



Jerry Yochelson

Interviewee: Jerry Yochelson
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Interviewed by: Barry Kessler
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Qt: "This is Barry Kessler. Today is Thursday, May 17, and I am in Shady Side at the Capt. Salem Avery House Museum to interview Jerry Yochelson for the Fishing Club Project." [Slight pause.] "Jerry, in your mind, what was the Shady Side experience all about? What did this place mean?"

JY: "Getting away from town...total relaxation, for me. I didn't like being in town any way 'cause I started out in the country and hated it in town. This was the place to be."

Qt: "What kind of a place was this?"

JY: "In what context?"

Qt: "When you were coming here as a young person, what kind of place was it? Was it a...what was going on here? Pretend I've never heard of it before...completely new, I've never heard of it...just walking in, and if you could just sort of explain it to me, like maybe I was some kid in your school when you were coming here, and I had no idea what Shady Side is."

JY: [Chuckles a bit.] "It was just a great place to come and goof off. And, basically, every body here was your extended family, so you didn't get away with anything. [Laughing.] Not like today. But all the parents were all the children's parents all the time, but the experience you learned...I mean we were around some of the old watermen, or at least I was. I sought that stuff out. They taught me a lot of things. One of them

loaned me a row boat to play with, things of that nature. Like I was telling you earlier, you'd go out here and catch a bushel of crabs off the pilings of the duck blinds with a rowboat and just live off the Bay. I mean we didn't have a swimming pool in the beginning; you could go swimming out there...the water was crystal clear. It was just an escape. Some of the women I don't think liked it as much as the men did. [chuckles], but that's just the way things are."

Qt: "Right. Who were the people that were here at the time you were coming here?"

JY: "What do you mean who were they. I mean..."

Qt: "What kind of a group was it?"

JY: "Just all...probably when I was a kid, they were all in their late 20's and early 30's, except for a few that had been here longer. A lot of them were members of the Brandeis

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Club. So it wasn't that I didn't know them before I got here. And the family was invited down. Then they were invited to become members and we did. And I couldn't wait to get here and I hated to leave every week."

Qt: "Give me an idea of what it would be like to get ready to come to the Club."

JY: "Pack up some food, which, for some reason, always seemed to be a hassle, 'cause you couldn't leave anything here. They always turned the refrigerators off, unless somebody was staying for the week. Everybody had to empty their refrigerator every week. So the hassle was getting enough food together because the market was pretty limited here and then going to Annapolis was something else in those days. Muddy Creek Road was almost two lanes wide, very windey, and there was nothing in Annapolis. If you didn't get there before 5 o'clock, there was nothing. And then some clothes and that was it."

Qt: "Right. And then what can you remember about the trip from your home?"

JY: "Always took too long 'cause you wanted to be here. 'Are we there yet?', you know, even though it took a little over an hour, I guess, back then. When they opened Rt. 50, that was really something. To come up 50 and go through Davidsonville versus up Central Avenue and through all that mess. 'Cause back then, everything was just two lanes and no beltway, through Hyattsville, through all the...Peace Cross, all the traffic mess back then was a pain."

Qt: "And when you finally got here, what did you do?"

JY: "Went out and played. [Laughing] I mean, I was only what, 11, 12...whatever. And so, it was play. I mean, that's what you did."

Qt: "Tell me exactly what you did when you went out and played, what kinds of things were you doing?"

JY: "Down at the water, crabbing mainly...as a kid, without a boat or whatever. And then when you get near the 4th of July, you'd get some fireworks and you'd throw explosive things in the water to bring minnows up and what not...things of that nature."

Qt: "When you would get here, what would be going on? Or who would be here already, perhaps?"

JY: "Probably Bill Goldberg and maybe Danheiser or whoever might be staying for a week. But a lot of summers, we vacationed here for one or two weeks, and then Dad would commute to work some of the days. I don't think anybody ever got here much before mid-day on a Friday, and were generally all gone by dark on Sunday."

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Qt: "So then when...I'm just imagining Friday afternoon, your family were the first to get here, the last to get here. What would be going on?"

JY: "We probably would never get here before 7 or 8 o'clock at night. And sometimes there would only be two or three families here on the weekend, and then other times everybody would be here all at the same time. It just...whatever your schedule was. For us, this was where we did everything all the time, unless we went to Norfolk to visit family."

