

1
00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:03,220

2
00:00:03,220 --> 00:00:05,380
We're interviewing
Robert Kertesz.

3
00:00:05,380 --> 00:00:11,680
This is tape 2, side A.
Today is August 7th, 1996.

4
00:00:11,680 --> 00:00:15,187
I would like you to
please clarify just

5
00:00:15,187 --> 00:00:17,020
how it was possible for
you and your brother

6
00:00:17,020 --> 00:00:19,480
to manage by yourselves when
you returned to the ghetto

7
00:00:19,480 --> 00:00:23,835
after the Red Cross safehouse.

8
00:00:23,835 --> 00:00:30,620
Well, going back, these
were unusual circumstances.

9
00:00:30,620 --> 00:00:34,380
So you grow up
very, very quickly.

10
00:00:34,380 --> 00:00:44,190
You realized that, as I said
before, you have to survive.

11
00:00:44,190 --> 00:00:51,540
So what you do is first,
you look for food.

12

00:00:51,540 --> 00:00:54,350

And I found out quickly
enough, you know,

13

00:00:54,350 --> 00:00:57,050

where some of these
so-called soup kitchens

14

00:00:57,050 --> 00:01:00,220

were that we could go to.

15

00:01:00,220 --> 00:01:04,879

And second was of course
someplace to stay,

16

00:01:04,879 --> 00:01:07,670

but you have to remember
that everybody in the ghetto

17

00:01:07,670 --> 00:01:10,710

was basically in
the same situation.

18

00:01:10,710 --> 00:01:15,830

So nobody really owned a
house in there, you know,

19

00:01:15,830 --> 00:01:18,500

unless they live in
that area before.

20

00:01:18,500 --> 00:01:22,940

So you just went and
attached yourself

21

00:01:22,940 --> 00:01:26,960

to almost any family
that would have room,

22

00:01:26,960 --> 00:01:31,860

you know, because I think the
Jews were helping each other,

23

00:01:31,860 --> 00:01:35,310

so that they could
see two little kids--

24

00:01:35,310 --> 00:01:39,430

I mean, they wanted to be
a mother and father to us,

25

00:01:39,430 --> 00:01:39,930

you know.

26

00:01:39,930 --> 00:01:42,840

27

00:01:42,840 --> 00:01:46,440

So that's how we kind of
survived, by people helping

28

00:01:46,440 --> 00:01:53,040

and by people taking us in
and treating us as their own.

29

00:01:53,040 --> 00:01:54,990

But don't forget, they
had their own sorrows.

30

00:01:54,990 --> 00:01:57,150

You know, they had
their own problems,

31

00:01:57,150 --> 00:02:05,730

and they could not give us
a complete situation of love

32

00:02:05,730 --> 00:02:08,030

and caring and everything.

33

00:02:08,030 --> 00:02:10,280

But at least they
gave us shelter.

34

00:02:10,280 --> 00:02:13,190

They gave us whatever
little bit of clothes

35
00:02:13,190 --> 00:02:16,010
that we might have had if
they had something left over.

36
00:02:16,010 --> 00:02:17,150
And we were sharing.

37
00:02:17,150 --> 00:02:22,430
I mean, we were either
sharing or we were stealing.

38
00:02:22,430 --> 00:02:24,140
Not from other Jews--

39
00:02:24,140 --> 00:02:26,990
we were stealing
from dead bodies.

40
00:02:26,990 --> 00:02:29,180
You know, you take
somebody's shoe.

41
00:02:29,180 --> 00:02:32,630
You take somebody's clothes,
because you were cold

42
00:02:32,630 --> 00:02:34,100
and you were hungry.

43
00:02:34,100 --> 00:02:39,627
And it's terrible, but when
you get that desperate--

44
00:02:39,627 --> 00:02:41,210
I'm not saying you're
going to do just

45
00:02:41,210 --> 00:02:45,260
about anything because,
I'm talking as an adult,

46
00:02:45,260 --> 00:02:48,530
but I had a good upbringing.

47
00:02:48,530 --> 00:02:51,270
You know, I didn't
try to do bad.

48
00:02:51,270 --> 00:02:54,020
But when I was
hungry, yes, I did

49
00:02:54,020 --> 00:02:57,440
take food that maybe didn't
belong to me because I wanted

50
00:02:57,440 --> 00:03:00,180
to live, and I was hungry.

51
00:03:00,180 --> 00:03:05,150
It was just a basic instinct
to satisfy that hunger,

52
00:03:05,150 --> 00:03:09,800
and to do the same
thing for my brother.

53
00:03:09,800 --> 00:03:16,330
So we survived by other
people's kindness,

54
00:03:16,330 --> 00:03:18,900
and I have to say
by my own cunning,

55
00:03:18,900 --> 00:03:24,020
I guess, by doing what
was necessary just

56
00:03:24,020 --> 00:03:28,130
to live for, I can't
even say for that day,

57

00:03:28,130 --> 00:03:29,510
just for that moment.

58

00:03:29,510 --> 00:03:33,810
Just the very next
day was a blessing,

59

00:03:33,810 --> 00:03:36,710
you know, that you got up
and you were still alive.

60

00:03:36,710 --> 00:03:38,510
I didn't understand
it maybe then

61

00:03:38,510 --> 00:03:41,870
because it was just instinct,
but I understand it now.

62

00:03:41,870 --> 00:03:47,852

63

00:03:47,852 --> 00:03:50,310
You spoke a few minutes ago
about your parents coming back,

64

00:03:50,310 --> 00:03:52,710
but before we get to
your parents coming back,

65

00:03:52,710 --> 00:03:55,450
I want you to take some
time and explain to me what

66

00:03:55,450 --> 00:03:56,780
your liberation was like.

67

00:03:56,780 --> 00:04:00,740

68

00:04:00,740 --> 00:04:09,050
Liberation, of course it

happened when the Russians

69

00:04:09,050 --> 00:04:09,905
liberated Budapest.

70

00:04:09,905 --> 00:04:15,560

71

00:04:15,560 --> 00:04:17,044
I remember very, very vividly.

72

00:04:17,044 --> 00:04:22,480

73

00:04:22,480 --> 00:04:31,520
The Russians were almost as
bad, I would say, some of them,

74

00:04:31,520 --> 00:04:37,110
as the people that
just got defeated.

75

00:04:37,110 --> 00:04:42,780
They declared two days of
free looting in Budapest.

76

00:04:42,780 --> 00:04:45,330
Anybody could go and get
anything they wanted.

77

00:04:45,330 --> 00:04:50,010
You could go into any
store and take anything.

78

00:04:50,010 --> 00:04:55,230
Of course, the ghetto walls were
knocked down and we were free,

79

00:04:55,230 --> 00:04:59,880
but now we just had a bigger
area in which to scrounge

80

00:04:59,880 --> 00:05:02,910
and in which to find food,
because food was always

81
00:05:02,910 --> 00:05:05,590
the main thing that
we were looking for.

82
00:05:05,590 --> 00:05:11,580
But I remember people
running through the streets

83
00:05:11,580 --> 00:05:17,160
with all kinds of things on
their backs or in their arms.

84
00:05:17,160 --> 00:05:20,710
I had a roll of material.

85
00:05:20,710 --> 00:05:23,790
I don't know if it was
linen or what it was.

86
00:05:23,790 --> 00:05:26,120
It was what they
called a bale of it.

87
00:05:26,120 --> 00:05:30,270
And you know, I don't
know why I had that.

