably on the other side of Phyllis. And Bonnie and Laura Foer ... Bonnie Sheinbaum Gorman and Laura Foer slept, I'm sure, near each other 'cause their families were closer and shared a boat. And then the others were there, you know, we were all there. Susie Yochelson was, of course, there with us, and Ellen

Freedman was a little more distant from most of us; although, she was there, she was our friend, too. But it was a fun time.

There were steps that led into the girls' dorm from one of the hallways, from the long hallway, and I remember very often a parent would come up and sit on those stairs until we quieted down and fell asleep, because it would be a lot of giggling, and I guess they

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didn't want that. They wanted us to get rest so that we wouldn't be grumpy the next day. As a parent, I can understand that now, of course. But at the time, I just remember we had such a good time, and I don't think we didn't ... I don't think there was anything malicious if we were gossiping or talking about other people. I think we were just kind of reliving our day. It was fun."

Qt: "Did that have ...I'm just curious...sometimes people talked about the formation of those friendships in that sort of crucible there. Do you feel that that had any effect on your life since then?"

LP: "Well, it was such a natural, easy way to make friends. It's interesting, and maybe that did color for a lot of us, inter-personal relationships in that it was very non-threatening, so you weren't fearful of new people or getting to know people. We sort of always knew each other. I don't remember getting to know any of the Shady Side members." [Phone rings. Slight pause.] "But I just"... "Making friends at Shady Side was never a conscious effort. It seemed like we had always been friends, and that might have been an influence on my feelings about meeting people in general. I never feel ... I rarely feel shy around new people. I guess we all do at times, but I'm always interested in new people and kind of curious about what they're like and will we become friends, or are we just going to be acquaintances. But I feel the relationships with those people were so comfortable that there was never the conscious feeling of whether we had something in common or not, or whether we were the same level academically, or the same kind of students, or the same kind of Judaic practitioners, or whatever. There was none of that. It was just everybody was accepted for who he or she was. Some of us were really different. Some of the people that we were with there were really unique and probably would not have been our friends in other circumstances. We might not have crossed paths in ballet class or overnight camp or whatever. But because we were at Shady Side, we made friends and found that the different kinds of people were interesting.

And I still feel that way. I still ...My husband and I have quite a collection of friends and I'm very happy with the fact that we have a variety of friendships but, mainly, because we have close friends that we really care about. And I think I may have learned some of those skills. My husband insists that he's very shy, but he goes ...he plunges into large groups without me and, you know, I tag along and we have good times. But going into Shady Side was a different social venture, and I have a feeling, for most of us, it laid groundwork for the future. [Long pause]. And some of those people I'm sure you know I'm still connected with in some ways. Not that I have major connections, but, of course, there have been marriages within our families that have overlapped in some cases. And



the parents have been friends to the ends of their lives in most cases and so the children - my generation - who are now in their 50's and 60's in most cases, have continued the connections, except for the Shady Side Reunion that you guys sponsored that I couldn't come to at the last minute and was very disappointed about. I don't think there have been any Shady Side reunions, so that was very welcome and exciting for many people."

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Qt: "What about the outside world? In some ways, Shady Side was this enclosed kind of compound. What connections, while you were there during the summer, did you have with anybody who wasn't a member or any place outside the house?"

LP: "Interestingly, we knew there were cottages adjacent to our property where there were people that sometimes spent the whole summer, or weekends or parts of it. I didn't know those people. I knew the Shady Side people, even though these were our next-door neighbors and there were large plots of land with multiple houses on them or cottages, whatever you would call them; but I didn't know those people. I can't even remember who they were or what they did. But we were our Shady Side world. We also didn't have televisions and we did not have ... I don't remember anyone having a television there in those days. So we didn't pay a whole lot of attention to news. We didn't have a newspaper delivered, we were only there a few days at a time. So we were disconnected, but, of course, we brought our own outside world there and people...almost everyone invited friends at times or family members. I know looking through some of the old pictures I see very elderly family members who, nevertheless, were schlepped there.

I know my father's company had their summer outing there a number of times because it was a very large property, and enabled us ... we would ...there was catered food. I don't know how they did it but there were, you know, those chicken companies or whatever who would come and provide the meals. But people came and made their own fun. You played a ballgame or you sat and you talked, or you ... I don't know what they did, but those outings were wonderful things. I guess there probably were programs for kids 'cause there still are. That company is the company my husband runs now and they still have summer outings and they have usually a clown and face painting and various kinds of things for kids. So I'm sure in those days we had that, too. I remember bringing friends because I didn't know that many people within my father's company when I was a kid, and so I would sometimes have friends come for that weekend to be part of that. So that would be bringing the outside world in to us. And I think other people who were Shady Side members did the same kind of thing, we just tried to make sure it wasn't all on the same weekend."