Qt: "For the summer. Can you walk me through a typical day here at the Club? You'd wake up in the morning..."

JY: "Eat. [Chuckles] Go...boy it's tough to remember back before the pool. But if the pool was here, you'd hit the pool or you'd go out on a boat. If you wanted to go fishing with the men, you got up at 4 o'clock and you went fishing early. Eat again. Play some more. Eat again. I mean, that was me. They would probably have the evening meal generally from 4:30 to 6:30 because you had to sort of do a little shift work. After that, you could be outside till the mosquitoes got too bad, then you'd be in here either reading or playing a game. And then 8:30 or 9, everybody sort of ended up in the kitchen eating again, whether it was crabs or clams or a sandwich or whatever, and then you'd go to bed, and then, you'd just start all over again the next day.

I spent a lot of time over at the boatyard, and there was an old waterman over there that I hung around his place. And he was the fellow that let me use his rowboat all the time. And there was Wood's Wharf on the other side of the creek where you could rent a boat with a motor in it; and every now and then I could get a couple of bucks together and go do that. But I wanted to be out on the water or doing things versus sitting around and doing nothing. That's not me."

Qt: "Tell me what you can about the waterman you're talking about and, you know, I don't want dates but definitely names would be helpful...him and his family members."

JY: "His family...Ms. Bast..."

Qt: "Stop back, now start."

JY: "Ok. Go ahead..."

Qt: "If you can just tell me about this waterman."

JY: "He was just an old-time waterman, I mean, he was probably in his 70's when I met him. He told me stories about how he used to go out on a log canoe that he had, sail out to go oystering, and be gone for three days with just the little bit of food that he could carry with him, 'cause he had to sail to Baltimore to sell his catch, and then sail home to

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Shady Side. And he and his wife would come over here in the evening some time and sit around and eat, or whatever, with us; and I don't ever know what happened. I know they died but I don't know that they had family. I never met anybody connected to them. And there was Capt. Gene Wood, down at Wood's Wharf. In fact, his daughter and her husband are people that I know that I hung around with after I got out of the Navy and we moved down here; but I knew her when she was growing up 'cause she's probably ten years younger than me...her and her sister.

What else was around here then? Oh, all the boatyards had railways which they don't use anymore, and when...in the spring, when the *MelArt* was being commissioned for the year, I'd go over and help with that at the Rhodes Boatyard...Jim Rhodes."

Qt: "If you can describe to me like how you would get to Ennis Bast's house and what it would be like if I had never been there. If you could say for example, 'I never have been there', give me directions to get there from here."

JY: "Well you...straight through the woods at the end of the driveway to the boatyard and he lived next door to the boatyard. Or you could go out the driveway, turn left and follow the road around to his house."

Qt: "And what did it look like?"

JY: "He lived on Parish Creek, in the creek itself, in an old house similar to, I guess, Salem Avery House, really, but bigger."

Qt: "And if I walked up to the house, what would it look like?"

JY: "Now?"

Qt: “No, back then when you were young.”

JY: “It’s a two-story house with, I guess, an enclosed porch, just a plain...you see them all up and down the Eastern Shore...basically square, two-story house with an extra roof sticking off of it that was either an open or a closed porch.”

Qt: “And what would Capt. Bast be doing?”

JY: “I don’t know what he did, because he was already beyond the age where he could work. He wore suspenders. He was skinny as a rail...I don’t think they made a belt small enough to hold his pants up. [Chuckles] His wife was husky and she wasn’t Russian but she was a babushka. I mean she would smother you with a big kiss and the whole bit, and then they were a pair of characters, say anything..”

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Qt: “He would say anything?”

JY: “Both of them!” [Laughs]

Qt: “For example, what would they say?”

JY: “Not for print...anything...[Laughs]. Use your imagination.”

Qt: “What kind of a relationship did Ennis Bast have with the general membership here?”

JY: “Uh, I don’t know how it started but, and I don’t know exactly what was going on, but I know that they gave him clothes. He was real close to Art Shinebaum, it seemed like to me in memory; but I think the people here helped him out in some way with clothing, and I don’t know what else. I don’t even know where that started...that relationship.”

Qt: “And did you generally go over there by yourself or with other boys or...?”

JY: “Always by myself. The other children here were not country people. They were city people, and my desires were around things that worked and so forth and theirs weren’t, so...”