88
00:05:30,270 --> 00:05:32,640
I guess just because I saw
a lot of people take it,

89
00:05:32,640 --> 00:05:33,420
so I took it.

90
00:05:33,420 --> 00:05:35,170
You know, I thought
maybe it was something

91
00:05:35,170 --> 00:05:39,080

that I could barter
with for food.

92
00:05:39,080 --> 00:05:41,300
But as I said, it
was open looting,

93
00:05:41,300 --> 00:05:43,370
so as I'm walking
down the street,

94
00:05:43,370 --> 00:05:47,835
some guy came and he says, young
boy like you don't need that.

95
00:05:47,835 --> 00:05:50,210
And he took it from me, and
there was nothing I could do.

96
00:05:50,210 --> 00:05:52,770
But he was looting from me.

97
00:05:52,770 --> 00:05:56,360
And Russian soldiers
running through the street,

98
00:05:56,360 --> 00:06:01,490
going into jewelry stores,
and some of these people

99
00:06:01,490 --> 00:06:04,790
must've come from very
rural parts of Russia.

100
00:06:04,790 --> 00:06:08,100
Some of them had never seen
a flush toilet, for instance.

101
00:06:08,100 --> 00:06:11,300
I remember one of them washing
their face in a toilet.

102
00:06:11,300 --> 00:06:13,790

They flushed the toilet and
he washed his face in it

103
00:06:13,790 --> 00:06:17,930
because he'd never seen
a running toilet before.

104
00:06:17,930 --> 00:06:21,620
I'd seen some of them have their
pictures taken with watches,

105
00:06:21,620 --> 00:06:23,870
wristwatches all the
way up both arms,

106
00:06:23,870 --> 00:06:27,590
because that was a luxury,
that they probably never

107
00:06:27,590 --> 00:06:28,820
had a watch in their lives.

108
00:06:28,820 --> 00:06:31,250
And it was pictures
they were having taken

109
00:06:31,250 --> 00:06:35,060
to send back to to Russia.

110
00:06:35,060 --> 00:06:38,260
And I mean, these things
were wondrous to me

111
00:06:38,260 --> 00:06:42,690
because I'd never
seen Russian soldiers.

112
00:06:42,690 --> 00:06:47,810
You know, some of them,
as I said, were good.

113
00:06:47,810 --> 00:06:53,060
I remember one time I begged

one of them for some bread,

114

00:06:53,060 --> 00:06:56,750

and and one gave me bread.

115

00:06:56,750 --> 00:06:58,790

And the next time I

would ask one for bread,

116

00:06:58,790 --> 00:07:03,380

he would kick at

me because, I mean,

117

00:07:03,380 --> 00:07:06,660

I guess there was

meanness in them too.

118

00:07:06,660 --> 00:07:08,160

I'm sure he didn't

know I was Jewish

119

00:07:08,160 --> 00:07:12,170

and I was one of the

people that was in a ghetto

120

00:07:12,170 --> 00:07:15,290

or something, because

all of Budapest was now,

121

00:07:15,290 --> 00:07:18,200

quote unquote,

"liberated," you know.

122

00:07:18,200 --> 00:07:20,615

And everybody went wild.

123

00:07:20,615 --> 00:07:24,090

For two days, it

was an open city.

124

00:07:24,090 --> 00:07:28,910

You could do and take anything

that you wanted to do.

125
00:07:28,910 --> 00:07:35,840
Eventually, we moved back
into that one-apartment house

126
00:07:35,840 --> 00:07:38,540
where we started from
in the beginning.

127
00:07:38,540 --> 00:07:40,610
That apartment was still there.

128
00:07:40,610 --> 00:07:44,690
It was still really
in the family name.

129
00:07:44,690 --> 00:07:49,060
It was really my grandmother's.

130
00:07:49,060 --> 00:07:54,380
And we moved back in
there, and then liberation

131
00:07:54,380 --> 00:08:02,450
became a little bit better
for me because I spoke German.

132
00:08:02,450 --> 00:08:05,390
Well, I do speak German
because my grandmother spoke

133
00:08:05,390 --> 00:08:06,260
nothing but German.

134
00:08:06,260 --> 00:08:08,330
She didn't even speak Hungarian.

135
00:08:08,330 --> 00:08:13,623
And my mother at home,
they spoke German,

136
00:08:13,623 --> 00:08:14,540

and it wasn't Yiddish.

137
00:08:14,540 --> 00:08:15,650
It was really Hochdeutsch.

138
00:08:15,650 --> 00:08:18,980
It was German because
that's the only thing

139
00:08:18,980 --> 00:08:22,690
my grandmother understood.

140
00:08:22,690 --> 00:08:27,633
And Russian soldiers would
take over some apartments

141
00:08:27,633 --> 00:08:29,800
where they would just move
in and just take it over.

142
00:08:29,800 --> 00:08:32,217
And there were four of them
that moved into this building.

143
00:08:32,217 --> 00:08:35,080
Now, this building I'm
talking about where we lived

144
00:08:35,080 --> 00:08:35,950
was quite big.

145
00:08:35,950 --> 00:08:39,080
I mean, it was
four stories high.

146
00:08:39,080 --> 00:08:44,169
There must have
been maybe 25, 30,

147
00:08:44,169 --> 00:08:46,510
40 apartments on each floor.

148

00:08:46,510 --> 00:08:48,640

And they took over
one of the four

149

00:08:48,640 --> 00:08:51,160

of them, moved into
this one apartment.

150

00:08:51,160 --> 00:08:54,760

And I went to ask them for food,
and I found out one of them

151

00:08:54,760 --> 00:08:56,510

spoke German.

152

00:08:56,510 --> 00:09:02,113

And I became their guide.

153

00:09:02,113 --> 00:09:03,280

They wanted to see Budapest.

154

00:09:03,280 --> 00:09:05,630

They wanted to go
to different places,

155

00:09:05,630 --> 00:09:07,030

and he could converse with me.

156

00:09:07,030 --> 00:09:10,480

And that's when
I started getting

157

00:09:10,480 --> 00:09:13,720

some food for the
family and myself,

158

00:09:13,720 --> 00:09:16,840

by being his interpreter
and being his guide,

159

00:09:16,840 --> 00:09:21,080

and things started to
look up at that time.

160
00:09:21,080 --> 00:09:26,875

161
00:09:26,875 --> 00:09:31,290
Did liberation have with it
a sense of freedom for you

162
00:09:31,290 --> 00:09:33,540
in terms of the
oppression and the fear?

163
00:09:33,540 --> 00:09:34,605
Absolutely.

164
00:09:34,605 --> 00:09:37,370

165
00:09:37,370 --> 00:09:39,590
The only thing
missing at that time

166
00:09:39,590 --> 00:09:45,980
were my parents because
they were still not home,

167
00:09:45,980 --> 00:09:51,200
but we were free to do and go.

168
00:09:51,200 --> 00:09:54,320
I mean, it was just
like as I remembered

169
00:09:54,320 --> 00:09:59,420
a few years back except now I
was a couple of years older.

170
00:09:59,420 --> 00:10:09,570
And at that time, it became
my duty, more or less,

171
00:10:09,570 --> 00:10:14,820

to provide for the family.

172
00:10:14,820 --> 00:10:18,810
I guess at that time,
I must've been--

173
00:10:18,810 --> 00:10:24,130
what was this, 1944, '45?

174
00:10:24,130 --> 00:10:27,040
'33, I must have been
11, 12 years old.

