

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

Interview with Kurt Pauley
November 18, 1997
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PREFACE

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The reader should bear in mind that this is a verbatim transcript of spoken, rather than written prose. This transcript has been neither checked for spelling nor verified for accuracy, and therefore, it is possible that there are errors. As a result, nothing should be quoted or used from this transcript without first checking it against the taped interview.

KURT PAULEY

November 18, 1997

Question: This is a **United States Holocaust Memorial Museum** volunteer collection interview with **Kurt Pauley**, conducted by **Margaret Garrett** on November 18, in **Silver Spring, Maryland**. This interview is part of the museum's project to interview Holocaust survivors and witnesses who are also volunteers with the museum. Tape number one, side **A**. Mr. **Pauley**, what was your name at birth?

Answer: My name at birth was **Kurt Leo Pauley**.

Q: And your date of birth?

A: Was March 26th, 1930.

Q: And place of birth?

A: In **Aachen, Germany**.

Q: Could you talk about your family's background?

A: Yes. My mother's family had lived in the vicinity of **Aachen**, in what was then an independent town called **Eilendorf**, and which is now been incorporated into the city of **Aachen**. My mother's family has lived there at least since the middle of the 18th century, as far as our records show. And my father's family came from southern **Germany** in **Bavaria**, and he moved to – they had lived in **Wurzburg**, where my grandparents had a small hotel. And when he married, he moved to **Eilendorf** and took over my grandfather's business, which was a butcher – a butchery, and lived there with my parents and my grandfather, and who, I am sorry,

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lived there with my mother and my grandfather. And we – we f – we left **Germany** in 1939, when conditions got very bad, and my parents always –

Q: 1939?

A: I'm sorry, it's 1936. 1936, when conditions were beginning to get somewhat difficult as far as business and just being a Jew in **Germany**.

Q: Do you have brothers or sisters?

A: No, I was an only child, probably because of the situation, the political situation in **Germany** at the time.

Q: You think that your parents might have chosen to have more children?

A: Yes. At least that's what they always indicated.

Q: They told – they said that?

A: Oh yes, they said that.

Q: And could you describe what your home was like in **Germany**?

A: Briefly, yes. In fact, we visited it, my home again just last August when we were in **Germany**. It was a – a stone house, two stories, with a large yard in the back, a large garden in the back. And in the front was the – was a butcher's store, which my grandparents had run for many years, and their parents had run before that. And that butcher store still exists; someone's still in there. My grandfather had sold that

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business to his apprentice shortly after we left – about the time when we left **Germany** in 1936.

Q: So at the time that you were living there, your grandfather owned the butcher shop in the front of your house?

A: Yes. Yes, yes.

Q: And who lived in the house?

A: Just my – my parents with my grand – with my grandfather.

Q: So, your grandfather, your parents and you?

A: Yes.

Q: And you –

A: My grandfather was widowed.

Q: And bef – before we started the interview, you mentioned a nanny?

A: Yes, yes, because my mother was work – worked. In fact, she helped in the store, and did the bookkeeping and the various other tasks. Sh – she hired a local girl, she was about – well, let's see, she's 81 – well, she's 82 now actually, she – her birthday was la – la – in September. So she would have been 82. So she would have been what, seven – four – 15 years old at the time. And she stayed with us until we left – until we left **Germany**.

Q: Did she live in **Europe**?

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A: Yes, yes, yes.

Q: Oh, so she was living in –

A: No, she does not – no, she wasn't living in the home, she was a local girl, she lived nearby. Her parents lived at a nearby sh – her mother was – was left with a large family, and a – a sick husband, and so the children had to be – had to work rather early to help her make a living. She used to – cleaning and things like that, and so and – so **Hani**(ph) came every morning, and left every evening.

Q: And that was from –

A: From shortly –

Q: – the time you were how old?

A: – shortly after I was born, til we left **Germany** in 1936. In fact, when we spoke with her this time on our visit, she recalled many of the incidents just before that.

The fact that the **Brownshirts** were, during the boycott of Jewish stores, were standing outside the store and that she tried – they tried to discourage people from going in, but she came in anyway to help, every day. And she still had photographs of me when I was – one was when I was about five years old, and another one, which was a sort of a group picture when I was shu – probably about one year old.

Q: Now, what do you remember from your – from those first six years?

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A: Well, I can remember living in the house, and I had a room there. I can remember looking out the window of my room and looking out into the garden in the back. And living there, I remember one incident particularly because it's one of those things that stays in your mind. I must have been probably four years old, something like that, and the kitchen was two steps down from the level of the store, and I would sometimes rush into the kitchen from the store, and I fell. I fell flat on my face. I can remember that so vividly because I – you know, blood all over the place, I fell right – my nose was bleeding. And that's one of my earliest memories of an event that occurred there.

Q: How old do you think you were?

A: I think I was about four, four and a half, probably.

Q: And what happened after you fell? Do you remember that?

A: Oh, my mother, you know, came up to comfort me and my grandfather ran out to comfort me. And what was interesting was, in 1983, when we visited the home for the first time, the people are – who are living in there are descendants from my grandfather's apprentice. And, it was the son of the apprentice who was running the store then and shortly now – shortly, he – he had, before we came, he had turned the business over to his son, who unfortunately though, had a heart attack and died very rec – just recently, shortly before we came. But back in 1983, when we came in, the

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appre – th-the – my father – grandfather's apprentice was still alive. He was an o – very old man, but unfortunately his memory was gone. But the – his – his son still remembered my grandfather. And he remembered that my grandfather, after we had left, my – the people, the older people – I don't remember exactly when, but some time shortly after we left, they were – the Jewish people were sent to what was then the Jewish old age home in **Aachen**. They were all collected, and they were c – there. And he says he can remember my grandfather coming to the house because they didn't get ve – enough food to eat. He would come to the house there and ask them if he could eat with them, because they were not getting enough food. And that was pros – as I recall was about 1940 - '41. And then after awhile, this man said, your grandfather just didn't come any more, so we didn't know what happened, except they had heard that the Jews had been taken away. And as it turned out, the records now show that they'd been taken to **Theresienstadt**. I also can remember going to school shortly before we left. The school year in – in **Germany** starts right after Easter. And we left **Germany** in early summer. So I had to go to school briefly, and I can remember that my father was concerned about me and my going to school. I had to take a tram to get to school. And he rode behind the tram on a bicycle every day to just observe that nothing would occur. And then would meet the tram sometime on the way back, when I came back from school.

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Q: Was it required by the school that you go on the tram?

A: Yes, the school was too far for me to walk. That's the reason I had to take a tram.

Q: And there would be no other way for you to be transported?

A: Get there, no, no.

Q: And did you know that your father was following on a bicycle?

A: Yes, I did know that.

Q: Why didn't he just get on the tram with you?

A: Well, I – I'm not sure. I think he just didn't want to – to – at first, I just **[indecipherable]** about somewhat later. Initially I think he just didn't want to get me concerned that he felt that uneasy, that I would have to – that he would have to follow.

Q: So he was trying to help you be independent?

A: Yes, yes, I think so. And it's also that I wouldn't have those concerns. I can remember this – so I only went to school very – a few months. Maybe, at most two, before we left **Germany** to go to **Palestine**.

Q: What do you remember about the school?

A: I can remember they had a large, open courtyard. At least it seemed large to me at the time, probably wasn't that large, you know. At this time – the school is no

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longer there. It was a Jewish school, and – a Jewish elementary school, which was not uncommon in **Germany**, they were that – that – there – even before the Nazi times this [indecipherable] there were schools that were, you know, t – even today they have parochial school supported by the state, and so that the Jew – the Jewish schools were also partly supported by the state. And I do remember going to school very briefly. I don't remember too much, except that I was very unhappy going to school. That's the only time that I was unhappy going to school, I always liked going to school later.

Q: And what was there that –

A: So I must have been some concern.

Q: What – do you have any memory of what there was about the school that you were feeling unhappy?