Qt: “I just wonder about who were...of the other boys who were here, were any of them close to your age or did you develop friendships with any of them?”

JY: “Well, uh, Eddie Goldberg and I got along, but he was a little bit older than me. Ronnie Shinebaum was younger. Not really. Louis was younger. I would hang out with Arnold, my cousin, some. Mike Dunn next door and I hung out a lot. He’s my age. I mean but through the day, generally, you know, you’re fooling around with the

pool...you're with every body, or if you want to go fool around crabbing, someone might go with you. But as a general rule, most of the stuff I wanted to do, most other people were not interested in at all."

Qt: "So..."

JY: "In fact, a of them wouldn't go in the Bay 'cause it had "stuff in it" [Makes a nasty face and chuckles.] That's why they got the pool." [Chuckles.]

Qt: "So, you mean like the seaweed and creatures and..."

JY: "Yeah. Well, like the garfish would come up and poke you and the minnows would nibble on the hair on your legs and stuff like that, and some people just didn't like that." [Laughs.]

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Qt: "Yeah. Is there anything you can remember about sort of doing with Mike Dunn or with Ronnie Shinebaum while you were here?"

JY: "Well, the main thing with Mike Dunn was around the 4th of July, his uncle had something to do with law enforcement in North Carolina and would bring confiscated explosives by the truckload up here [Laughing.] and we would have a lot of fun with that. But Arnold and I would get in Arnold's boat and Mike and his cousin in his boat and we would each have a box of cherry bombs and we would go along throwing them at each other [Laughing.]"

Qt: "Woe!!!"

JY: "Full speed in the boat...stuff like that." [Laughing.]

Qt: "Great. Tell me about your father. What was he like as a person? Can you illustrate his personality or his character?"

JY: "Quiet...mechanical. A little bit bookish, along with being mechanical. Taught me all I know about business, you know, allowed me then to buy him out to continue on. Worked in the business when I was probably 13 on summers, you know, go in with him, clean the place, whatever. In high school, then, worked there summers, that type of thing. After the Navy I didn't work there. I didn't go back there till just before Joyce and I got married as a temporary thing 'cause we were planning to move away and never left. So there we are."

Qt: "Why do you think your father first wanted to be connected to this group?"

JY: "Well, the Brandeis Club thing, I guess. I don't know. I mean we never talked about it, but it goes maybe back to my grandfather. His father. He always wanted to

have a place in Deale or somewhere around here and my grandmother would have none of it, because she knew she'd be doing all the work and they'd be bringing company every weekend, and she'd be cooking and whatever, so she wouldn't let it happen. I don't know if they went to places like this when he was young or not. A cousin owned Drum Point; before that they owned a lot of property in Plum Point, and I can remember going there for weekends and family picnics. I don't know if that had some effect on him or not about as far as wanting to be here."

Qt: "What about fishing?"

JY: "Oh, he loved it. I mean, that was his thing, he and Art, especially, but he always liked fishing."

Qt: "Any idea how he developed an interest in fishing or...?"

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JY: "No, I don't."

Qt: "Did your grandfather fish also?"

JY: "Yeah, but it was more going with some of his friends to Deale on a charter boat a couple of times in the summer. He would take me occasionally also on that."

Qt: "Your grandfather?"

JY: "Yeah, um huh."

Qt: "So how does that contrast with your Dad's fishing? What kind of fishing did your Dad do?"

JY: "Oh, they would go out here for Perch and Spot during the summer for bottom fishing and then Rockfish in the fall, Blues and what not. But I would go...like Bill Goldberg always fished so Bill and my Dad, occasionally Mel but generally Art. And who else? There was one other adult that went all the time. I can't remember who that was, but occasionally I'd go with them. But we could go out there and catch a whole bushel of fish before the sun really got up in the sky before 8:30 or 9 in the morning, come back here, clean them and cook them for breakfast. And with a big...they had a frying pan that must've been two feet around. Did you ever have pictures of the old burner stoves they had back there? Well, it would fit over two of them...home fries, onions and potatoes and fresh fish for breakfast...incredible. Can't do that any more."

Qt: "Anything about your Dad's tackle or what he used for his fishing that you remember?"

JY: "No, because I didn't do that much with him fishing-wise. I didn't like to go bottom fishing. I couldn't stand to sit still in the boat. And you're just sitting there at anchor and

it drove me nuts. I would do it occasionally but it was not something that turned me on at all.”