Qt: "Do you remember going into the town of Shady Side, though, or interacting with the year-round residents there in any way?"

LP: "Is that where 'Ada's Country Kitchen' was? [Laughs] I do remember that. I don't remember ... I couldn't get you to it now if I tried to, but I do remember we went there. We got to have fried chicken, we got to go there. It was a big deal. And they had, of

course ...I'm sure you've probably heard this from Annette and Phyllis, they had a juke box , and we'd put our money into the juke box. I don't know what it cost then ... maybe a nickel or a dime, and we sang along. We sang 'On Top of Old Smokey', we sang 'The Tennessee Waltz', and we actually were not shy about singing in front of whoever was in the restaurant. That was pre-karaoke days.

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And I did have an experience there as a teenager which was not a good experience. I'm quite sure that that's where it was. When we went to pick up some food ... I don't remember what ...a group of teenagers, maybe three or four of us went to pick up something, and someone made an anti-Semitic remark which was so shocking to us cause we'd been coming there all our lives, mostly, and never were aware that we were Jews and other people weren't Jews and that they might care about that. That was eye opening to me. I think it was the first anti-Semitic experience I had had. It was surprising to have it there."

Qt: "What actually happened? If you can just kind of go through it, if you can remember that?"

LP: "Someone just made a remark about the Jews. And it was probably using some slang term. I don't remember exactly what it was. It was while we were standing there waiting for the food. And it was loud and clear – and we could hear that. It was not like the time we went to Mayo Beach one time, I don't remember ... the mothers took us to Mayo Beach or I don't remember my Dad being there, so it must have been a day trip or an afternoon trip from Shady Side, and I do remember it began to rain and then it began to hail and everybody was congregating in the little kiosk, the food kiosks or the game kiosks, or whatever they were called. And we tried to get under cover and we were told that we were not welcome. 'You and your kind are not welcome here and, no, you may not get in here and get out from the hail', so we had to head for the cars. But that was another anti-Semitic experience that was in that area and maybe that was just those were areas where Jews didn't really live, so we were intruders in their world and they didn't understand anything about us. That's what I remember, but I don't remember specifics from 'Ada's Country Kitchen', except fried chicken and singing songs. And I could sing you those same songs today but you would not want to stick around." [Laughs].

Qt: "After the remark, though, was made, in 'Ada's Country Kitchen', you were there with several other people from the Club, what did you do, kind of, in response?"

LP: "I guess we told the parents, but I don't know if anything ever happened as a result of it. I doubt that it's a place we returned to a lot after that. When somebody makes you feel unwelcome, you don't want to give them your money. And I remember also around that time, we had a big enough boat that we could go for a ride on the Bay and eat at different restaurants. I don't remember the names of the restaurants, but I know we would pull up with the boat, the men would buy gas, and we would eat at whatever the restaurant was, and so our horizons got a little broader I think."

Qt: “Can you tell me about any of the boat trips you took with your parents?”

LP: “Well, as you probably already know, my mother got very motion sick, and so boating was quite an experience for her, and she had to dope up even then, I think, on Dramamine. I don’t think there were too many options besides the Dramamine so she

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was probably a little sleepy much of the time we were on the boat. But I do remember, we, of course, loved going on the boat ride. We loved going in restaurants. We didn’t eat a lot in restaurants when I was growing up, other than on these weekend vacations. We thought all restaurants were called ‘Hot Shoppes’ because that’s where we ate. And my parents would take me... they took us, now and then to a different restaurant, and we would just get very excited about going to the Hot Shoppes, ‘cause we thought that was a synonym for ‘restaurant’.

On the bay, it was seafood. I didn’t like fish. At that time, I didn’t ...had never tried shellfish, and so we would order hamburgers, I’m sure, and French fries and probably fried chicken. I don’t remember what else but probably what we would not consider too healthful today or encourage our children to eat today, but it was fun and it was very exciting going to restaurants. And, of course, you didn’t get dressed up. You might have gone in a bathing suit with a cover-up, if it was dry, or you might have put on shorts and a tee-shirt and that’s how we ate in restaurants. It was great. It was very relaxing. To this day, and my husband was not a part of the Shady Side experience, he doesn’t like to take vacations where he has to take along a jacket and tie, so we, to this day, still vacation in casual places.”

Qt: “Did you get to see a lot of the Chesapeake Bay area through these trips?”