A: I really don't know. I'm really not sure why that was. Perhaps I had a feeling of the uneasiness of my parents, because by that time my father had been forced to close the store in **Aachen** already, that we had. Another store, he had two stores. And he only had the store now in – in the part – in **Eilendorf**. And I suspect that I felt some of the uneasiness of – that my parents must have had.

Q: Do you remember anything about the school, other than the playground?

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A: Well, I remember being in the classroom. I don't remember too much about what occurred. I remember when we – first day that I was there, I do have one memory. Walked into the classroom and on the blackboard there was a drawing done in chalk of a – of a little boy and a little girl. I guess the teacher had done that, I can recall that – seeing that. I don't remember anything really about – else about the school.

Q: Do you remember any of the other children?

A: Not really, not really.

Q: And outside of school, did you have playmates?

A: Yes, I – well, my cousins lived in **Eilendorf**. My mother had a si – a sister whose family also lived in **Eilendorf**, and th – she had three children. And so I can remember playing with them, and I'm – don't particularly remember other people except now, recently we received a letter from someone who had seen the article about our trip to **Aachen**, and she wrote us a letter. She also knew my – my nanny, because her mother, my nanny's mother, had been a domestic in their house, and she wrote him the letter that she had sometimes played with me because **Hani**(ph), who was the – who was the nanny. And she sent me a picture, a class picture that she had, which had – which included my elder cousin, my oldest cousin **Ilsa**, who was a classmate of hers. So she was about three years older than I was. And then

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she had a brother and sister who were younger than the brother **Eric**, was about my age, and I can remember playing with him.

Q: Now, was she Jewish?

A: This woman? No, she was not Jewish. No, no. No, no. And she wrote to us that she can remember meeting the **Kunn**(ph) family, that was their name, in **Aachen** later when she sometimes would go in with her mother after they had been forced to leave **Eilendorf**, and I guess they were – ma – they – they must have been gathered in some places. All the Jews must have been gathered there, and she can remember though, meeting **Ilsa** on the street sometimes for a short period of time during – I guess in the early 40s. So she had that memory. So she sent me a very nice letter, and she had spoken with me, and she thought I might be interested in having that picture of my – of my cousin, which of course we were very interested in seeing it.

Q: Was your family religious?

A: No, no, my family was not – the Jews of **Aachen** were what we would call in this country, Reform. And the – my – my father's family had been more religious, although my father was not particularly religious, although we would – we went to synagogue. And – but we would have – we – the synagogue was too far to walk, so we would have to drive there. So no, the – this – the – the Jew – the Jews of **Aachen** – there were very few religious Jews in **Aachen**, most of them were

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Reform. And then – that community had been there for quite some time, certainly since the middle of the 18th century.

Q: Do you remember anything specific about the closing in of the Nazis when you were in **Aachen**?

A: Not – no, I don't remember it particularly from firsthand experiences except my – of course, my parents talked about it from time to time later on.

Q: But you don't remember hearing them talk about it when you were a child?

A: I – no, no, I don't remember hearing it firsthand. I do remember our trip when we left **Germany**, I can remember that. I can remember going to say goodbye to my grandmother, my father's mother, who was still living in **Wurzburg** at that time, and taking the train down there to say goodbye to them.

Q: What was your understanding at the time of why you and your parents were leaving, and not your grandparents?

A: I don't know that I – I had that particular understanding of – at – at that age, of why that happened. Of course later my parents told me that these people, they didn't want to go along, they thought, you know, things would be all right, and they were old people, and they felt nothing would happen to them. And so I don't particularly know, except I do know my parents spoke about it. My father tried very hard to get them to leave. And by the time, of course, they wanted to leave, it was too late. We

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were in **Palestine** by then, of course, but – and even when we came to the **United States** in 1938, it was too late for them to leave, they couldn't get out.

Q: And do you remember what you were told about the leaving?

A: No, not really firsthand, I really don't know. Later, of course, I learned, you know, about it from my parents. And I heard from **Hani(ph)**, **Hani(ph) Dover**, the – my nanny, she told us when – on this last visit sh-she can remember that when my father decided to leave, telling them that he was leaving because there was no future in **Germany** for his son and his family. So my father decided to leave in 19 – actually, he told us that he wanted to leave already in 1933, but it took him three year – almost three years to get it together and to find a place to go. At that time we couldn't come to the **United States** because we had no family here. Later, we were – I th – my uncle, my father's brother came to this country through his wife's family and that's how we came to this country then, through my aunt's family, who were not Jewish, by the way. They provided an affidavit for my aunt's family and – and two of her sisters, and their family, and for us. Which was quite something to do, because giving an affidavit meant you were taking a responsibility.

Q: So you left for **Palestine** in 1936?

A: That's correct.

Q: And do you remember any feelings about saying goodbye, or –

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A: Yes. I was a little unhappy leaving my grandparents, I can remember, especially my grandmother, because that was a big trip to go to **Wurzburg** and to say goodbye, and then we – and I can remember going to my grandmother before that. In fact, I even have a memory of playing with a – she had a little red wind-up car, and I can remember playing with that in her apartment, which overlooked a square called the **Figurenbrunnen**. I can – and I can still remember looking down there and seeing the fountain in the center of the square and all the traffic and activity that was going on there. And going with my father down to the river, which was not far from the – from the house. So I have memories of that.

Q: So, describe the trip to –

A: **Palestine**?

Q: – **Palestine**, from leaving **Aachen**.

A: We went by train to **Italy**, and left from – trying to think which – which port we left from. I – I believe we left from **Genoa**.

Q: Did you have any favorite things that you took with you?

A: I must have, but I don't remember.

Q: Okay.

A: But I remember there – on the – being on the boat from – from **Italy** to – to **Palestine**. It was very warm, and in fact we have pictures of the family on the boat,

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sitting there in our bathing suits, by the side of the pool on the boat. And I can remember that, and I can remember being, of course in **Palestine**, and going to school in **Palestine**, and living there. My father had a nephew who was already in **Palestine**, and my mother had cousins who had gone to **Palestine** very early. They were ardent Zionists, and they had gone there in the 20s, and in fact one of the cousins whom we met on some of our trips back to **Palestine**, my mother's cousin, founded – was a founder of a kibbutz, Kibbutz **Yavne**, and he had a very large family, which we met when we were there. And my mother's brother went to **Palestine** just after we left **Palestine** to come to the **United States**. He went there with his family. And his son is my only living cousin – first cousin. And we're still in touch with him, and we see him frequently. He's with the Israeli foreign service and we met him in **Germany** twice on trips over to **Europe**, and he's been to the **States** frequently, because one of his daughters is married and her husband is studying here in the **United States**.

Q: Now, when you arrived in **Palestine**, what port did you –

A: **Haifa**.

Q: In **Haifa**.

A: Yes, and we lived in **Haifa**.

Q: And had arrangements been made before you got there?

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A: I believe so. My parents rented an apartment, I think through my – my father's nephew, my cousin. His name was **Walter** and he was married to an Israeli woman. So they had been there some time and I believe they had helped my parents make arrangements. And my father tried to s – started a business with this nephew.

Q: And where did he get the money to start a business?

A: Well, at that time you could take your money from **Germany**. In 1936, you could still take your – your – your money out. So he had taken that along, and he had – well, he – they chur – they went into the trucking business. They bought a truck, they – they imported a truck from **Germany**. It was one of the assets my father took with him. And I can remember going along with them on the truck. But they – the – the work that that they did was they got a contract with a soft drink distributor, and they would truck the soft drinks. Unfortunately this was the time of the depression, and economic conditions were not very good in **Palestine**, in the – in the – in that time period. And so the business was not very good. And my father was – always said we could compute almost to the day when he'd spend his last **piasta** in **Palestine**, because they just simply couldn't make a living. And I think that was the principle reason then, that he left **Palestine**, was economic.

Q: How long were you in **Palestine**?

A: Two and half years.

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Q: From '36 –

A: To – to late '38.

Q: Mm-hm. And –

A: Just a little over – just over two years.

Q: So you were six when you arrived. And did you start school right away?

A: Yes, yes, Yes, I did.

Q: Do you remember that?