Qt: “So, what did you prefer?”

JY: “Trolling for Rockfish in the fall, ‘cause you’re moving, you’re doing something.”

Qt: “Or at least it feels like you’re doing something?”

JY: [Laughing]. “Yeah, it’s like going around when the traffic stopped, take a different route, you know, so I’m not sitting. That’s when I got caught with the Bay Bridge thing with a wreck. Had to go up to Elkton and around...extra 110 miles.”

Qt: “It’s worse to sit still?”

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JY: “Oh, God, yeah. I wouldn’t be able to do it. [Laughs.]”

Qt: “So did your father want to teach you to fish or...?”

JY: “Well, when we went fishing he showed me, you know, how to tie a lure on properly that type of stuff. But it wasn’t ‘Come on, I want to teach you.’ It was, ‘We’re going fishing. Do you want to go?’ Then he would show me what to do.”

Qt: “Do you have any sense about what kinds of friendships your father developed? What the friendships meant to him?”

JY: “Well, they were...the Brandeis Club was basically his core friends, and they had their monthly meeting. I mean he hardly ever missed one of those, and they would meet at each other’s house, they would rotate and whatever. And as I recall, they would do trips, just for the adults, not the children. I don’t remember that much about it. I remember them going away with the Brandeis people on vacations. But later on, Art and Goldie and my Mom and Dad would go on the boat for a week somewhere. I guess his closest friend was Art, Mel, who would be next and then the rest of the group. I knew all the other people. I didn’t know how close they were. They would go to parties. They always had a New Year’s party for the Brandeis group, that type of thing.”

Qt: “What about while we’re talking about the Brandeis Club, when, on days out here at Shady Side that the rest of the Brandeis group would come out, what was that like?”

JY: “I really don’t remember that. More probably just a picnic thing...it was like a day. It was like the Freedman Company Picnic. I mean their people would all show up and at the end if the day they were all gone and that was it.”

Qt: “But how did you respond to days like that. How would that make you feel?”

JY: “Well, I enjoyed it. I mean I knew all those people. I enjoyed seeing them.”

Qt: “And do you remember what kinds of food there were?”

JY: “I remember Freedman’s; I don’t remember that. Freedman’s had...it was a group of people that...the University of Maryland, one of the fraternities or something, had a catering deal; and they would set up barrels that were cut in half which was their grill; and they did chicken. And I don’t remember if they did beef or not. But they had something they sprayed on the chicken with pump sprayers, and that was their secret sauce, as it were, and that was some kind of good stuff. But it looked like the Eastern Shore things that you see from the firehouses, and they would set it up right over here on the side, and all these people would show up, and that was it.”

Qt: “What about all the girls here?”

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JY: “Nice! [Chuckles.] What about ‘em?”

Qt: “Just wondering what kind of relationship you had with the other daughters of the families?”

JY: “Well, other than my sister, fine. [Laughs.] And she’ll admit it...she was a thorn in my side. But Linda was my first girlfriend, and we had our summer here type of thing, which was great. After high school, we went to the prom, and I went in the Navy, and it was over.”

Qt: “Tell me about your sister.”

JY: “What do you want to know about her? She was seven year’s younger than I am. She was a brat...always digging into my personal private life. And now she lives in Boston.” [Laughing.]

Qt: “Ok. Some of the people who I’ve interviewed talked about the way that the relationships that were formed in the club affected them throughout their lives. And I just wondered if there’s some aspect that stuck in your mind?”

JY: “Relationships with other people here?”

Qt: “Right, the group here.”

JY: “I really don’t have any because I’m here. They’re all somewhere else. If I have a relationship, I would say Bonnie and Goldie and Art were the closest. I can remember having tried a relationship with Bert Foer, but it just never came together. Mel, his Dad and I had a good relationship. I liked Mel a lot, and his Mom, Frances, who died. They were close with me. Beyond that, not much.”

Qt: “Well, let me ask you in a different way. Obviously, you live here in Shady Side so the answer might be obvious, but how did coming here as a young person affect your life’s path the way...the person you became as an adult?”

JY: “Well, as I said everybody was your parent so the ethics that they had, the moral level that they kept is what set mine, I guess, to a great degree. Some of them were a lot stricter than my parents, and some were less strict than my parents. Well you know the kids always say: ‘Oh, so and so can do that – why can’t I?’, you know, and I’m one of those guys, but the line that they made you walk is what helped shape what I am today.