175
00:10:27,040 --> 00:10:31,780
And I remember downstairs
from this apartment house,

176
00:10:31,780 --> 00:10:35,680
there was a bakery that used
to do some beautiful pastries.

177
00:10:35,680 --> 00:10:43,360
And the man knew me, and I would
sell pastries on consignment.

178
00:10:43,360 --> 00:10:45,100
He gave me some
pastries and I'd go out,

179
00:10:45,100 --> 00:10:47,225
and I'd sell it on the
street and bring back money.

180
00:10:47,225 --> 00:10:49,150
I'd make a little bit
of money and, that's

181
00:10:49,150 --> 00:10:56,210
how I help the family to
buy food or what have you.

182
00:10:56,210 --> 00:11:00,860
For heat in the house, you

know, we burned a wood stove.

183

00:11:00,860 --> 00:11:06,330

We would go to bombed out
homes and find hardwood floor,

184

00:11:06,330 --> 00:11:09,060

and a lot of it was
beautiful hardwood floor.

185

00:11:09,060 --> 00:11:11,070

And we would just rip
up the hardwood floor

186

00:11:11,070 --> 00:11:12,100

and take it home.

187

00:11:12,100 --> 00:11:15,180

That's what we would
burn as fuel, you know.

188

00:11:15,180 --> 00:11:18,780

But I grew up very
quickly at that time

189

00:11:18,780 --> 00:11:21,237

because it was a necessity.

190

00:11:21,237 --> 00:11:23,365

191

00:11:23,365 --> 00:11:25,240

Tell me about your
reunion with your parents.

192

00:11:25,240 --> 00:11:32,710

193

00:11:32,710 --> 00:11:37,360

As I said, it happened several
months after the liberation.

194

00:11:37,360 --> 00:11:42,840
And we used to--

195
00:11:42,840 --> 00:11:49,300
when I say we my aunt
used to go to some place,

196
00:11:49,300 --> 00:11:53,230
some official place
where they used

197
00:11:53,230 --> 00:11:59,320
to have lists of people
who were liberated

198
00:11:59,320 --> 00:12:01,690
from different
concentration camps,

199
00:12:01,690 --> 00:12:05,860
and their names would be on it.

200
00:12:05,860 --> 00:12:12,400
And one day several months
later, she came home

201
00:12:12,400 --> 00:12:16,390
and she said that she saw both
my father and my mother's name

202
00:12:16,390 --> 00:12:18,520
on it.

203
00:12:18,520 --> 00:12:21,880
And that's when I knew
that they were coming home.

204
00:12:21,880 --> 00:12:24,540

205
00:12:24,540 --> 00:12:31,260
And I think about two weeks
later, they came home.

206
00:12:31,260 --> 00:12:34,697

207
00:12:34,697 --> 00:12:36,516
And it was unbelievable.

208
00:12:36,516 --> 00:12:43,360

209
00:12:43,360 --> 00:12:48,760
I think it was probably the
happiest moment of of my life.

210
00:12:48,760 --> 00:12:50,860
My father passed away--

211
00:12:50,860 --> 00:12:53,800
he was only 59 years old--

212
00:12:53,800 --> 00:12:56,530
later on here in
this Washington area.

213
00:12:56,530 --> 00:12:59,250

214
00:12:59,250 --> 00:13:01,810
And I miss him
very much even now.

215
00:13:01,810 --> 00:13:04,060
My mother is still alive,
but I'll tell you about that

216
00:13:04,060 --> 00:13:05,336
later if you want.

217
00:13:05,336 --> 00:13:13,144

218

00:13:13,144 --> 00:13:15,570
Sorry.

219
00:13:15,570 --> 00:13:18,100
Did your parents have any
difficulty locating you

220
00:13:18,100 --> 00:13:19,380
when they came back?

221
00:13:19,380 --> 00:13:20,130
No, not really.

222
00:13:20,130 --> 00:13:23,130
They came back to
the same house where

223
00:13:23,130 --> 00:13:26,020
we lived before they
got really taken away.

224
00:13:26,020 --> 00:13:29,040
So that was the focal point.

225
00:13:29,040 --> 00:13:33,150
They came back straight and
they knew where to find us.

226
00:13:33,150 --> 00:13:39,420
And by this time, both
my aunts lived over there

227
00:13:39,420 --> 00:13:49,090
at that time, and my
uncle, my brother and I.

228
00:13:49,090 --> 00:13:52,090
And by this time,
my grandmother died,

229
00:13:52,090 --> 00:13:56,700
so my mother and father,
when they came home,

230
00:13:56,700 --> 00:13:59,850
they knew exactly
where to come to them.

231
00:13:59,850 --> 00:14:14,150
And we lived there until
sometime in 1945, I

232
00:14:14,150 --> 00:14:19,234
guess around the fall of 1945.

233
00:14:19,234 --> 00:14:24,430
And again, my
parents, I guess they

234
00:14:24,430 --> 00:14:28,510
were smarter than I thought,
because they must have realized

235
00:14:28,510 --> 00:14:33,220
that living under communism
and under the Russians

236
00:14:33,220 --> 00:14:35,710
was not going to
be a heck of a lot

237
00:14:35,710 --> 00:14:39,610
better than it was prior
to the real bad things that

238
00:14:39,610 --> 00:14:43,390
were happening to
the Jews in Hungary.

239
00:14:43,390 --> 00:14:47,740
So again, my father started
working as a barber again,

240
00:14:47,740 --> 00:14:51,870
and I assume they
saved enough money.

241

00:14:51,870 --> 00:14:54,270

And at that time, they
used to be guides.

242

00:14:54,270 --> 00:14:58,390

They used to be people who used
to take Jews or anybody wanted

243

00:14:58,390 --> 00:15:03,370

to leave Hungary across
the border into Austria

244

00:15:03,370 --> 00:15:07,870

and from there into a DP camp.

245

00:15:07,870 --> 00:15:09,820

And that's how we
eventually wound up--

246

00:15:09,820 --> 00:15:14,320

in 1945, we wound up
in outside of Munich

247

00:15:14,320 --> 00:15:17,140

in a displaced
person camp called

248

00:15:17,140 --> 00:15:23,510

Neu-Freimann Siedlung, which
means New Freimann Community

249

00:15:23,510 --> 00:15:24,570

Camp.

250

00:15:24,570 --> 00:15:32,150

And that was what they did.

251

00:15:32,150 --> 00:15:34,360

Here it's reverse
discrimination, I guess.

252

00:15:34,360 --> 00:15:36,040
They displaced all
the Germans that

253
00:15:36,040 --> 00:15:40,450
were living in these
little semi-detached houses

254
00:15:40,450 --> 00:15:45,430
into another area, and they
made a compound for the Jews,

255
00:15:45,430 --> 00:15:47,770
and we moved in there.

256
00:15:47,770 --> 00:15:55,200
In fact, about 13 years ago,
my wife and I went back,

257
00:15:55,200 --> 00:15:57,790
and I wanted to show
her where it was.

258
00:15:57,790 --> 00:16:01,850
And we went in, and some
lady came out and said,

259
00:16:01,850 --> 00:16:02,510
can I help you?

260
00:16:02,510 --> 00:16:03,010
I said, no.

261
00:16:03,010 --> 00:16:05,912
I said, I just wanted to
show my wife where I lived.

262
00:16:05,912 --> 00:16:06,870
And that was a mistake.