LP: “We probably got to see some of it. We didn’t go on the longer trips that our parents did. And so we didn’t see as much, and I didn’t really know that what I was seeing would really be historic and would really be something that would be more of value to me as I got older. I loved reading the Michener book about the Chesapeake Bay. I loved it. It was one of my favorite books because I got to... not just relive my own experiences on the Bay but learned a whole lot about it that I hadn’t bothered with when I was a kid.”

Qt: “But that was later?”

LP: “That was much later. I was married and a mother by the time I read that book. But it was a pleasure to know that. I highly recommend it to anybody who hasn’t read it because it’s really a wonderful tie to that whole area.”

Qt: “What about the end of the Shady Side experience? When did you and your family stop going?”

LP: “ Well, for me, it tapered off, of course, because I got married and I moved to the Boston area. I believe my parents were still going to Shady Side at that point but I know that when my Dad, as he got older and was stricken with Parkinson’s disease, it became more and more dangerous for him to get on the boat, walking out the little dock and getting on the boat at the Selby Bay Yacht Club. And so I know that they probably discontinued going down there at that point. But I think they had discontinued their membership in the Fishing Club some years before that because they could stay on the

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boat when they went down and also because going to and from was so much faster by that time that they could go for the day. And so...but I wasn’t here, so I wasn’t really aware that it disappeared. And I don’t remember if we took my children when they were little. I don’t have any pictures of my children at Shady Side. So maybe they never got to go there. [Slight pause.]

They did go camping, however. I do remember, after I was married ...actually after I had moved to the Washington area. My husband and I did a lot of...what we did when our children were little that his family had never experienced but was the closest tie to Shady Side that I had. We lived in the Boston area, we had a big tent and we went camping every weekend. He took Fridays and Mondays as his entire summer vacation, every Friday and Monday all summer, and we took the kids all over New England on camping trips. Now at that point, when we moved to the Washington area, we had a five and a half and a two and a half year old son, so this was when they were quite young. The oldest was probably six months old the first time we took him camping. But we moved to the Washington area, at which point our tent had worn out and the summer before we’d bought a pop-top camper. Our tent, literally, the poles wore through the canvas and it had to be trashed. And I remember camping in Annapolis because I remember my parents and the Kamerows coming to see what the pop-top camper was like and comparing it to life on a boat. They said it wasn’t quite as good as being on a boat ‘cause you weren’t on the water, but instead you were in the woods and you had a campfire to cook on and they could very much appreciate that and it was fun for us to camp in Annapolis or whatever campground was nearby and having them visit us to see how we vacationed.”

Qt: “When was the last time you were in Shady Side then?”

LP: “I would guess early in my married life, and I’ve been married 39 and a half years, so I would guess maybe 37, 38 years ago? 35 years ago? It was a long time ago. I would like to come back.”

Qt: “As you picture it in your mind, though, tell me what you see.”

LP: “Well, of course, I see this big, long building with a...I see the back of it. I can picture the back approaching, pulling into the parking ... there was no parking lot organization so cars were parked all over the place back there. And you’d go up some steps, you’d go in and there’s this big, long kitchen with long tables and oil cloth on the

tables. To this day, by the way, I still love oil cloth and I have a big piece of oil cloth I use in my kitchen sometimes on the kitchen table. And then straight ahead was the great Big Room and off the Big Room was Stanley and Helen Kamerow's bedroom, and two sets of stairs to take us upstairs to the big long hallway where the Sheinbaums and the Foers and the Goldbergs ...no, the Goldbergs, I think, were at the other side of the girls' dorm. But there were a number of families that had their bedrooms up there. And the...if you went to the left when you first came into the kitchen, you could cut through

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the boys' dorm to my parents' bedroom and out to the screened porch. And I remember that porch and, of course, the rocking chairs and outside of that, I remember the sets of the swings that we all loved. And that was another thing, we sometimes couldn't get on because other people were using those. I remember what seemed to us an enormous ... a vast yard leading to the West River, to the water, and the hammock down near there. And there was always a green bench also there looking out over the water. I remember jellyfish and seaweed and, you know, we would complain, but, of course, when I was little, that's where we had to swim, so we swam there and we got stung by jellyfish. Sometimes we swam off my parents' boat but that was scarier because you had no idea what was down there. At least at Shady Side at the Fishing Club, you knew there was seaweed. You knew where the worst seaweed was. You knew where the ... if there were jellyfish, somebody would be on the dock saying, 'Jellyfish over there!'. You know, we could scramble back out.