The reason I’m here now is, when we got married, the only thing I could afford to buy was here, so that’s why we’re here, and we were actually looking to leave when we bought the house we’re in now because where we were, we didn’t want to be any more. We were thinking of going to Calvert County, but couldn’t find what we wanted down

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there; and a friend of mine who lived down the road here was in real estate, and he kept telling me to make an offer on the house we’re in; and I kept saying, ‘Aaahhh, it’s too much money’. And he kept saying, ‘Listen to me. Just make an offer.’ So I made the offer, it was way low, and they took it and we’re here.”

Qt: “For a long time?”

JY: “Um humm. [Shakes his head in the affirmative.]

Qt: “I wonder if you can come back to when you were young and paint a picture for me of activity in the kitchen in the evening.”

JY: “You mean for dinner?”

Qt: “Umm hmm.”

JY: “The women I think would work out the timing. ‘When do you guys plan to eat?’ ‘Well, we think we’re probably ‘gonna eat at such and such a time.’ So they would all work out when there would be enough room for whoever needed to be there at what time. The men just showed up and ate, pretty much.” [Chuckles.]

Qt: “And the kids?”

JY: “Same thing, I mean, you know...I don’t...there were some of the people that fed the kids separate from themselves. I always thought that was strange. But we always ate together, generally with the Shinebaums or the Foers and sometimes with the Goldbergs, depending on where there was table space available. There were tables at the far end and at this end and just by the slope in the floor there. I did have to help clean up, wash dishes. I can remember that.” [Chuckles.]

Qt: "And what about the sleeping arrangements? How would that be?"

JY: "Well, the boys had the downstairs in the old house and the girls had the upstairs next to the bedroom where the Danheisers were."

Qt: "And the girls talk a lot about, when I interview them, about the antics in their dorm and all the different conversations that they had getting ready for bed. Was that what happened in the boy's dorm...anything?"

JY: "I don't recall that. I think, for my part, I think it's 'Go in there and go to sleep.' 'Cause, you know, I put in a day already. I'm a good sleeper...always have been. And I don't remember...I think the guys would talk about the girls through the day when they're off some where, not chit-chattin' in the bedroom."

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Qt: "One other thing about this place that made it a little different is that all the members were Jewish. What...if you can tell me something about your own family's Jewish connection and what kind of...?"

JY: "As it relates to here or?"

Qt: "Just in general, as a background. And then if there was anything, you can get into that."

JY: "Well, let's see. My grandfather was Orthodox but not Kosher, and so we went to Southeast Hebrew Congregation. And then we moved to Silver Spring...we still went to Southeast for a while. But I went to Hebrew school up near Georgia Avenue, near...about two or three blocks from where Bonnie and Ronnie lived. They had an Orthodox shul...it was a rowhouse turned into a shul; and as I remember, the rabbi was a tough old bird. And after my Bar Mitzvah, I really didn't want to have a whole lot to do with religion because of that guy. I didn't like him at all. The folks joined...what was the name of that shul? Grubb Road and East West Highway. That's where I got married and I can't remember the name of it. But now my Mom's a member of Orkodash. I don't think my sister has anything going on, and I don't either, really, religiously speaking. That's pretty much it. I mean, yeah, they were all Jewish but that's what this place was."

Qt: "So there wasn't any observance of any Jewish...anything here?"

JY: "Not here, no. Now Goldie kept Kosher. After...I think she even...she didn't keep a Kosher kitchen here but she didn't do anything that wasn't Kosher. Now Art would eat crabs and she'd sit at the table with us, but that was his only transgression that she would allow. [Laughs.] Although, she was in the hospital for a while some years ago, and Art calls us up and says, 'Would you please come over here to the house and take all this food I have out of here before Goldie comes home?' [Laughing.] So Joyce and I went

over and cleaned out all the trays...where was I going with that? Let's see..."
[Chuckles.]

Qt: "Goldie's being Kosher."

JY: "Oh, yeah. When we would have Father's Day and Mother's Day, we would do it here and we would have Kosher meat and so forth in deference to Goldie for that."

Qt: "It must've been hard for her with all of the clams and crabs and ...?"

JY: "Well, she didn't eat them, you know, it was more for us! [Laughing.]

Qt: "But your parents didn't exercise any restrictions on what you ate here?"