263
00:16:06,870 --> 00:16:10,240
I talked in German, and she
started cursing me again.

264
00:16:10,240 --> 00:16:13,130
So I said, it's time to go.

265
00:16:13,130 --> 00:16:15,565
So anti-Semitism is
still alive in Germany.

266
00:16:15,565 --> 00:16:19,630

267
00:16:19,630 --> 00:16:22,870
Can you tell me what the
conditions were like for you

268
00:16:22,870 --> 00:16:25,120
as a child in the DP camp?

269
00:16:25,120 --> 00:16:27,010
Oh, it was happy times.

270
00:16:27,010 --> 00:16:27,850
It was great fun.

271
00:16:27,850 --> 00:16:32,770
It was like-- now,
there is where I

272
00:16:32,770 --> 00:16:37,040
had nothing but Jewish friends.

273
00:16:37,040 --> 00:16:38,200
In fact, all my friends--

274
00:16:38,200 --> 00:16:40,870

275
00:16:40,870 --> 00:16:42,160
never say "all."

276
00:16:42,160 --> 00:16:45,120

Most of my friends from
there went to Israel.

277
00:16:45,120 --> 00:16:48,910

278
00:16:48,910 --> 00:16:52,750
School was a Hebrew school.

279
00:16:52,750 --> 00:16:56,590
I spoke quite well
Hebrew at that time.

280
00:16:56,590 --> 00:17:01,750
The school was in, of course,
in Yiddish and in Hebrew,

281
00:17:01,750 --> 00:17:05,069
and I entered in many plays.

282
00:17:05,069 --> 00:17:08,765
I played King Herod one time.

283
00:17:08,765 --> 00:17:12,200
And I was always a cut-up.

284
00:17:12,200 --> 00:17:16,160
I was very forward.

285
00:17:16,160 --> 00:17:22,099
I started my music lessons
with one of the other people--

286
00:17:22,099 --> 00:17:27,270
this gentleman was
a player from--

287
00:17:27,270 --> 00:17:29,250
I don't know if he was
in the Moscow Symphony,

288
00:17:29,250 --> 00:17:32,770

but he was one of the
symphony orchestras in Russia.

289
00:17:32,770 --> 00:17:34,620
He was a Jew--

290
00:17:34,620 --> 00:17:36,930
because not everybody
in the camp was Jewish.

291
00:17:36,930 --> 00:17:41,060
There were a lot of
displaced Polish people,

292
00:17:41,060 --> 00:17:45,660
but the majority
of us were Jewish.

293
00:17:45,660 --> 00:17:50,870
And I started out
playing clarinet,

294
00:17:50,870 --> 00:17:57,280
and I remember I didn't used
to like to practice and all

295
00:17:57,280 --> 00:18:01,870
that, but eventually I spent
20 years in the services

296
00:18:01,870 --> 00:18:03,710
with the Air Force
band as a clarinetist,

297
00:18:03,710 --> 00:18:07,100
so I made my living out of
it for many, many years.

298
00:18:07,100 --> 00:18:09,880
And I retired from the
service doing that.

299
00:18:09,880 --> 00:18:12,370

But it was happy times.

300
00:18:12,370 --> 00:18:15,190

301
00:18:15,190 --> 00:18:17,680
We did a lot of
mischievous things

302
00:18:17,680 --> 00:18:20,770
that the kids, 11,
12, and 13, will do.

303
00:18:20,770 --> 00:18:23,770

304
00:18:23,770 --> 00:18:26,170
We made bicycling
out of bicycle parts

305
00:18:26,170 --> 00:18:30,760
because we couldn't afford a
new bike or something like that.

306
00:18:30,760 --> 00:18:32,050
But we just had fun.

307
00:18:32,050 --> 00:18:34,420
We went to camp.

308
00:18:34,420 --> 00:18:39,550
Everything was
Jewish and in Hebrew.

309
00:18:39,550 --> 00:18:41,938
We played a lot of soccer.

310
00:18:41,938 --> 00:18:43,730
We had our own little
league, and we played

311
00:18:43,730 --> 00:18:46,190

against the German youth teams.

312
00:18:46,190 --> 00:18:48,390
And we were very good at it.

313
00:18:48,390 --> 00:18:51,720

314
00:18:51,720 --> 00:18:54,160
I think it was fun.

315
00:18:54,160 --> 00:18:58,030
I'm sure for my
parents it wasn't fun.

316
00:18:58,030 --> 00:19:01,690
We lived upstairs in
this semi-detached house,

317
00:19:01,690 --> 00:19:05,470
two houses together, but we
only had the upstairs apartment

318
00:19:05,470 --> 00:19:06,250
in one of them.

319
00:19:06,250 --> 00:19:10,040
And then downstairs-- somebody
else slept downstairs.

320
00:19:10,040 --> 00:19:14,110
And my father--
there was all kinds

321
00:19:14,110 --> 00:19:16,420
of black marketeering going
on right next door to us,

322
00:19:16,420 --> 00:19:18,000
but he could never
get into that.

323

00:19:18,000 --> 00:19:20,970
He was an honest man.

324
00:19:20,970 --> 00:19:25,050
He would cut hair and shave
people for a few pennies,

325
00:19:25,050 --> 00:19:28,410
and that's how he worked
even while we were there,

326
00:19:28,410 --> 00:19:30,750
and we were there
for three years.

327
00:19:30,750 --> 00:19:36,120
The camp was run by the auspices
of the American government.

328
00:19:36,120 --> 00:19:42,480
There was a camp commandant
who was a major from the army.

329
00:19:42,480 --> 00:19:51,780
And like I said, for me
it was very, very happy

330
00:19:51,780 --> 00:19:56,430
times because I did all the
kid things that I couldn't

331
00:19:56,430 --> 00:19:58,970
do just a few years prior.

332
00:19:58,970 --> 00:20:04,430
And at that time my brother
became a burden to me.

333
00:20:04,430 --> 00:20:07,090
Now, here I didn't want him
to follow me around anymore.

334
00:20:07,090 --> 00:20:10,420

I took care of him long
enough, and he would just not

335
00:20:10,420 --> 00:20:13,630
leave me out of his sight.

336
00:20:13,630 --> 00:20:17,950
And I would always
chase him home.

337
00:20:17,950 --> 00:20:22,440
He'll go home, cry to my
mother about it and my father.

338
00:20:22,440 --> 00:20:24,460
But we were happy there.

339
00:20:24,460 --> 00:20:25,630
Us kids were happy.

340
00:20:25,630 --> 00:20:26,200
We played.

341
00:20:26,200 --> 00:20:27,430
We went to school.

342
00:20:27,430 --> 00:20:31,510
We had our summer vacations
and a lot of new things to see.

343
00:20:31,510 --> 00:20:35,270

344
00:20:35,270 --> 00:20:39,560
I actually worked part-time
as a 12-year-old kid

345
00:20:39,560 --> 00:20:44,150
in a German camera factory,
just putting together parts.

346
00:20:44,150 --> 00:20:47,690

I don't know if I was an
apprentice of some kind.

347
00:20:47,690 --> 00:20:53,210
So I had fun, but as I said, all
my friends went to-- almost all

348
00:20:53,210 --> 00:20:57,500
my friends went to Israel, and
I was hoping we would go, too.

349
00:20:57,500 --> 00:21:05,050
But as I'm sure you know,
it was done by quotas.