A: Yes, I can remember that, and I can remember that first I was a lot happy going to school because I couldn't understand the teacher, they were speaking **Ivrit**, I couldn't speak any **Ivrit**. But apparently I must have learned it very quickly, children learn very quickly. And I was very happy going to school after that.

Q: What about your parents with the language?

A: They never really got to be very proficient in **Ivrit**. But then in **Haifa** there was a large German colony, and so you could get along pretty well with German.

Q: But your father knew enough of the language to get along in business?

A: Yes, yes, yes.

Q: And –

A: And of course my nephew – his nephew helped him along with that, he spoke **Ivrit** quite fluently.

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Q: And did you make friends in school?

A: Oh yes, oh yes, we had a lot of friends, and my par – but as – as – and my parents, of cour – had friends. Most of them, of course, were immigrants like themselves. And because conditions were so difficult that my parents also, to help make a little money, rented out one of the bedrooms in the apartment to a young man who was from **Austria**. And he lived there with partial board. So that helped them earn some money to help pay for the expenses, and that's how they managed to eke out some of the living, as well.

Q: And how did your mother spend her time?

A: Well, partly, you know, provide – providing for this boarder. And also again, to help make a living, they would – my father had been a prof – was a professional chef, they would have dinners that people could come to, about once a week, for pay, or for money. And so that they took in paying guests, so to speak for – once a week for a meal. And that helped them as well.

Q: Do you remem – remember the dinners?

A: Oh yes, I can remember some of them.

Q: Is that fun for you?

A: Sometimes, and sometimes of course it was too late for me to stay up. And I remember that they put me to sleep out on the veranda, out on the porch, because

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the people were in the apartment. And I remember going to sleep outside. But I guess it was fun for a little boy.

Q: Wh-What else was fun for you in **Palestine**?

A: Well, just playing around –

Q: Like what kind of play?

A: – and going to school.

Q: What did you like to play?

A: Well, what do children do, children get together and they play games.

Q: Like what kind of games?

A: I – really – well, you know, hide and seek, and those kind of games that – some ball. And then so I've – when – when my parents told me that they were leaving **Palestine**, of course I was – at that time, then I was rather sad to leave, because of my friends.

Q: So you – so you remember that?

A: Yes, I do remember that. I remember le – that departure. And I can remember the trip to the **United States** because then I was quite old enough to – to – to remember that. [phone ringing]

Q: Do you have to [indecipherable]

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A: The answering machine will take it. Yes, that trip was – I have more memories of that trip.

Q: And more memories of the leaving and feeling sad about the leaving.

A: Yes, yes, yes, yes. Although my – being with my parents, of course, made it, you know, easier. And I can remember then, we went by boat to marse – from **Haifa** to **Marseilles**. And from **Marseilles** overland to **Paris**, where we stayed a couple of days, waiting for the ship which was leaving from **Le Havre**.

Q: Now this was in 1939?

A: 1938.

Q: '38.

A: Late '38.

Q: And so you were staying overnight in –

A: Winter '38.

Q: – **Marseilles**.

A: We spent a couple of days in – in **Paris**. No, we didn't stay in marse – I can't remember staying in **Marseilles**. I think we just got on the train and went immediately to **Paris**, where we stayed for a couple of days because the ship, which was the **Queen Mary**, didn't leave **Le Havre** for several days after our arrival, and

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then we got on the ship. And that was quite an adventure for a little boy, such a big ship.

Q: What was that like for you?

A: Oh, I had a wonderful time on the ship, although the – the passage was a little bit s – it was a little bit stormy on that passage, but the – I didn't particularly get seasick, but my parents did have a little bit of seasickness. I can remember there were a lot of activities for children. They had organized play. I can remember playing on the ship with some of the other children. And it was by f – I can still remember that it was the first time I ever ate **Brussels** sprouts was on the Queen **Mary**. I didn't know what **Brussels** sprouts were until I got on the Queen **Mary**. And then we arrived in **New York**. But I guess it was – trip was – th-the Queen **Mary** was rather fast, it was like five and a half days to get to **New York** from **Le Havre**. And there we stayed, in **New York** for a couple of days, and then went by train to **Cincinnati**, which was where my uncle was living, and we moved to **Cincinnati, Ohio**. And I can remember that very well, and I grew up in **Cincinnati** through high school. I was 18 years old when we left **Cincinnati** to go to **New Jersey**.

Q: So you arrived in **Cincinnati** when you were about nine?

A: Actually about eight and a half.

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Q: Eight and a half. So you were there eight and a half to 18.

A: Yes. Almost 10 years.

Q: Did you know any English when you were –

A: No, I knew no English when I arrived, and of course I had to go to school. And because I spoke no English, they decided that I should – although I was eight and a half, to put me in the first grade. Now there was a little boy in the school who was a – who spoke German, and helped me understand what the teacher was saying.

Q: Was he in first grade?

A: Yes, he was in first grade.

Q: This is public school.

A: Public school. Which is not that unusual in **Cincinnati**. **Cincinnati** had a long history of German immigration. There were a lot of people in **Cincinnati** who spoke German, even though they were not – you know, they may be second or even third generation American. So this little boy spoke German and helped me, and of course once I learned English, then they moved me to the second and third grade very quickly.

Q: Were you friends with him outside of school also, or just in school?

A: Actually not, because he lived – he didn't live nearby, but I made other friends. And this little boy was much younger than I was, and once I moved out of the first

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grade, I sort of lost touch with him. But – and my parents, of course, had to start again, and that was economically very difficult to make a living at that time in the **United States** because of the depression. And my parents had – took my parents awhile. My father, as I say, was a professional chef, but he couldn't get a job in that field at the time, immediately. It was very interesting. So he tr – got various jobs doing things, and one ti – one job that he managed to get was in a large cafeteria. And he says all he ever did was peel potatoes and on – cut up onions. He said, but was one good thing about cutting up onions, because he always got a seat on the trolley going back because he smelled so of onions, nobody wanted to sit next to him. But one day, he tells the story, he met someone on the street, and – that he knew from **Europe**. A man that had been with him in **Switzerland** where they had learned their trade together. This man was a chef in one of the large hotels in **Cincinnati**, and when he met my father he asked him what he was doing, and how things were. My father, of course, told him how difficult it was for him to get a job. He said well, he said, meet me in the union hall next Wednesday. And he got him a job as a cook in one of the restaurants in downtown **Cincinnati**, where my father then eventually became the chef. So that's how he did it, how it happened that he got a job even during the depression, through a friend, or an acquaintance, that man

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he had studied with in **Switzerland**. So after that things got a little better, economically.

Q: So that would have been when?

A: Well, actually, that probably happened in 1939.

Q: So that was soon after you arrived.

A: It was about a year, little less than a year after we arrived.

Q: So what was it like for you, in as far as making friends?

A: Well, made friends very quickly.

Q: Even though you had a language problem at first?

A: Well, the – the language problem went away very quickly. I – I don't remember that was a problem. And there were – in the area we lived in, there were a lot of other immigrants as well as people who spoke German.

Q: So would –

A: But I spoke English very quickly.

Q: So did your friends tend to be also immigrants?

A: Yes, most of – most of them were, most of them were, because they were also –

Q: Jews, or not Jews?

A: Yes, most of them were Jewish. It was a predominantly Jewish area that we lived in in **Cincinnati** called **Avondale**. At that time it was very Jewish. I – going to walk

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– I remember walking to high school I would pass three synagogues on the way to – walking to high school.

Q: Now, was your family involved with the synagogue?

A: Yes, yes, yes. They were then. It was interesting. The immigrants – the German Jewish immigrants started a congregation of their own, so my parents felt that they wanted to support this, although they weren't Orthodox – it was an Orthodox congregation – but they felt they wanted to support the congre – that congregation, and I – and so then they did get involved.

Q: And what about you?

A: And I can remember going – yes, we went to a synagogue. I used to go to synagogue on Saturdays and because also my friends went. Even though my parents didn't always go because it – because of – of – of work. Later my father left the restaurant and started a bakery of his own, with a partner, someone he knew, an acquaintance. And so of course then they were working six days a week. So he would not be – he wouldn't go to synagogue that frequently.