JY: "No, not at all."

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Qt: "What about the eels?"

JY: "What about them? They're good. Fried eel is very good."

Qt: "Just a lot of people remember catching the eels and...?"

JY: "You nail them to a tree, you cut around and you peel them, and you cut them in little chunks and you fry 'em, and they're delicious."

Qt: "Just while we're, you know, talking about shellfish, but I've also had a few people who were members here talk about the sense of being that there were places you couldn't go as Jews like experiencing some kind of either a comment or an exclusion because of being Jewish?"

JY: "I never let it bother me. I actually still today hear comments when people find out I'm Jewish. 'You're Jewish?' Well, I didn't approach life like 'I'm a Jew.' I approach life that I'm me. And I don't care if you don't like a Jew. It doesn't matter to me. I'm just going to do what I'm going to do. And, you know, I give as I get. You start on me and I'm going to start on you, 'cause I learned a few comments myself over time. I felt it in the Navy. I mean there was a lot of discrimination in the Navy when I was in, and I actually got into a big fight with a guy over some comments. And funny thing is, after that, we were tight, best of friends. He was from Georgia, you know, backwoods of Georgia. I mean, you take a lot of comments, ok fine, but one got over the edge and we got into it."

Qt: "In Shady Side, when you were growing up, there were very few Jews here."

JY: “Yeah, a guy owned a market, was about it. There were two markets, actually. Yeah, the people...my neighbor, who we we’re very, very good friends with, I joined the Volunteer Fire Department and we would have...we’d get together and one thing or another. And I’m the only Jewish guy in the place, right? And you hear stuff, and one time he’s got too much beer in him and he says something, you know. And he and I have a little tussle and roll around on the ground a little bit, and it’s over. And after that, it isn’t any more. And what it is you just go on and pretty soon they realize that you’re not anything different than they are.”

Qt: “I just wonder, it’s interesting to me that this group that was here at this Club was so different from the local people who lived around the Club. Can you tell about what kind of sense you had in relationship to the local people, a sense of belonging or not belonging?”

JY: “Well, the only local people I knew were Jim Rhodes, who had the boatyard, Gene Wood, that had his thing over there, Wood’s Wharf. I wouldn’t say Mike Dunn’s local

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people, I mean, people who lived here year round; basically, were the only ones I ever knew before I got married. When we got married and moved here, the sons and daughters of the older people were generally my age. Going in the fire department I met a lot of them; and before I went into the fire department, I started hanging around the watermen because it interested me. And I don’t know if I got accepted or what but then I ended up with the guy that I was telling you about that lives across the road from me. I worked for him on the weekends oystering, and I just wanted to do that. I went out in the summer clamming with him, and, just because that was the thing to do. Well, I met all these people. We did New Year’s with them and what have you, and I became part of the community. I don’t know if I was fully accepted, but I was part of that community.

And then after the hurricane in ’72, the whole thing started just falling apart in terms of their livelihood on the water. And then when they put the sewers in in ’78, the whole community sort of fell apart because now the few hundred people that you knew became a small part of the few thousand people that live here.”

Qt: “Looking back, though, to the 50’s and 60’s when you were here as a young person...?”

JY: “I didn’t have a connection to the community.”

Qt: “Yeah.”

JY: “We’d go to the carnival that the fire department would put on, and you’d see all the kids from the local community but you didn’t fit with them, you didn’t communicate with them, you didn’t anything with them. You just went to the carnival.”

Qt: “How do you think they looked upon you and your group?”

JY: “Not favorably, I’m sure. Because I can remember, you’d walk along and there they are. And you’re looking at them and they’re looking at you and there’s no love there.”
[Chuckles.]

Qt: “Why not?”

JY: “Because you’re an outsider. Very small community and I won’t say inbred, but they’ve all been born here, their parents were all born here, and maybe even their grandparents, and you’re an outsider. If you read the paper here now, if you read the obituaries: ‘Lived in Annapolis for 35 years’. ‘Lived in wherever for 82 years’, but if you weren’t born here, ‘you’ve lived here for so many years’. If you were born here, ‘you’re a native’. And that’s how they put it in the obituaries in the local paper.”

Qt: “What about other people who were here for the summer?”

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JY: “Oh, you mean like the Dunns?”

Qt: “The Dunns, were there any others besides Mike Dunn?”