350
00:21:05,050 --> 00:21:09,700
My mother, as a
German citizen born

351
00:21:09,700 --> 00:21:12,870
in Germany, German nationality,
had a very small quota,

352
00:21:12,870 --> 00:21:18,950
which meant that she would get
her choice before my father

353
00:21:18,950 --> 00:21:21,090
would, who was Hungarian.

354
00:21:21,090 --> 00:21:27,210
And we put in for both of
them, and it was whichever

355
00:21:27,210 --> 00:21:29,130
one would have come first.

356
00:21:29,130 --> 00:21:32,570
And we had a chance to
come to the United States,

357
00:21:32,570 --> 00:21:37,980
and my mother decided that's

where she wanted to come.

358
00:21:37,980 --> 00:21:41,847
So my brother, and I, and my
mother were the only three

359
00:21:41,847 --> 00:21:42,930
that were allowed to come.

360
00:21:42,930 --> 00:21:45,510
My father had to stay
behind because he was not

361
00:21:45,510 --> 00:21:46,860
on our quota.

362
00:21:46,860 --> 00:21:50,890
We, as youngsters,
as under age--

363
00:21:50,890 --> 00:21:55,770
we were on my mother's visa,
but my father was couldn't come.

364
00:21:55,770 --> 00:21:59,890
So we came here, and we
established not residence,

365
00:21:59,890 --> 00:22:05,260
but we got someone to
guarantee my father work

366
00:22:05,260 --> 00:22:07,942
and who sponsored
him, and that's

367
00:22:07,942 --> 00:22:10,150
about six months after we
were already in the States.

368
00:22:10,150 --> 00:22:14,830
So my father came
because he had a sponsor.

369

00:22:14,830 --> 00:22:16,900

Before we get to your
life in the United States,

370

00:22:16,900 --> 00:22:18,907

I have a few questions
I wanted to ask you.

371

00:22:18,907 --> 00:22:20,740

One question I want to
ask you is if you had

372

00:22:20,740 --> 00:22:23,620

a bar mitzvah in the DP camp.

373

00:22:23,620 --> 00:22:25,160

No, I didn't.

374

00:22:25,160 --> 00:22:31,970

I was never bar mitzvahed,
and I don't know why.

375

00:22:31,970 --> 00:22:35,900

But I was never bar mitzvahed.

376

00:22:35,900 --> 00:22:38,960

When did you start to understand
what happened to the other Jews

377

00:22:38,960 --> 00:22:41,260

in Europe?

378

00:22:41,260 --> 00:22:45,060

While we were in the DP camp.

379

00:22:45,060 --> 00:22:47,510

I had older friends.

380

00:22:47,510 --> 00:22:53,240

Here I was 12, but I
was kind of hanging

381

00:22:53,240 --> 00:22:58,330
with kids who were 16 and 18 and
some of them who were actually

382

00:22:58,330 --> 00:23:03,990
in concentration camps,
had numbers on their arms.

383

00:23:03,990 --> 00:23:05,350
So we knew.

384

00:23:05,350 --> 00:23:10,390
They didn't tell us
everything, but we, of course,

385

00:23:10,390 --> 00:23:12,500
questioned the
tattoos on the arms.

386

00:23:12,500 --> 00:23:16,120
And there were explanations,
and we did understand.

387

00:23:16,120 --> 00:23:21,990
So we knew-- we didn't realize
the magnitude of the Holocaust,

388

00:23:21,990 --> 00:23:28,760
but we did realize that a lot
of people didn't come back.

389

00:23:28,760 --> 00:23:33,850
What did your parents tell
you about their experiences?

390

00:23:33,850 --> 00:23:34,782
Very little.

391

00:23:34,782 --> 00:23:37,790

392

00:23:37,790 --> 00:23:41,030
It must have been very painful
for my mother to talk about it.

393
00:23:41,030 --> 00:23:45,000

394
00:23:45,000 --> 00:23:46,712
I just remember my
mom my mother saying,

395
00:23:46,712 --> 00:23:48,420
if it wouldn't have
been for your father,

396
00:23:48,420 --> 00:23:50,128
I wouldn't be here,
and things like that.

397
00:23:50,128 --> 00:23:52,110
He's the one that saved me.

398
00:23:52,110 --> 00:23:55,540

399
00:23:55,540 --> 00:23:56,930
And I would ask, how come?

400
00:23:56,930 --> 00:24:00,310
And that's-- and I explained
to you what she said.

401
00:24:00,310 --> 00:24:04,480
And to be very
honest with you, I

402
00:24:04,480 --> 00:24:08,880
was just too much
for me to comprehend

403
00:24:08,880 --> 00:24:10,160
what really happened.

404

00:24:10,160 --> 00:24:13,680

did The actual
atrocities that I finally

405

00:24:13,680 --> 00:24:19,080

understood I only
understood after I'd

406

00:24:19,080 --> 00:24:22,440

seen some pictures
and much later on.

407

00:24:22,440 --> 00:24:23,680

People talked about it.

408

00:24:23,680 --> 00:24:27,610

But let's face it.

409

00:24:27,610 --> 00:24:30,730

Even right now, people talk
about it, and how many people

410

00:24:30,730 --> 00:24:32,290

do not believe?

411

00:24:32,290 --> 00:24:36,640

Now, you can talk about the
ovens and the shootings,

412

00:24:36,640 --> 00:24:42,630

but I read about them after I
grew up, got a little older.

413

00:24:42,630 --> 00:24:45,310

But just somebody saying--

414

00:24:45,310 --> 00:24:46,970

it is so preposterous that--

415

00:24:46,970 --> 00:24:51,930

416
00:24:51,930 --> 00:24:55,300
10 years from now, if
you will tell that story,

417
00:24:55,300 --> 00:24:56,850
will they really believe it?

418
00:24:56,850 --> 00:25:00,330
Will they say, is it possible
that humanity did this

419
00:25:00,330 --> 00:25:01,500
to each other?

420
00:25:01,500 --> 00:25:04,740
One person could do such
atrocities to somebody else?

421
00:25:04,740 --> 00:25:12,140
So it would be hard to believe,
unless you see pictures,

422
00:25:12,140 --> 00:25:14,260
talk to people.

423
00:25:14,260 --> 00:25:18,700
And I was a youngster,
and I'm still here.

424
00:25:18,700 --> 00:25:22,830
But there's so many of us
that are not here anymore

425
00:25:22,830 --> 00:25:27,790
and who have taken--
like my mom, who must

426
00:25:27,790 --> 00:25:32,154
say tremendous stories to tell.

427
00:25:32,154 --> 00:25:39,630
But she has Alzheimer's,

and she is not

428
00:25:39,630 --> 00:25:42,320
capable of telling you anything.

429
00:25:42,320 --> 00:25:50,620
And some of the people
that have stories to tell

430
00:25:50,620 --> 00:25:51,778
are no longer with us.

431
00:25:51,778 --> 00:25:55,130

432
00:25:55,130 --> 00:25:59,450
You said that in the DP camp
it was a happy place for you.

433
00:25:59,450 --> 00:26:03,870
Do you remember other people
having a different life

434
00:26:03,870 --> 00:26:05,540
in the DP camp after the war?

435
00:26:05,540 --> 00:26:07,590
Do you remember how
other people were

436
00:26:07,590 --> 00:26:11,130
trying to rebuild their lives
after the war in the DP camp?

437
00:26:11,130 --> 00:26:16,580
Well I think a lot of people
realized that that was just

438
00:26:16,580 --> 00:26:18,540
a transient place.