Q: So you went with your parents when they went. Do – were you involved with –

A: No, sometimes I would go without my parents.

Q: With your friends or by yourself?

A: Yes – no, with my friends, we'd meet my fren – I'd meet my friends there.

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Q: And were you involved in any children's activities at the synagogue?

A: The synagogue didn't have any particular – that much in the way of children's activities. We had other activities through, you know, thr-through the school, and I made other friends in school, and so they – they weren't necessarily really connected with the synagogue.

Q: Did you have a Bar Mitzvah?

A: Yes, yes, we did.

Q: Do you remember that?

A: Yes, I can remember that very well. Of course, it wasn't as elaborate an affair as Bar Mitzvahs are today. First of all, it wasn't customary then, and beside my parents weren't going to spend that kind of money on a Bar Mitzvah. But I can remember friends and family ad – coming to the apartment, and my parents had a kiddush, and – and then a meal for the family afterwards in the apartment.

Q: And do you remember how you felt about all that?

A: Oh, I was very excited, because of course, I got a lot – a number of gifts. And it was very exciting having all those people there and being the center of attention. I guess I can remember that very well.

Q: We have to turn over the tape.

A: Okay. Maybe we'll have a little co –

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End of Tape One, Side A

Beginning Tape One, Side B

Q: – tinuation of a **United States Holocaust Memorial Museum** volunteer collection interview with **Kurt Pauly**, tape number one, side **B**. Okay.

A: Okay, because of the difficult economic conditions when we first came, and particularly before my father got a good job as a cook, my mother also went out to work as a domestic on a day – day – daily basis. And I can remember going to some of the homes where she was working when I got out of school, so that I wouldn't be at home alone. And she did that for some years to help supplement my father's income. As well as, again, renting out – we took a very large apartment in the same house where my uncle lived, and my parents rented out two of the bedrooms to help pay for their expenses as well at that time. And those were rented out for quite a few years until things got a little better and we no longer needed to do that. I can remember making friends with a – with the people who – who rented the rooms, and they stayed for quite awhile, so they must have been fairly happy living with my parents. So that we had an elderly lady there I remember, a Mrs. **Scholl**(ph), who was an American woman who I guess was re – living as – she was widowed. And she always told me her husband had been a drummer boy in the Civil War. And we had another woman, a Mrs. **Stern**, who was an immigrant. And she was a

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rather – she was not – later on she got rather sickly, and unfortunately – and left because of illness. And we made friends with her family as well; she had a son. And actually my parents got to be very friendly with them – with those people as well. They became more than just boarders, they be – sort of became friends. And of course later things got better, my parents didn't have to rent out rooms any more. But of course as a child I never felt particularly deprived or poor because I was – we were, you know, at least comfortable, and I – I guess people around me didn't have any more than we had, so –

Q: You mean your friends at school?

A: Friends, right, friends at school and people that my parents knew that I came to contact with. So I guess even at the beginning, although my parents had a very hard time economically, didn't seem to make that much of a problem for me initially.

Q: Do you remember having any awareness at that time of what was going on in the rest of world?

A: Yes, of course, and as – as I – as I grew older, I can remember, well, when the war started, 1939, and my parents [indecipherable] of course, at that time, and their concerns with the people that they had left in **Europe**, their family. And I can – my mother was, of course – my mother was a somewhat of a di – rather depressed personality, and that didn't get any better as she aged. But I can remember that they

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had a great deal of concerns about people they left behind, their parents and their families.

Q: And how did that affect you?

A: Well, not so much directly when you're a child, that sort of – you know, it's sort of there, but it – it doesn't have that much impact on you. Although I ca – I could remember my grandparents and I – I remember their concern. So some of those concerns did rub off on me, but as a child I – it – you don't feel any responsibility for it, so – but I can remember the war going on, and then of course, I can remember distinctly when – when **Pearl Harbor** occurred. That was on that Sunday, because I had gone with my father on that Sunday to – to see a new restaurant that they were – that the – that thas – those people were opening, people that my father worked for, and he wanted to check out, see how it's com – was coming along. And so that Sunday we took a trip to the new restaurant, which was out in the suburbs. And when we came back there was all this hubbub and people talking and telling us that **Pearl Harbor** had been attacked. So I can remember that very distinctly. Of course, during the war then, of course, I can remember – well, we had rationing, so that was a problem of sorts, for everyone. And of course my – you know, not knowing how long the war would last, I guess my parents already began to have some concerns about this happening – their son perhaps drafted at

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some time into the war, although that didn't occur at that time, although later I was drafted during the Korean War. But then it's – but I was going to high school, and I enjoyed going to high school very much [indecipherable]. In fact, I enjoyed going to school period in **Cincinnati**. It was a very good experience.

Q: What did you like about it?

A: I just enjoyed learning. I was a good student and I enjoyed it and I – the schools were challenging and – and I just enjoyed it. The high school I went to – well, actually it was a combination junior high – high. It was a school – although a public school, it was a school you had to enter by competitive exam. And, you know, three years of Latin were still required. And so I can remember the teacher – the Latin teacher telling us how fortunate we were that two years of Greek were no longer required. But it was a good school, and I enjoyed going there. Even though it was a good walk to school, but –

Q: So you enjoyed the academic life.

A: Yes, I did, I did.

Q: And what about the –

A: And the friends.

Q: – extracurricular part?

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A: We enjoyed that. I went with my friends and although not all of my friends then went to that particular high school, some of them went to one of the other high schools. I enjoyed – I enjoyed going to the school, and you know, being a teenager. I also helped my parents later in the bakery which they opened up, and I would work there after school and on weekends, helping out.

Q: So did that cut into your social time?

A: A little bit, but not too badly, not too badly. My parents were understanding and th-they didn't want me to work all the time. So I don't remember that that was a particular problem.

Q: Now how was it for you as far as being a German Jewish immigrant?

A: Well, bec – we were surrounded by a lot of people in the same boat. And so it wasn't a particular problem.

Q: Did you feel discrimination?

A: No, no, I can't remember feeling any discrimination at all. It was – it was a very – basically a – a pretty good time, except the problems that my parents had then later with – when they learned when the war was over and they got indications of what had happened to their families. Of course I remember that, that was – those were terrible times for my parents, and my mother –

Q: Talk about that.

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A: Well, she cried a great deal about it. Of course, she cried very easily because she – she was a somewhat depressed person. But I'm sure that there were – you know, the – there were certainly very good reasons there to cry about that. And when she – she had always hoped that perhaps somebody would have survived the war, besides of – her brother, of course, had survived in **Palestine**. But that perhaps some of her nieces and nephews, these people – these children that I played with in **Eilendorf** had survived. But sh – my – my – my oldest cousin **Ilsa** was a – a great favorite of my mother, and she always had some hope that perhaps one of the children had survived. But that was not to be, and later we found out when we checked the records, particularly here at the Holocaust Museum, there were indications that all of them had been – you know, all of them had perished in the war. And of course, my mother, not – and of course my father's family as well; he had the sister, and his mother and well, he had several sisters and their f – and all those people also perished. So that was a terrible, you know, feeling for my parents.

Q: And how was it for you?

A: Well, you know, children don't in-internalize that as much. And it – although I knew, you know, it was – it was bad, it – the impact on me was not as great because I had been so young when we left, and so my memories of these people were rather limited. I mean, it was very, very st – you know, it – I mean, some of that

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unhappiness obviously rubbed off on me and – but – and then by that time I was old enough to realize what that meant. But – but that – it was, of course, much more traumatic for my parents. Very traumatic for them. And – and of course, my uncle's family, as well, my aunt's family. They also, of course, lost a lot of people in the Holocaust.