JY: “The Pitches lived here year round for... but not in the beginning. I don’t remember when they moved into the house over here. Other than the Dunns, I don’t remember any of the summer people. I remember some of the names. Like up the road, the Parks had a place for Parks Transfer Company...had a summer place up the road here. Sommerville has one, but I didn’t know any of them.”

Qt: “No connection with them?”

JY: “No. KDV, which is a compound for the Kolkers, Deeners and somebody else, which Mel and Art and some of them knew those people, but we really never got together with them, never went there.”

Qt: “So this was...?”

JY: “They were Jewish, too. I mean, if you go out by the ballfield and turn right, down West Shadyside, or is it EastWest Shadyside? West Shadyside, rather, on the first curve they’ve got a compound down there with three homes on it.”

Qt: “But there wasn’t any real...?”

JY: “Connection back to here? No, I don’t remember them ever coming here or us ever going there.”

Qt: “On another tape you said something about ‘we’d go out to Dean’s and get Stewart sandwiches’. But...or the transcriber got it wrong...mixed up.”

JY: “What kind of sandwiches?”

Qt: “Stewart.”

JY: [Shakes head in the negative.]

Qt: “I couldn’t figure it out...I think she got it wrong, but I’m not sure. So, the question is, were there places in Shady Side where you’d go for something to eat or...besides the carnival, for any reason?”

JY: “I can remember going to Zang’s, which was in Galesville, and get ice cream. You’d go by boat, tie up to their pier, and I think that’s what Pirate’s Cove is now. It used to be called Zang’s, and we’d go over there occasionally, and everybody would pile in the *MelArt* and we’d go, and that was a big trip. Gosh, when was it? Late 50’s is

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when they built Parole Plaza. Now there was some place to go. They had a movie house, which was a really big thing. ‘Let’s go to the movies.’ There used to be a drive in movie there, and we’d go to that every now and then.”

Qt: “What is Parole Plaza?”

JY: “At Rt. 2 and Forrest Drive, you know, where the Outback Steakhouse is. That used to be the movie house. That’s where the drive-in movie was. Where else would we go? I couldn’t swear, they may have gone down to ‘The Rod and Reel’, but generally you didn’t come here to go out and eat. You were here...very rare that you would go anywhere from here to eat anything.”

Qt: “I’m going to ask you one last question, I think, and that is if I were here on an average weekend day, nice weather like today, and I were standing looking out this window at the main front yard and the pier, and the whole...and it was a busy weekend with a lot of folks here, what would I typically see? Who would be where, and what would people be doing?”

JY: “A lot of the people would be laying in the lounges on the pool, outside the fence, a few inside. A few kids would be in the pool. You might find somebody on the swings, but generally that was a late afternoon or early evening thing. Some people would still be in here just reading or on the porch. No horseshoes, no ballgames...that was a rare thing, I mean, that wasn’t going on. And that was pretty much it. I mean that pool was the center of the whole day.”

Qt: “And can you remember any kind of incidents around the pool or stories of things that took place around the pool? Any kinds of shenanigans that would go on?”

JY: “No, no. Other than the water being cold in the spring.” [Laughs.]

Qt: “After the pool was built, though, would there be anybody out on the pier or down on the rocks or...?”

JY: “Me.”

Qt: “You? And what would you be doing?”

JY: “Probably trying to catch some crabs or maybe minnows. I didn’t care for the pool much. I don’t like chlorine; although after the first year or so, I was in it more than I was before, but the water in the Bay was fine for me. Very few other people ever got in. In fact, before the pool, did we put up a net? I don’t remember if they put up a net for the nettles or not; it seems familiar, but I don’t remember. I think they did. And they would keep, just off the end of the pier, they would keep an area clear of seaweed. I think the women would get in the water; but to go like you would in a pool, they didn’t do that.”

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Qt: “You once told me that some of your earliest memories are wanting to have your own boat?”

JY: “Oh yeah.”

Qt: “So when did you finally get a boat? Tell me about it.”