439
00:26:18,540 --> 00:26:22,110

It was just a temporary
thing, and the uncertainty

440
00:26:22,110 --> 00:26:25,230
of not knowing what
the future will bring

441
00:26:25,230 --> 00:26:29,650
created a lot of
anxiety, I'm sure.

442
00:26:29,650 --> 00:26:35,575
But we tried to lead as much
of a normal life as possible.

443
00:26:35,575 --> 00:26:40,550

444
00:26:40,550 --> 00:26:45,810
There were a lot
of Hasidic Jews who

445
00:26:45,810 --> 00:26:48,990
kept the laws, the Torah,
the covenant, you name it.

446
00:26:48,990 --> 00:26:52,470
We had services.

447
00:26:52,470 --> 00:27:00,320
We had an excellent cantor,
and it was a mandatory thing,

448
00:27:00,320 --> 00:27:05,940
basically, for us to
go to the synagogue,

449
00:27:05,940 --> 00:27:08,700
not only on holidays
but Shabbos.

450
00:27:08,700 --> 00:27:12,820

451
00:27:12,820 --> 00:27:18,667
But some of the
people had trouble.

452
00:27:18,667 --> 00:27:20,500
As I said before, there
were a lot of people

453
00:27:20,500 --> 00:27:24,970
from Poland, a lot of people
from Russia who were not

454
00:27:24,970 --> 00:27:29,170
Jewish, but they were
also looking for something

455
00:27:29,170 --> 00:27:31,735
better than what they had
back home because there

456
00:27:31,735 --> 00:27:32,680
were also displaced.

457
00:27:32,680 --> 00:27:38,850

458
00:27:38,850 --> 00:27:41,700
And believe it or
not, even in DP camp,

459
00:27:41,700 --> 00:27:45,750
there were some anti
feelings against each other.

460
00:27:45,750 --> 00:27:48,000
The Poles didn't like
the Jews, and the Jews

461
00:27:48,000 --> 00:27:50,250
didn't like the Russians,
and the Russians

462

00:27:50,250 --> 00:27:52,630

didn't like anybody,
and so on and so forth.

463

00:27:52,630 --> 00:28:04,380

So the DP camp was almost like
a little city all by itself.

464

00:28:04,380 --> 00:28:06,500

There was everything there.

465

00:28:06,500 --> 00:28:10,310

We would get our food
rations through--

466

00:28:10,310 --> 00:28:12,360

I'm sure you heard the--

467

00:28:12,360 --> 00:28:16,798

UNRRA, U-N-R-A, which was
United something, something.

468

00:28:16,798 --> 00:28:17,340

I don't know.

469

00:28:17,340 --> 00:28:21,040

It was a-- in fact,
it was them who

470

00:28:21,040 --> 00:28:24,550

sponsored the people to come
out to the United States

471

00:28:24,550 --> 00:28:27,100

through them, and they would
place you different places.

472

00:28:27,100 --> 00:28:28,720

Once you got to
the United States,

473

00:28:28,720 --> 00:28:30,430

they are the ones
that helped you

474
00:28:30,430 --> 00:28:33,640
to start a new life someplace.

475
00:28:33,640 --> 00:28:35,680
But food would be coming
in like once a week,

476
00:28:35,680 --> 00:28:38,540
and you would get
rations every week.

477
00:28:38,540 --> 00:28:40,040
It all depends many
kids there were.

478
00:28:40,040 --> 00:28:45,910
And we would have powdered milk,
and sugar, and canned goods,

479
00:28:45,910 --> 00:28:47,530
and things like that.

480
00:28:47,530 --> 00:28:54,800
And so it was a in-between
time for the grown-ups.

481
00:28:54,800 --> 00:28:58,640
I'm sure that they were
very anxious of knowing

482
00:28:58,640 --> 00:29:00,490
where they will
eventually wind up

483
00:29:00,490 --> 00:29:02,720
and what will the new
life be, but for us

484
00:29:02,720 --> 00:29:06,180
kids it was just passing

time, just happy times.

485
00:29:06,180 --> 00:29:08,770

486
00:29:08,770 --> 00:29:12,110
When did you come to
the United States?

487
00:29:12,110 --> 00:29:18,630
I came to the United
States in October of 1948,

488
00:29:18,630 --> 00:29:31,130
and we left Bremerhaven
on a converted freighter

489
00:29:31,130 --> 00:29:36,820
called something,
something Shark.

490
00:29:36,820 --> 00:29:41,390
But I know I was sick
for seven days, whatever

491
00:29:41,390 --> 00:29:42,980
it took to get over it.

492
00:29:42,980 --> 00:29:44,900
And some of the crew
took pity on me,

493
00:29:44,900 --> 00:29:47,480
and they fed me the orange
juice and everything.

494
00:29:47,480 --> 00:29:52,640
But that was happy times.

495
00:29:52,640 --> 00:29:55,470
That was even more
happy, except we

496

00:29:55,470 --> 00:29:58,870

didn't know what was going
to happen to my father.

497

00:29:58,870 --> 00:30:03,080

But coming to the States was--

498

00:30:03,080 --> 00:30:06,410

the first time going
into New York--

499

00:30:06,410 --> 00:30:07,610

that was an eye-opener.

500

00:30:07,610 --> 00:30:10,540

That was unbelievable.

501

00:30:10,540 --> 00:30:12,973

Did you stay in New York?

502

00:30:12,973 --> 00:30:14,640

They didn't want you--
this organization

503

00:30:14,640 --> 00:30:16,973

that brought us over didn't
want us to stay in New York.

504

00:30:16,973 --> 00:30:19,410

There were too many
people already--

505

00:30:19,410 --> 00:30:21,633

DPs, who were coming
over from overseas--

506

00:30:21,633 --> 00:30:23,300

there were too many
of them in New York,

507

00:30:23,300 --> 00:30:25,655

and they wanted you to

go to different places.

508
00:30:25,655 --> 00:30:27,020
Now, don't ask me why.

509
00:30:27,020 --> 00:30:30,230
Some slick guy talked
my mother into going

510
00:30:30,230 --> 00:30:36,290
to St. Paul, Minnesota,
and I tell you, I loved it.

511
00:30:36,290 --> 00:30:37,380
As a kid, I loved it.

512
00:30:37,380 --> 00:30:41,750
It was a beautiful place
to live and to grow up.

513
00:30:41,750 --> 00:30:43,550
But it was cold.

514
00:30:43,550 --> 00:30:44,690
For my mom it was cold.

515
00:30:44,690 --> 00:30:47,660
For me, I loved skiing,
and I loved ice skating.

516
00:30:47,660 --> 00:30:49,340
And I just loved to be--

517
00:30:49,340 --> 00:30:56,332
I started junior high school
and learning a new language.

518
00:30:56,332 --> 00:30:59,070
And it was just great.

519
00:30:59,070 --> 00:31:01,532
And I got myself

right into the main--

520

00:31:01,532 --> 00:31:03,990

I played an instrument, so I immediately got into the band.

521

00:31:03,990 --> 00:31:07,338

And I had immediate friends.

522

00:31:07,338 --> 00:31:08,880

I had something in common right away.

523

00:31:08,880 --> 00:31:12,240

It wasn't just "the kid who just came over from Europe."

524

00:31:12,240 --> 00:31:15,810

They accepted me, and I had some very happy times, again,

525

00:31:15,810 --> 00:31:18,704

personally, very, very happy times in St. Paul.