Q: So at the end of the war you would have been 15 – 16 when your parents found out –

A: Yes, yes, yes, yes, that's right. So then, in the meantime, m-my father had started this bakery with an aqua – with a f – with a – an acquaintance, but they didn't get along too well, as partners frequently do. And my father decided then to get out of the bakery. And he sold his interest to his partner, and he had had friends from **Cincinnati** that had moved to **Vineland, New Jersey**, and started a poultry farm during the war. And th-they were always in touch with the – with these people, they were close friends. And they convinced them to come to **Vineland, New Jersey** and also start a poultry farm, which turned out to be a big mistake because although during the war those farms made a lot of business, after the war that business really faded. They couldn't compete with the large farms in the Midwest and on the eastern shore of **Maryland**. So unfortunately that was – turned out to be a big

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mistake for – for my parents, although they made the best of it. Unfortunately my father died very young, at 62, of cancer.

Q: That would have been how long ago?

A: And that was in 1957, shortly before I graduated from school. What happened was, in 1951, I was – see, I – we left **Cincinnati**, that sort of – I guess that – there was a certain upheaval there f – and – and th – I could –

Q: Now the year you left **Cincinnati** was?

A: Was '48.

Q: '48. So you had graduated from high school?

A: I just graduated from high school in 1948.

Q: Was that part of the timing that they wanted to –

A: Yes, probably.

Q: – stay in **Cincinnati** so you could graduate?

A: Yes, I think that was probably part of it. I graduated in '48, and then my parents moved there. But tha-that was a bit of an upheaval for me. And as a result, if I'd stayed in **Cincinnati**, I'm sure I would have just gone to the University of **Cincinnati** right then and there. But because of that upheaval, I – moving to **New Jersey**, I didn't go to college at that time, and I was a little confused about what I wanted to do, as teenagers frequently are. And what happened was, I got a job in

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Vineland, with the **Vineland** newspaper, the **Vineland Times Journal** as a sort of a – a runner, a boy, you know, in the office, and I would run errands and take out proofs of ads to advertisers to get their approval, and things like that. And did that for a while, and then of course in 1951, I was drafted. It was the Korean War, and that was a quite traumatic for my parents, that –

Q: Now, bef – before that, in the first few years in **Vineland**, had you sort of expected that you would continue in that direction, or did you think about going to college at some point –

A: I did think about it, but I – I – I – it – because of the move perhaps, and – and then the other thing was, my parents found, as I said, the business, the – the – the poultry business got – eggs business got to be rather poor, and they had a great deal of difficulty making ends meet, so I went – decide well, I can just go out to work. That was probably part of that.

Q: So you felt you had to help support the family?

A: Well, at least support myself. So I did that, and then, as I say, I was drafted in 1951, and –

Q: How did you feel about being drafted?

A: Well, it sort of gave me a focus, cause now I had – had no choi – I knew what I was doing. And although my parents of course, were very concerned. I mean, we

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lost all these people in the war, and now their only son was going into the service. And what happened was, I was sent to **Arkansas**, Camp **Chaffee** for my – for my basic training. And decided to sign up for **OCS**, Officers' Candidate School. Took the test for **OCS** and was admitted to a class which was to start about six weeks after my basic training was to be completed. So in the meantime, I was sent to what was called leadership school, which was really for – a school for non-commissioned officers. But since I had the six weeks, they had to do something with me, so they sent me there. And I was in – I had an accident, training accident and – and very serious foot – fracture of my foot. What happened was the the trails of the 105 **Howitzers** – this was an artillery base, and we were ar – taking artillery training. And I had an accident with a 105 **Howitzer**, which almost cut off my foot. But fortunately it didn't, but it was a serious fracture, and I was sent to the hospital. And that was in May of 1952, and was in the hospital through the following January. So by that time, I no longer had enough time to be sent to **Korea**. You had to have a ba – at least a year of remaining service to be sent overseas. So I didn't have that time any more. And so I was kept at the hospital as a clerk. They had to assign me somewhere. And spent the rest of my time as a clerk in the hospital and was discharged in November of 1953.

Q: What happened to your relationship with your parents during this –

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A: Well my parents, you know, once they realized that the accident was not that – well, it was serious, but it certainly wasn't fatal, and fortunately the surgery was very successful on my foot. And although I was in the hospital a good deal of the time, my parents, in effect, had the s – had – felt a sense of relief that I wasn't going to be sent to **Korea**. And in fact, I went home a good deal of time because of my injury. After the surgery and a brief rehabilitation in the hospital, they sent me on a 30 day leave to home, just waiting for this thing to heal. I came back, they changed the cast and took out the pins from my foot, sent me on another 30 day leave. I was home on three 30 day leaves and one 14 day leave before I got out of the hospital. So I had to – and then, of course, I spent the rest of my time in **Arkansas** as a clerk in the hospital. Then when I got out of – out of the hospital, of course I had the ben – or – or out of the service, I got the benefits of the **G.I.** Bill. And as a disabled veteran, in quotes disabled, because of the injury – and I was somewhat handicapped, at least initially, because of that I had pains in my foot and – but not that serious. But they – but I did get the – a minimum disability as a result, from the – from the sw – when I was discharged from the service. As a disabled veteran, the benefits of the **G.I.** Bill were quite considerable. They – what – what – it was called was rehabilitation. In other words, they were going to rehabilitate you so that you could do something. So I – they paid for four years at the University of

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Pennsylvania, all my tuition; I went to the **Wharton** School, and Uncle **Sam** paid for everything. Cause my parents certainly couldn't have afforded to pay, not unless I had gotten a scholarship or something. I certainly couldn't have paid for that kind of tuition. So fortunate – I was very – in a way, this injury was very fortunate. So then I – I had four years at the University of **Pennsylvania**, which I also enjoyed very much. That was a great time. Cause I was getting paid to go to school. Not only did they pay for all the tuition and books and fees, but I got a subsistence allowance for living, which I could do very well [**indecipherable**]. And in 1950 – late '56, I met **Jill**.

Q: Now, were you at the **Wharton** School?

A: Yes. I was still in school when I met **Jill**. We were introduced by a mutual friend. At first we – the first time he tried to get us together, of course, neither one of us could manage to get together. But he wouldn't give up, and a year and a half later, he tried again, and this time we met. And well, eventually I decided to – we decided to get married and we did get married just shortly before I graduated from school. Unfortunately, my father at that time got sick, in the summer of 1957. And we married in the – December of 1957, so my father was dead by the time we married, unfortunately. But he did know **Jill**, and he did know we were intending to get married. And I graduated in 1958. Now that was difficult for my mother,

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because now she was widowed and she felt very un – well, she just felt kind of lost, and she – she felt she couldn't live alone, so we had some difficulty along those lines, and at first – which was, I think, a big mistake, anlis – at least initially on our part, of course, she lived with us briefly, after we moved to **New York**. I moved to **New York** for – because I got a job there with one of the large – big eight accounting firms. Was called **Touche, Niven, Bailey and Smart**, now it's part of **Deloitte Touche**. So – but eventually my mother – we [indecipherable] to put her into an apartment of her own, and we were nearby. In fact, it was in the same house where we lived, initially.

Q: And were you supporting her?

A: No, she was able to support herself. She had, between Social Security and her – what – what money she – she had, she was able to support herself so we didn't have to support her. And –

Q: But did you have to continue to give her a lot of emotional support?

A: Yes, yes. A great deal of emotional support. And I must say, my wife was – was very good with that, although it was very difficult for us, **Jill** really handled it very well.

Q: Now, your wife –

A: She did a great deal for my mother.

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Q: – your wife is a survivor.

A: My wife is also a survivor. Her family left **Germany** in 1939, very late, but was able to leave, and move to – go to **Kenya, East Africa**. That's a long story on – of its own, but they were very fortunate because the – her – her immediate family and uncles, aunts and cousins, quite a few of them – and in fact, even two grandparents, her father's parents, and her mother's mother, also left with them.

Q: Do you think your attraction for each other had something to do with both of you being survivors?

A: I think so, I think so, although we didn't think of ourselves as survivors at that time. That term wasn't really something that we applied to ourselves. I think so, because we had very common similar backgrounds. It's – as it turned out, **Jill** came from a place that was very close to where I was born, although my – our parents didn't know each other in **Germany**.

Q: But you had that in common.

A: We did, we did. But now, her family was Orthodox, and over time I guess I sort of swung in that direction, as a result.

