

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR ORAL HISTORIES

1. I am Judy Levy, I am conducting an interview with Charles "Pinky" Weisberg for the JFVS archives.

2. Can you tell me how and why your family originally came to this country and when?

Father's older brother, Joe, came to this country first. He knew some fellow countrymen from the same town now living in Louisville. Prior to coming here, my father was induced in the Queen's Private Calgary Army, in Russia. He and a buddy deserted, were captured and jumped off a boxcar and made their way to the United States.

3. What were your parents' names and where were they born?

Sam and Mildred Weisberg. Mother was born in Louisville. Father was born outside Odessa.

4. What is your birth date? What language(s) were spoken in your home? Where did you live then? Who lived in the same house with you – Grandparents? - Uncles? - Aunts? - Brothers? - Sisters?

My birth date is May 9, 1919. We spoke English and Yiddish at home. We lived at the corner of Campbell and Jefferson Streets. The house had an outside toilet. It was just my sister, who was killed by a drunk driver at age three, my parents and myself.

5. What was your neighborhood like? Were there other Jews living in the neighborhood? Did you walk to school? Sunday School? Temple? Was there a neighborhood grocery? Drug store?

Mostly Gentile and Italian. My best friends were the Grisantis. I walked to Eastern Jr. High and Anshei Sfard. We owned the neighborhood grocery store. There was one other Jewish business in the neighborhood, Mr. Baer had a dry goods store.

6. How did the 1937 flood affect you and your family?

Floodwater came through the front door of the grocery store. Dad was in the hospital with a broken back. He told me to give all the groceries to our credit customers.

7. If you wished to travel what kind of transportation did you use? Did you travel when you were young? If so, where?

We had a car and in the summer we would go to Shawnee Park to cool off after a long day at the store.

8. Was your family involved in a synagogue / temple?

Yes, Anshei Sfard.

9. What holidays and rituals were observed?

We observed all the holidays. Yom Kippur was the most important. My grandfather spent the night with us and we would walk to schull. He would break the fast with a piece of bread and schnapps.

10. Did you attend religious school? Were you confirmed? Bar Mitzvah?

Yes, Talmud Torah. I was confirmed and Bar Mitzvah.

11. What is your educational background? What was your career?

I finished high school. I had a career in Real Estate and Antiques.

12. What brought you to Louisville and when did you come?

I was born in Louisville.

**13. How did you meet your husband/wife? Where and when were you married?
Did you have children?**

My first wife and I were childhood sweethearts. We married in 1941. My second wife, Marlene, won a national contest sponsored by the "Ladies Home Journal". There were 3300 contestants and Marlene was a finalist. I saw this in the newspaper. She won \$5000.00 and was on some talk show sponsored by Oil of Olay "You look great for your age". I called Naomi Pressma and she suggested that I call Marlene. I called her for a lunch date. She couldn't go because she worked. I called her sister, Dale Hyman, whom my first wife knew, because she was her advisor Amities. The rest is history. I have three sons. Frank, Ron and Alan. Marlene has two sons. Keith Trau and Eric Gould.

14. Tell about your involvement in the Jewish Community. Was you whole family involved?

I have been an advisor to Resnick AZA for fifteen years. I was the President of Jewish Community Center in 1975. I grew up at the Jewish Community Center. I always belonged to Anshei Sfarad and Adath Jeshurun. I was the co-founder of Humana. I served on numerous boards in Louisville, including the University of Louisville, Bellermine College, and the Cathedral Heritage Foundation. I was the chairman of the Campaign and a charter member of the Foundation for Planned Giving. I have participated on many committees.

15. How was your family affected by the World Wars? Wars in Israel?

I was in the war, the second Jewish boy to be drafted in 1941. I was in the Moroccan Algerian Campaign on November 8, 1942. D-day in North Africa. I was wounded there and received a Purple Heart. D-day in Sicily. D-day plus two in Italy. Frankie was born while I was overseas. He was three years old when I first saw him. I have been to Israel about seven times. I went to a prime minister's mission. I had lunch with Aba Eban.

I had cocktails with Moshe Dayan. I had dinner at the Keneseth with Golda Mier. I was one of the few boys who put on teffilin in my foxhole. I lost them in the war.

16. What are your favorite spiritual memories? How did religion affect your life?

The most unusual spiritual experience was in Rome. We were there when the Pope was blessing new cardinals. After the service we rushed to see his audience in Saint Peter's Square. When he appeared I got chills to be the presence of someone who is the spiritual leader of so many. Religion has shaped my life.

17. What interests did you have?

Music, art and antiques. I am going to take more music lessons and play with the Doc's Band. One of my hobbies is impersonating Ray Miller, a character I created to entertain everyone.

18. What are your favorite family memories?

Fishing all over with my boys and cruising.

19. What is your legacy? How would you like to be remembered? What values would you like to pass on to those you leave behind?

I would like to be remembered as a person who never forgot where I came from. I always go by my dad's grocery store once a month to remind myself. I would like to leave behind a feeling of family closeness, charity for all and closeness to friends.

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I do hereby give my permission to record my life history through the Jewish Family and Vocational Service, 3587 Dutchmans Lane, Louisville, Kentucky 40205. My story will be kept in the JFVS Library and can be accessed by interested people. It will be preserved archivally for future generations.

Charles "Pinky" Weisberg

Participant

Witness
1/2/02

Date Signed

JFVS/aj 10/4/01
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