And I remember thinking that this would go on forever. I remember never thinking that things would change. This would always be there for us. And there were old pictures in there that meant nothing to us, about Samuel Gompers and people who had been part of this organization that we didn't know anything about. We had nothing written down that I knew about that was history, and I'm not a history person, so I really wouldn't have been interested in it then. But I just remember it being very relaxed and informal, and nobody got dressed up there. I think we had to get dressed up one time go to a wedding from Shady Side, but it had to be many years later."

Qt: "Well, it seems to me that you've described virtually the physical plant, and the activities that you did there, the people that inhabited the place and what it meant to you over the course of your life. Is there anything we might have left out?"

LP: "Well, most likely, because my brain leaks, as I told you. [Laughing] And it leaks more and more in time, but I'm sure there are things that we might've left out. I mean there were long tables, for example, picnic tables on the grounds, that were always used by...whether we had company or whether we just took our food outside. It was a bigger project because you had to carry your food from the kitchen at one side of the building, through the Big Room, through the screened porch and out to the tables. But we do have lots of pictures of us eating watermelon and by us meaning my family and some friends, and some other Shady Side members, Fishing Club members and so I know we did that.

And I know we played outside games out there. And I remember it both pre- and during the swimming pool era, I am not seated since there's no swimming pool any more, so that would be an adventure. The swimming pool was a major improvement for all of us because of the jellyfish and the seaweed, and so forth, and our friends really loved that because it was a private pool. None of us, none of our friends, no one we knew had a private pool, but we, at the Fishing Club, had a private pool and it was great 'cause it was only us and our friends, and, you know, Fishing Club members and Fishing Club members friends who were there. So that was quite unique for us, too. Otherwise, we

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had public pools to go to which we didn't do much. I don't ...I can't think of other things but I'm sure there are...they're there, and I'll think of them as soon as you've put away your equipment."

Qt: "Tell me about some of the games that you played. You mentioned games, outdoor games?"

LP: "Oh, yeah. I'm sure ...I can't even...we had croquet, and we had ...there were horseshoes. I'd never seen horseshoes anywhere in my life except there. We had croquet at home. We had a croquet set because we, and the Kamerows, had this big yard, and we could play that at home, but that was something we could do there. And that's the kind of thing where it didn't require that you know a lot of rules. I remember mostly the men played horseshoes, and I'm not sure... I don't think I could ever get a horseshoe to go around the nail or whatever that post was that stuck out of the ground, but I remember that croquet was every age, every body, any body when we set it up, and then you had to be real careful not to trip over the wickets and to pick them all back up again. But it was...and we, of course, had balls there. I don't know what we did, just played catch or whether we, you know...I don't remember soccer or anything like that in those days. I didn't know about soccer until my kids were little and there was Montgomery soccer for them to join. But we ... somehow we used the grounds and enjoyed them.

I do remember friends coming to visit when we were teenagers. My cousin, Phyllis, and I had good friends through our United Synagogue Youth group, and we brought them down in clumps. But at one time, David Gottlieb and Michael Salzburg came to visit us, and they brought a tent, set up tent on the grounds. That was probably the first and only time that ever happened. And there were no rules at the Fishing Club that you couldn't do that. No one told them they couldn't build a campfire. It caused, I know, a big ruckus among the adults. I don't know about our parents, but everybody else was quite distressed that they were burning logs in a spot on the grounds. They laid tefillin while they were there outside at the tent, and basically, spent that weekend camping at Shady Side and had a wonderful time. It's very memorable to me. I wonder if they remember. I'm sure Phyllis remembers it, too. And that was a wonderful, fun experience that was unique to us and our friends. I do not remember anyone else camping on the grounds."

Qt: "Can you tell a little bit more about the swings 'cause they seem to have been a big fixture?"

LP: “Yeah, I don’t know what we did on the swings besides just sit there and swing back and forth by the woods. We didn’t have those swings at home. We had never seen those kinds anywhere else. That was characteristic of Shady Side. So when you got there and if nobody else was on the swings, you’d get on the swings, and other people might come around and say, ‘hey’, you know, ‘how you doin’?’, whatever, and join in sitting on the swings...or stand ... we would stand, sort of just drape ourselves around the poles that supported the swings so that more of us could talk than the four that would fit on the

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swings at one time. And that again...it was just a relaxed...something relaxed, a characteristic of being there that we didn’t have anywhere else. And I think that makes a big difference when you’re vacationing. Most people try to find places that are different from home. They don’t go some place that looks and feels just like home. And that’s what we got to do every weekend for a lot of years. But I’m not gonna ... which years or how many years, but it was a lot of years.”

[Interview ends.]

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