Q: Mm-hm. You mean, over time after you were married?

A: After we were married, yes, after we were married.

Q: And so you consider yourself Orthodox now?

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A: Yes, yes, I do. But we were able to – to handle my mother's problems, although that wasn't easy at first, but gradually she adjusted more to that. But my – **Jill** gave her a lot of support and I gave her support, although I – I was working rather hard and **Jill**, after we had children, didn't work, so she had some time. And then living, at least initially in the same apartment house as we, my – so we were very – you know, had – were able to – to give my mother a great deal of support.

Q: And when were your children born?

A: Our children – my son is 32, and my daughter is 30. They were adopted. My wife had several miscarriages, and we were never – we never had children of our own. So we decided after the third miscarriage, to adopt children, which we did.

Q: And what was that experience like for you?

A: Well, that was a really very – it's emotionally a difficult experience, but we – we decided that we wanted to do that. And we adopted them through the **Louise Wise Agency in New York**. And that was quite an experience in itself, going through that procedure. But I must say they – they were supportive because they saw we were sincere and they felt that we would make good parents. And we adopted our son then when he was – well, he was about three months old. And so then short – then three years later we decided maybe we should try for another adoption, which was very unusual. The agency did not give out a lot of second children. They had just

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started a program – in fact, initially, when we adopted our son, they gave out no second children.

Q: Was that because they didn't have enough children?

A: Yes, yes.

Q: Okay.

A: And then they, somewhere during that time period, apparently, they started a program for giving out second children. They felt that perhaps it might be good for the children, that they would have siblings, or go to a family, not be an only child. So they started a program to place second children, and we were able to get into that program. And then we adopted my daughter about three years after my son. And she again was about three months old when we adopted her.

Q: And were they Jewish babies?

A: Yes. In **New York** at that time, the law was that you – they – the children could only be placed in homes of the religion of their mother. So the agency could only place Jewish children, and it could only place them in Jewish homes. Except that there was one exce – an interesting exception. There was a program for Native Americans adoption. You c – the law did not apply to Native Americans. And they also had a program for placing Native American children. It was a rather small

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program. We never got – did adopt a Native American child. But that was the only exception at that time.

Q: Would that have been your choice, to adopt Jewish babies?

A: Not necessarily, because we – they could have become Jewish. So that – it just worked out that way because when we went – the agents – had we not been able to adopt through the agency, we probably would have tried some other means, but it all worked out very well. So – and – so then after we adopted my daughter – well, first of all, the agency required that you have a separate room for each of the children, that was one of the conditions. We only had a thr – two bedroom apartment, and my son was already in the second bedroom. So we – we told the agency we would get a sec – a third – another bedroom for the – for – for my daughter eventually, so we looked for a house. So on – on the condition that we would, you know, provide a second bedroom for the – my daughter, they placed my daughter with us on – she was still in the – we were still in the apartment. But what we did was we made a room out of a dinette area, temporarily, for my daughter. And somewhere after that we – we did move into a house, and then we had a bedroom for each child. And meanwhile I was working, and I worked for five years for a public accounting firm, **Touche**, and – whose name changed several times while I was working for them. But by th – when I left they were called **Touche**

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Ross. And after about five years I went with a company called **Mark Marietta**(ph) in **New York**, at the headquarters. It was shortly after the company was formed, it was a merger of two other companies, that's – is frequently the case. And I was with them until I retired really, in 19 – at the age of 62, in 1992.

Q: Now, how did you get to **Washington**?

A: Ah yes, how did we get to **Washington**, all right. In the meantime, was oh, in the early 70s, my mother began to develop signs of dementia. So we – in the – in the meantime, she had moved out of her – the apartment in the house that we lived in, and taken an apartment in a – in – in – in a building that was built for senior citizen resident, as a senior citizen residence. She was very happy there. It was not too far from us. But while she was there she began to develop signs of dementia. And at the suggestion of her doctors and based on our own observations we decided that she probably should go into a – some kind of a home. And after looking around very long and hard, we found a place in upstate **New York**, in **New Rochelle**. There was a very good Jewish philanthropic home there, which is still there. And we decided of all the places we saw, this was the most approp – the best and most appropriate, and they accepted my mother. And this was in 1974, and two – oh, maybe two weeks after they had accepted my mother, the company said oh, by the way, we're moving the headquarters to **Bethesda, Maryland**. Now we knew that

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they were considering moving, but it – but the actual knowledge that the move was going to take place occurred just as my mother had been accepted in this home. So we said, well, can't put my mother there, we'll have to try to place her down here. We decided to move down here, that was [indecipherable] company [indecipherable]. As it turned out, we couldn't place my mother in a home here. We tried some alternatives for her, but it did not work out and we went back to the home in **New Rochelle** and said, would they accept my mother? We couldn't place her in the Hebrew home here. They had – they wouldn't accept her, they didn't have the facilities, she was an out-of-stater, so forth and so on. And they said well, if she's in no worse condition that she was when we accepted her, we'll take her. And of course, she was in worse condition. Except we were fortunate, the one day we took her up there she had a very good day. I fl – we flew – I flew up with her, and she had a great day, and they said fine, she's no worse than she was then, and they took her in. And although we felt very unhappy about placing my mother in **New Rochelle**, when we were here with our family, there was – there seemed to be no alternative. We decided to do that and she lived there for about four years before she died. And we went up there roughly almost once a month. One of us would go, either I would go or **Jill** would go, on a – usually on a Sunday to see my mother. And of course, her condition deteriorated, so after awhile she really didn't even

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know us any more, which is typical for that condition. But – so we took someone to help, we hired someone to help, you know, take – supplement the care that she was getting in the home. And that worked out reasonably well in terms of her condition. And then, of course, eventually she died, after about four years in the home.

Q: That was when?

A: Well, let's see, that was – we moved here in '74, it was about '70

[indecipherable] '77. Meanwhile, of course, we were here with our children, and I was continuing my work with the company. And **Jill**, when the children grew up decided she wanted to do something again, and she went, started selling real estate. We had – the children grew up, that was a mixed bag. They had very bad teenage years, and my daughter was the most difficult child. She had a terrible teenage time. I won't go into all the details, but she ran away from home several times. We finally had to – finally her condition got to be so bad, we hospitalized her briefly. And that helped her a great deal. That really helped her. She was hospitalized almost a year.

Q: That was a tough time for you.

A: It was a very tough time for us. And meanwhile my son, although he was not as rebellious as my daughter, or as difficult as my daughter, was also having a rather difficult teenage time. But my daughter somehow managed, as a result of the hospitalization, to pull herself together and her condition improved. And although it

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was far from perfect, nevertheless now she is married, and she has a s – husband, and she has two lovely children, and – and although she never made it to college, she did graduate high school, and they're living in **Florida**. And my son did get through – finally did go through the University of penns – of **Maryland**. And he's turned out to be a very nice, responsible individual, and we're very close to both children. And my son lives in **New York** with his family, he also has two children. And we – in fact, his little boy was just born two weeks ago.

Q: So you're a grandfather again.

A: A grandfather four times now. And so he has a little girl, as not – just under two, and a little boy. And my daughter also has a little girl and a little boy we're very close to. And they're lovely children. So we enjoy being grandparents.

Q: Mm-hm. We have to turn the tape.

End of Tape One, Side B

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Beginning Tape Two, Side A

Q: This is a continuation of a **United States Holocaust Memorial Museum** volunteer collection interview with **Kurt Pauly**, conducted by **Margaret Garrett** on November 18, 1997, in **Silver Spring, Maryland**. Tape number two, side A. Mr. **Pauly**, could you talk about your beginning to volunteer at the museum?

A: Yes. I retired in 1992, and at that time **Jill** was still selling real estate, but we decided to look for something to do. And we had heard about the training program for the Holocaust Museum. So we applied, thinking that with our background, it was something we would be very interested in. And as that turned out to be the case. We went and –

Q: You say, with your background, did you have some feelings about –

A: Yes, yes.

Q: – being there?