526

00:31:18,704 --> 00:31:54,790

527

00:31:54,790 --> 00:31:56,900

We are doing an interview with Robert Kertesz.

528

00:31:56,900 --> 00:31:59,960

This is tape two, side B. You were talking

529

00:31:59,960 --> 00:32:01,795

about coming to United States, and I

530

00:32:01,795 --> 00:32:04,420

was going to ask if were having any difficulty with transition.

531
00:32:04,420 --> 00:32:05,630
But apparently you
don't seem to have

532
00:32:05,630 --> 00:32:06,840
had any problems with that.

533
00:32:06,840 --> 00:32:07,640
No, not at all.

534
00:32:07,640 --> 00:32:09,480
I was always outgoing type.

535
00:32:09,480 --> 00:32:13,180
And as I said, I
played an instrument,

536
00:32:13,180 --> 00:32:16,220
so I was accepted
right away in the band.

537
00:32:16,220 --> 00:32:21,070
And I had a wonderful,
wonderful time.

538
00:32:21,070 --> 00:32:25,010
And living in St. Paul,
being a small-town-type--

539
00:32:25,010 --> 00:32:27,720
we lived on the
outskirts of St. Paul.

540
00:32:27,720 --> 00:32:31,770
It was just absolutely great.

541
00:32:31,770 --> 00:32:35,040
Marvin Levine is still a
very good friend of mine

542
00:32:35,040 --> 00:32:39,263

who is a CPA in
Minneapolis right now,

543
00:32:39,263 --> 00:32:40,680
and we talk every
once in a while.

544
00:32:40,680 --> 00:32:41,900
He's just a great guy.

545
00:32:41,900 --> 00:32:46,820
He went to the
University of Minnesota,

546
00:32:46,820 --> 00:32:48,110
and he was a trumpet player.

547
00:32:48,110 --> 00:32:51,080
In fact, he still plays, and
he and I used to play duets.

548
00:32:51,080 --> 00:32:53,380
And we just had
a wonderful time.

549
00:32:53,380 --> 00:32:56,510
He lived around
the corner from me.

550
00:32:56,510 --> 00:33:01,460
But then when my father came
over about six months later--

551
00:33:01,460 --> 00:33:02,840
he liked the big city.

552
00:33:02,840 --> 00:33:07,190
He lived in Budapest,
where everything was moving

553
00:33:07,190 --> 00:33:10,160
and streetcars, and buses,
and bustling of people,

554

00:33:10,160 --> 00:33:16,110
and everything, so he wanted
to move back to New York

555

00:33:16,110 --> 00:33:19,460
and with me kicking
and screaming.

556

00:33:19,460 --> 00:33:23,350
But we did move
back to New York.

557

00:33:23,350 --> 00:33:26,750
But I was very, very persuasive,
and we only lived in New York

558

00:33:26,750 --> 00:33:27,260
for a year.

559

00:33:27,260 --> 00:33:28,430
And I talked him back.

560

00:33:28,430 --> 00:33:33,040
I talked him into going back
to St. Paul, which we did.

561

00:33:33,040 --> 00:33:36,280
We went back to St. Paul,
and I graduated from Humble--

562

00:33:36,280 --> 00:33:39,700
I'm sorry, from Marshall
High School, which--

563

00:33:39,700 --> 00:33:43,140
but now it doesn't
exist anymore,

564

00:33:43,140 --> 00:33:45,100
but I graduated from
Marchall High School.

565

00:33:45,100 --> 00:33:49,710

566

00:33:49,710 --> 00:33:53,490

But my father still was
yearning for owning a shop

567

00:33:53,490 --> 00:33:57,550

in a big city, so he made
a move the second time

568

00:33:57,550 --> 00:33:58,900

back to New York.

569

00:33:58,900 --> 00:34:06,920

And I've been back to the
Minneapolis area, but I wish

570

00:34:06,920 --> 00:34:12,199

I could have brought up my kids
in Minneapolis, or in St. Paul,

571

00:34:12,199 --> 00:34:15,889

or somewhere out there, on
the outskirts of it because--

572

00:34:15,889 --> 00:34:20,420

although being in the service,
I schlepped them around all

573

00:34:20,420 --> 00:34:23,090

over the place, and I
think they turned out fine.

574

00:34:23,090 --> 00:34:27,150

But small-town living compared
to New York is the way to go,

575

00:34:27,150 --> 00:34:27,650

I think.

576

00:34:27,650 --> 00:34:30,190

577

00:34:30,190 --> 00:34:38,929

And while in New York, I applied
for City College in New York.

578

00:34:38,929 --> 00:34:40,760

I was going to go
to City College.

579

00:34:40,760 --> 00:34:45,830

And then all of a sudden,
a couple of buddies of mine

580

00:34:45,830 --> 00:34:49,235

decided to join the Air
Force, and I said, well,

581

00:34:49,235 --> 00:34:50,360

I'm going to try it myself.

582

00:34:50,360 --> 00:34:56,889

I'm going to go and become a
pilot, not realizing that the

583

00:34:56,889 --> 00:35:00,520

since I was still not a
citizen of the United States

584

00:35:00,520 --> 00:35:03,400

I couldn't become
a pilot no less.

585

00:35:03,400 --> 00:35:07,210

Even though I passed my tests
for it and everything else,

586

00:35:07,210 --> 00:35:11,750

they would not allow me to get
into that type of training.

587

00:35:11,750 --> 00:35:14,230

So it just happened that I

was down in Tampa, Florida

588

00:35:14,230 --> 00:35:16,420
by this time, MacDill
Air Force Base,

589

00:35:16,420 --> 00:35:22,003
and there was a band playing on
the outside, someplace outside.

590

00:35:22,003 --> 00:35:22,920
The windows were open.

591

00:35:22,920 --> 00:35:24,310
It was a beautiful day.

592

00:35:24,310 --> 00:35:26,330
And a guy said, well,
what do you want to do?

593

00:35:26,330 --> 00:35:27,340
I said, you have a band?

594

00:35:27,340 --> 00:35:28,780
He said, why, do you play?

595

00:35:28,780 --> 00:35:29,680
I said, yes.

596

00:35:29,680 --> 00:35:34,470
So five minutes later
I was in the band,

597

00:35:34,470 --> 00:35:36,800
and that lasted for 20 years.

598

00:35:36,800 --> 00:35:39,640
The last 11 years I spent
with the Air Force Band

599

00:35:39,640 --> 00:35:42,670
right here in

Washington, DC, which is

600
00:35:42,670 --> 00:35:45,370
the top band in the services.

601
00:35:45,370 --> 00:35:46,930
I have a nice career.

602
00:35:46,930 --> 00:35:50,140
I enjoyed it very much.

603
00:35:50,140 --> 00:35:56,920
My education, if you want
to know, was spent mainly--

604
00:35:56,920 --> 00:35:59,630
I went to a music
conservatorium in Germany,

605
00:35:59,630 --> 00:36:02,380
even though I studied
with a private teacher.

606
00:36:02,380 --> 00:36:07,070
So rather than college, although
I have taken college courses--

607
00:36:07,070 --> 00:36:10,750
I don't have enough credits
for graduate study or anything

608
00:36:10,750 --> 00:36:17,290
like that, but I do have
probably enough credits to--

609
00:36:17,290 --> 00:36:20,570
I probably need about
three or four semesters,

610
00:36:20,570 --> 00:36:22,310
and I could get my
bachelor's degree.