JY: “I didn’t get a boat until about 1969 or ‘70 when we bought that little boat from Arnold. [Coughs.] And then in ’72, I bought a 45’ party boat from a guy down in Town Point. We kept that...we brought that up the Bay after the hurricane, and Joyce had to sit on the bow to help me navigate through all the trash that was coming down in the Bay from the Susquehanna River. We kept that five years, and we bought a... what the heck was it? We bought a fiberglass boat. The big wooden boat...it took me till August to get it in the water that last year; and I said, ‘Nah, that’s...I’m getting to busy at work. I don’t have the time to devote’, so I had to get rid of the big boat, which we just lived on every weekend. Even though we lived here, we were on that boat and gone, every weekend, Friday night to Sunday night. We got this little 27’ fiberglass boat with a flying bridge; we kept that three years, I think. And then we bought this house, and I said, you know if we’re going to...we’ve got property now versus a little lot. We like to be outside. We like to plant stuff, whatever; we got rid of all the boats to remodel the house, to get that going, and we never got back on the boat again. Or not...we never bought a boat again.”

Qt: “Significant.”

JY: “Yeah, I’ve got a little 12’ sailing dinghy which hasn’t been in the water for seven years. And I keep saying, ‘Damn, I’d like to have a boat!’ I just don’t do it.”

Qt: “What about the *SacKam* and the *MelArt*, ‘cause those were the major boats that were here? If you could just describe those to me.”

JY: “Other than Bill Goldberg’s rowboat, they were the only boats here.”

Qt: “What were those two boats like? Could you describe each one?”

JY: “When you say what were they like, they were great boats, I mean; and, of course, there were several of them. I remember they always had their problems with their engines, in the older ones, every spring, you know, there was always something had to be changed, fixed whatever, because it would sit over winter and they would rot or whatever. And as I recall, it seemed to me the *SacKam* was always a higher end boat than the *MelArt* was. And then once they got rid of all of those, Art and my Dad bought a little fiberglass 15 or 20’runabout to go fishing in.”

Qt: “What was that called?”

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JY: “Gala. Goldie, Aron, Lily and Art...or Goldie, Art, Lili, whatever...G-A-L-A [Spells out the letters.]”

Qt: “That was just a little fishing boat?”

JY: “Yeah.”

Qt: “What about the responsibilities for maintaining this place?”

JY: “My Dad and Art and Mel generally would be in charge and get other people to help do whatever. And then once it got to just ...when it became our place, Dad and Art pretty much did it all.”

Qt: “By that point, Mel had died?”

JY: “Mel was gone. He died. They couldn’t attract new members for some reason. Why, I don’t know, because, to me, this was the end all be all, you know? People didn’t view this as something to do. Well, I guess, if you look back to the ‘30’s and ‘40’s and ‘50’s, what else was there? You know, we hadn’t evolved enough other stuff to do.”

Qt: “Yeah. I think it was kind of a unique experiment in communal living; and you know, I just think...”

JY: “It worked. It was great.”

Qt: “So, from your point of view, what happened at the end? Can you just describe...?”

JY: “When you say what happened, they couldn’t get enough people to sustain it, and Art and my Dad were getting to the point where they didn’t want to deal with having to take care of all of it all the time.”

Qt: “And so...”

JY: “I don’t know what prompted them to decide to shut it down. I do remember when they told me and it was like, ‘Oh, my God! Come on, now, you can’t do this’. And it seemed like, to me, there was all this interminable hassle they had to go through to try and sell it, and... turn it off a second. “ [Tape stops temporarily.]

QT: “Your feeling about it.”

JY: “When you’re 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, that’s formative. At that time, Ocean City was God knows how long to get to. It wasn’t worth it. This was it. This was what amusement there was available to you, away from your normal environment on the weekend. And it just, you know, booked ship. It’s so great, it’s so relaxing, it’s so everything, at that time

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in history. Now when you go to Ocean City in half the time, or whatever, you know. I don’t know how to put it in words... it’s...I wouldn’t even come in this building for the first ten years after the Society got it; I was so mad that it had to be sold. That just was not the same.”

Qt: “Yeah, yeah. It seems that there was just a remarkable combination of a social group,,,”

JY: “Oh, yeah.”

Qt: “...and the friendships and the natural environment, the water...”

JY: “Well, even though I didn’t really connect with that, I still looked forward to being here and being with them, any way. And then when we had the gathering last year, it was great, to see every body, and you know, just...it was great. It isn’t like now I’m going to go to dinner with all of them, but that was really wonderful.”

Qt: “Well, I think everybody felt that way. Thank you so much for taking this time to go back into summers past and memory with me, and I’ll look forward to talking with you again.”

JY: “Thank you.”

[Interview ends.]