A: Yes, we did, because of all the people that both of us had lost in the Holocaust. And over the years, you know, you – you – as you get older, then you – you're interested in what happened in the past. And so we had – we had to s – oh, we'd become more informed about what had happened to our families that – during the war. And so we felt that this was something we really wanted to do because of our

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experiences in the – and what had happened to our families. We felt that the museum was a good memorial, and – and a – and – and a – very important as a place of learning, and we still feel that way. And people can – should learn about the Holocaust. So when we – after our interviews, and when we started the training program, we felt we, you know, we really had done the right thing and we would – we would – we would want to do the kind of work that the museum could provide us.

Q: What contributed to your being more sure that that was what you wanted to do?

A: Well, as we saw what the museum was, and how it was going about its mission as a – a place of learning, and a place where people could come to see what had occurred, particularly people who might not otherwise have been able to have that experience. We felt that that was a very fitting kind of activity for us, sort of a – sort of a memorial of our own for the people that we had lost in the Holocaust. And I think we still feel that way about it. So we went – visitor services is – is the work that we ended up doing. And now **Jill** though, has left the – at least temporarily the visitor services to work for the – work for **Marty Goldman** in his office. And I still continue with the visitor services.

Q: And what is **Marty Goldman's** office?

A: Office is – his – his is the Office of Volunteer Survivors' Affairs.

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Q: And what do you do in your volunteer [indecipherable]

A: Well, in – as visitor services, we do the usual thing. We are at the information desk at the elevators, we orient groups, and just generally trying to be helpful –

Q: And so –

A: – to the – to the visitors that come in.

Q: Do you do all of those at various times?

A: Yes, yes, yes, at various times we do that.

Q: And how often do you go?

A: We go in, well, once a week, on Thursday afternoons is our time. And I must say, our group had been very stable. Almost all of those – almost all of those volunteers are people who started with us when the museum opened, and have been coming on Thursday afternoons since the museum opened.

Q: And so you started when the museum opened?

A: Yes, yes.

Q: So you were in the very first group.

A: Yes, we were in the first group, with the first group. We were there for the dedication and we've been there ever since.

Q: Do you participate in other museum activities?

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A: Not too much, because we have other things. But well, when they have, you know, meetings and other things, sometimes we go. We go sometimes to – occasionally some of the classes, although we haven't gone to too many of them, because they're in the evening and – and we're tired on Thursday afternoons and – although occasionally we go in for something special, that we're particularly interested in.

Q: So the group of volunteers on thirdy – Thursday afternoon has remained fairly stable.

A: Very stable there, yes.

Q: And you've gotten to know the others?

A: Yes, yes, yes, we're friendly with them, sort of on a – on a volunteer basis. We don't really get together with them otherwise, socially, but – but we all feel very close to each other as volunteers.

Q: And do you feel that the volunteers work pretty well together, or that sometimes there are frictions and tensions and –

A: No, we – we – we seem to be a very homogeneous or at least a very – not necessarily homogeneous group, but we seem to get along very well together, and we haven't had any great co – any conflicts with each other. We – we – we are all very happy together.

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Q: [sneezes] Excuse me.

A: Bless you.

Q: Are any of the other people in the group survivors?

A: No.

Q: So you had to stop and think about that –

A: Yes, I'm – I'm close – there's one woman who comes whose husband was a survivor, but she's the only one that's close.

Q: And do you feel different from the others in that you are a survivor and they are not, or do they see you differently?

A: I don't know if we see each other that way – well, obviously we've had some different experiences, but because we were child survivors and also because we were not really directly in the camps, we weren't in the – in the Holocaust in that sense, we don't quite have the same experiences that the people who went through the camps had. Those survivors, I think we feel very different than they do. So we – we probably don't feel as different as these other volunteers, although we do feel somewhat different because of – of our experiences and the things that we – we saw happening to our families.

Q: Do you feel that you have a greater emotional understanding of what it's about?

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A: I don't know, but – I don't know if we have or not, but I th – we f – we – we certainly have a lot of feelings about the museum. Initially, when we were f – the volunteer program had the – had the volunteers spend time in the exhibition, in the permanent exhibition. And that was part of your daily tour, you would spend your time on – on the floor. And we began to complain about that because we – it was emotionally too draining to see that exhibit all the time.

Q: We, you mean, we –

A: The volunteers –

Q: – the volunteer survivors?

A: – and the – yes – no, all the volunteers –

Q: All the volunteers.

A: – began to feel that and we, maybe we felt it even more, because of our experience, bu-but all of them began to feel that that was just too much pressure and it was emotionally too upsetting to be in the exhibit that frequently, and for such long periods of time. As I put it, going through the exhibit, after awhile the pictures that you saw, the images you saw began to be almost like – like family, they were – they became so familiar, it was almost like looking into a family album, and it was just emotionally too wrenching to s – to do that all the time. Now, once in awhile we do go through the exhibit again, and we saw – us-usually when we do, we find

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we see something we didn't see before. But we can't handle it on a da – on a weekly basis.

Q: You say we go through –

A: **Jill** and I.

Q: You and **Jill** go through it.

A: Yes.

Q: And – and –

A: Oh, some of the other volunteers also do.

Q: And you do that just on your own initiative –

A: Yes.

Q: – to kind of refresh the experience?

A: Yes sometimes. Or sometimes we have friends who come in, and we'll go with them, and sometimes we'll accompany them through the exhibit. But on-only infrequently will we go through. But we do want to go through periodically.

Q: And could you say something about the direct experience that you have with the visitors, what that feels like for you?

A: Well, of course, in most cases it's – th – it's – it's not ver – you do – you don't have too much reaction, but it c – but periodically you find that there are people who really have some kind of em-emotional experience they want to convey to

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someone, and they – they do that, and they come up and they speak to the volunteers.

Q: This is an emotional experience that they have in the museum –

A: In the museum.

Q: – after –

A: Afterwards, they come and – and – and they want to speak to somebody about it.

I guess they just feel they have to get it off their chest – out – off their chest, or they want to pass it along to someone in the museum, that – that – this experience that they've had. Just a few months ago I had a very interesting experience. A woman came in who spoke – didn't speak too much English, she was German, a German teacher. And so she had come up to one of the other volunteers who knew that I spoke German, so she brought this woman over. So we spoke, and she said she was a teacher and she was here on some conference and she wanted to see the Holocaust Museum. And afterwards, she came up to me and she was – was very emotional about what she had seen. And she said now, she said, I'm really happy that I've seen this, because now no one in **Germany** can tell me that they didn't know what was going on during the war. She said, and I have to pass this along to my grandchildren and my children. She said, I want them to know, make sure that they know what happened. So occasionally you get those kind of reactions. Or people who are just

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very emotional about what they've seen for some reason. Either just because the whole exhibit is that way, or they've had some experience in their lives that attaches them to the Holocaust in some way. Some family member, or they themselves; we frequently get other survivors who come in the museum and come up to us and tell us a little bit about what they felt when they went through the exhibit.

Q: So how has that affected your life the other six days of the week? Does that make your experiences more intense, or –

A: I think we feel an attachment now to – to the museum, and to the – and to – to the people who come, because it seems to be an experience that's – that's important to them in many cases. And we're very kin – we're particularly also very interested in seeing all these children that come in, these children's groups, school groups. Now, some of them, of course, probably don't get much reaction. You know how children are sometimes, it's just another thing on their list. But many of them seem to be very interested and do get something positive out of that experience. And that's always something very worthwhile, when you see that.

Q: So when you leave at the end of your duty every Thursday afternoon, how are you usually feeling?

A: Very tired. Not only fi – not – not so much physically all the time, but emotionally sometimes draining. But – but we're – we're – but I feel good about it,

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and **Jill** does too, although she decided to stop the visitors' service work for a couple of reasons; one, it was getting to be physically to – diff – hard on her. She felt that it was too tiring, and she wanted to try something else for awhile. Not that she was unhappy doing it, it was almost physical, more than anything else. You know – even though, you know, a lot of people say well, you're always doing the same thing, and there's no – but it isn't always the same thing. It isn't always the same thing.