611

00:36:22,310 --> 00:36:25,340

But I never finished that.

612

00:36:25,340 --> 00:36:30,820

But I used to
practice, especially

613

00:36:30,820 --> 00:36:33,990

in the summertime, four
or five hours a day.

614

00:36:33,990 --> 00:36:35,520

That was my education.

615

00:36:35,520 --> 00:36:37,290

I took a lesson
practically every day

616

00:36:37,290 --> 00:36:40,140

because my teacher was
right there in the DP camp,

617

00:36:40,140 --> 00:36:43,680

and he was not only a friend of
the family but also my teacher.

618

00:36:43,680 --> 00:36:47,220

And in the old days,
when you didn't practice

619

00:36:47,220 --> 00:36:49,800

or you made mistakes, something,
you got rapped on the butt

620

00:36:49,800 --> 00:36:52,425

or on the hand or something like
that, which is, of course, now

621

00:36:52,425 --> 00:36:55,080

forbidden, but I think
it didn't do me any harm

622

00:36:55,080 --> 00:37:00,550
and that it made
me a better person.

623
00:37:00,550 --> 00:37:03,120
What have you done since you
retired from the Air Force?

624
00:37:03,120 --> 00:37:06,250

625
00:37:06,250 --> 00:37:09,460
I have done a lot of things.

626
00:37:09,460 --> 00:37:12,560
I used to have a
real estate office.

627
00:37:12,560 --> 00:37:15,450
When I got here, I had a lot
of free time on my hands.

628
00:37:15,450 --> 00:37:17,200
Even though I was with
the Air Force Band,

629
00:37:17,200 --> 00:37:19,570
our work day was a short one.

630
00:37:19,570 --> 00:37:23,140
I got into real estate
and eventually owned

631
00:37:23,140 --> 00:37:27,670
a real estate company, a
small one, but it did fine.

632
00:37:27,670 --> 00:37:29,120
That led into--

633
00:37:29,120 --> 00:37:32,500
I started to build a couple
of houses here and there,

634
00:37:32,500 --> 00:37:38,015
and eventually I realized
that I liked being outside,

635
00:37:38,015 --> 00:37:39,640
being around work
crews and everything,

636
00:37:39,640 --> 00:37:43,810
rather than be cooped
up in the office

637
00:37:43,810 --> 00:37:48,850
and having to work Saturdays and
Sundays at the whim of people

638
00:37:48,850 --> 00:37:49,850
who want to buy a house.

639
00:37:49,850 --> 00:37:52,090
If those were the only
days they wanted to go,

640
00:37:52,090 --> 00:37:53,480
then I had to be available.

641
00:37:53,480 --> 00:37:56,000
So instead of doing
that, I spent--

642
00:37:56,000 --> 00:37:58,000
I got into building,
and that way, I

643
00:37:58,000 --> 00:38:00,160
had more time with my family.

644
00:38:00,160 --> 00:38:03,280
And we did a little
bit of traveling.

645

00:38:03,280 --> 00:38:05,770
My wife is a avid
golfer, so the--

646
00:38:05,770 --> 00:38:09,270

647
00:38:09,270 --> 00:38:12,990
my wife, as I said,
is an avid golfer.

648
00:38:12,990 --> 00:38:15,780
I got her into the
game because she always

649
00:38:15,780 --> 00:38:19,470
wanted to be with me when
I went on a golf course.

650
00:38:19,470 --> 00:38:21,720
So since she learned
how to play golf,

651
00:38:21,720 --> 00:38:24,630
we would do a little
bit of traveling,

652
00:38:24,630 --> 00:38:29,640
different golf courses in the
States and also Caribbeans

653
00:38:29,640 --> 00:38:31,230
and all that.

654
00:38:31,230 --> 00:38:34,650
I always, always wanted
to learn how to fly.

655
00:38:34,650 --> 00:38:39,000

656
00:38:39,000 --> 00:38:40,680
I always wanted to

learn how to fly,

657

00:38:40,680 --> 00:38:46,710

so I started doing
that back in 1975.

658

00:38:46,710 --> 00:38:50,420

And I have amassed over
1,000 hours of flying.

659

00:38:50,420 --> 00:38:53,800

I have my own little airplane
that we take trips in.

660

00:38:53,800 --> 00:38:57,050

But I'm getting too old for
that, so I think I'm going to--

661

00:38:57,050 --> 00:39:01,530

And we spend time with
our grandchildren.

662

00:39:01,530 --> 00:39:03,140

We have three grandchildren.

663

00:39:03,140 --> 00:39:10,710

The oldest one is 13, and we
got an 11-year-old grandson.

664

00:39:10,710 --> 00:39:18,350

And we have a nine-year-old
granddaughter.

665

00:39:18,350 --> 00:39:23,090

And they live very close by,
so I see them all the time.

666

00:39:23,090 --> 00:39:25,100

By the way, I have
three children.

667

00:39:25,100 --> 00:39:27,950

I have two sons.

668
00:39:27,950 --> 00:39:29,870
My wife and I have three sons.

669
00:39:29,870 --> 00:39:31,250
I mean three children.

670
00:39:31,250 --> 00:39:37,170
Our oldest son is
39, and [AUDIO OUT]

671
00:39:37,170 --> 00:39:41,180
and is my daughter
[AUDIO OUT] 35-year-old son.

672
00:39:41,180 --> 00:39:45,006
[AUDIO OUT] They all live
nearby, so [AUDIO OUT]..

673
00:39:45,006 --> 00:39:47,697

674
00:39:47,697 --> 00:39:49,822
[AUDIO OUT] I'd like to
ask you if there's anything

675
00:39:49,822 --> 00:39:54,090
you want to add, any episode
that has come [AUDIO OUT]..

676
00:39:54,090 --> 00:39:57,750
Something does come to my mind
that I forgot to tell you.

677
00:39:57,750 --> 00:40:01,710
You remember when I told you
that we escaped from the ghetto

678
00:40:01,710 --> 00:40:07,980
and went to a air raid shelter
because an air raid came out?

679

00:40:07,980 --> 00:40:13,340
My brother [AUDIO OUT] who at
that time was about [AUDIO OUT]

680
00:40:13,340 --> 00:40:14,684
found [AUDIO OUT].

681
00:40:14,684 --> 00:40:17,750

682
00:40:17,750 --> 00:40:21,120
At that time, it was like
\$100, but it was [AUDIO OUT]..

683
00:40:21,120 --> 00:40:25,390
But that was the
[AUDIO OUT] for the bill.

684
00:40:25,390 --> 00:40:28,150
And we went out--

685
00:40:28,150 --> 00:40:31,660
when [AUDIO OUT] really before
we went into the [AUDIO OUT]

686
00:40:31,660 --> 00:40:33,730
the first thing
that did was we went

687
00:40:33,730 --> 00:40:38,670
to a [AUDIO OUT] candy and
[AUDIO OUT] the air raid

688
00:40:38,670 --> 00:40:41,390
actually hit [AUDIO OUT].

689
00:40:41,390 --> 00:40:43,366
I remember that.

690
00:40:43,366 --> 00:40:46,610
It's funny because instead
of buying [AUDIO OUT]

691

00:40:46,610 --> 00:40:51,890

but I guess we had a [AUDIO OUT]
went and got some [AUDIO OUT]..

692

00:40:51,890 --> 00:40:55,790

693

00:40:55,790 --> 00:40:57,640

My pleasure.

694

00:40:57,640 --> 00:41:00,000