Q: So when people come up and want to talk to someone and you're it, that –

A: Yeah, it's very satisfying. Or you can answer questions for people. Lot of people come who have no experience or understanding of what happened in the Holocaust and after they've seen it, or even be – sometimes before they see it, they have questions, and they want to ask someone, or – or they want to tell you something. And if you can help them deal with that, or answer their questions, that's very satisfying, cause that place is a place where people should learn.

Q: Is there any more you want to say about that experience before we move on to a new subject?

A: Oh, I think that about covers it. I think that's the – the satisfaction we get out of it is – is – is – is dual. One is satisfying to us because of what we're doing, and it's

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also satisfying because we feel that that's something we've done for the people that were lost in the Holocaust.

Q: Have you made trips back to **Germany** or **Israel**?

A: Well, we made trips to **Israel**, yes. And of course, we went to **Yad Vashem** and that – lo-long before we had a museum here in **Washington**. Now that's a very different kind of institution. We found that to be emotionally very difficult to handle, **Yad Vashem**, as well. But I f – I find that I n – in a way I find the museum here easier to handle than I did **Yad Vashem** for some reason. I'm not sure what it was, but – or maybe it was just because the time has passed and I've just adjusted better to handling my emotions in relation to that.

Q: Oh, this was the first Holocaust museum you had [indecipherable]

A: Yes, yes, and that was many years – the first time we went was many – that was many years ago. And – and on our other trips to **Israel** we never – we never went back to the – to the – to **Yad Vashem**, because we found it emotionally so upsetting.

Q: Do you think if it had not been so upsetting, you might have considered going?

A: Maybe, maybe. I don't know.

Q: How was it for you otherwise, visiting **Israel**?

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A: Oh, well we – we liked visiting is – we went several times with the – when the children were young and we’ve gone since. And of course my ve – my cousin is there, my – my mother’s nephew. And we’re close to – because – in a way, because we – we have so little family. He also has very little family. All those cousins that we would have had, and other family members are all gone. And that’s kind of a tie that we have with him.

Q: So that’s a very important part of –

A: Yes, it is.

Q: – going to **Israel** –

A: Mm-hm.

Q: – to see him.

A: Yes. Although, as I said to you before, we visited him si – he’s with the foreign service, the – the Israeli foreign service, so we’ve seen him in **Europe** several times. And he’s been in je – both times he’s been stationed in **Germany**, because he speaks German so well. And of course for him it’s a different experience, as – well, you know, to be there as a – as a – and in that capacity –

Q: What was it like for you to visit **Germany**?

A: Well, the first time we went to **Germany** was in 1983. Was the first time we, either one of us, had been back to **Germany**. And we didn’t know what our reaction

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would be when we went. And we both – we went to both where **Jill** had come from, and also to **Aachen** and **Eilendorf** where my mother's family had come from. And it was a little difficult to handle, but – but **Jill** wanted to go back as – and I wanted to go back, just to see where our – where we'd come from and where our parents and family had been, and what that was like. And **Jill** had a lot of memories. **Jill** – **Jill** has a – many more memories, in a way, from her childhood than I do. And of course she had heard a lot from her parents and grandparents and aunts and uncles about life in **Germany**, so she wanted to see where they had lived. And I went with my cousin then to **Eilendorf**, and – and also **Jill** went along. And we went to the home, on our own, the home where my – where his father and my mother had grown up, where they – and where later my mother had lived, and my father. And when we got to the – it was a very interesting experience, we got to the door, we knocked and we introduced ourselves and told them who we were. And the woman who answered the door as – was the – was the wife of the man who now was running that butcher shop. And her father-in-law was still alive, and he had been the apprentice to my grandfather. And when we came in she gave us – it was almost as if she was running a tape, she almost had to get it off her chest as – this whole story that she remembered of my grandfather.

Q: Had you heard the story before?

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A: No, we hadn't heard that story before, and it was – that was a very emotionally
lil – emotional experience because this was such a sad story and – and **Jill** and I and
my cousin, after we left we sort of said, you know and – although we understood
wha – but why couldn't, you know, someone like that have perhaps taken him and
hidden him? But you know, of course, that was very dangerous to do, and – and of
course they had no obligation to do it. It was good enough of them, I guess, that
they helped him with food, and so forth. But – but for us it was so terribly sad to
hear that. First, you know, from someone who had seen him, and – and so we went
away. We were rather depressed when we left that – at that time. Although the
people were very nice people. And we had no – we really didn't have any bad
feelings about them. And my parents –

Q: But you did have the feelings of why couldn't someone –

A: Yes –

Q: – have hidden him?

A: – that's right, exactly, we sort of had those feelings. Because my mother, my –
had always spoken well of those people. I mean, you know, she had had very
positive feelings toward them. And – sort of the people that she knew in her
childhood, and of course thought of – all of them obviously weren't Nazis,
necessarily. So we f – we – you know, we didn't have any bad feelings about it. But

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that was a terrible feeling to go away, and having heard that story from someone who had actually experienced it, and knowing what fate had befallen my grandfather. Then we went back again, this time in 1997 at the invitation of the city of **Aachen**. And they had arranged – they had a pr – they have a pr – they have the prog – a program to bring back sa – people who has – had been in **Aachen** and had been forced to flee, because of the Nazis.

Q: Jews and were there others?

A: No, were Jew – no, Jews. I don't think there was anyone who wasn't Jewish that had been brought back. And since they had missed us on the first program that they had – they had a large group about three, four years earlier, this was a very – in a way it was very good that maybe they'd missed us because now there were only two of us there, and so it was a very personalized kind of thing, very personal. And they had arranged for us to meet this group. I call them the – call them the historical society, but their actual name would – closer is the **Heimatverein**, which sort of a – a home – a hometown club. But basically they're a historical society, that's what they're interested in, they're interested in the history of – of this part of **Aachen**, **Eilendorf**, that they – their family – where they live, and where their families have lived for generations as well. And when we came they wanted us to – to meet with them, and to tell us what they knew about the Jews that had lived in **Eilendorf**, and

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also to see what – what our experiences had been after we left. So they – so we not only got the usual tours, but we actually met with people, including my former ne – nanny, and some other people who had lived there for – during the time when my parents were still there, although most of the people were much too young to have been anything but children, or even some of them were, of course, obviously not even born til after the war. But they were very interested in what had happened to these – their former – the former residents, the Jewish residents of this little town of **Eilendorf**, which was now incorporated into **Aachen**, cause the – so they had done all this genealogical research on my mother's family. And one other interesting aspect, by the way of that, I just mention in passing; my mother had always said that she was related to **Annie Frank's** family, and we never quite knew how. So we had mentioned this to them. And the facts – my mother told the story that when **Annie Frank's** grandmother, maternal grandmother and – I'm sorry, yes – of – paternal grandmother, was very ill. She was one of the people [indecipherable] sort of a distant member of the family, that came when – during her illness, and she spent some time with her. But we never quite knew what the relationship was, so we mentioned it to them and subsequently they deg – dug into the genealogy and they found out what the connection was, that **Annie Frank** and I had the same great-great-grandparents on her father's side, which was, you know, her mother's – well,

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her mother's side. I'm sorry, not her father's side, her mother's side. So we had the same great-great-grandparents, that's where the relationship came in. Which was very interesting to hear. And my mother always said that I had played with her and her sister at some time, but I don't have any memories of that.

Q: What was it like seeing your nanny again?

A: That was a very – first of all, it was a big surprise, because I didn't even know she was still alive. Of course I – I didn't know at that time what her age was, because, you know, when you're six years old everybody – I thought she was much older than she obviously was. But it was – it – it was a sort of bittersweet thing. Obviously, it was wonderful seeing her again, and hearing her stories. On the other hand, some of the things sh-she told us, were very unhappy things, about, you know, what my – what had began – sort of experiences my parents had [**phone ringing**] after the Nazis came in and – and the time we were leaving, and what she knew about the family, what had happened to my cousins and so forth. So that was an unhappy part, but on the other hand, we were very happy to hear from someone who had known the family and had remembered – of course, we also went to the cemetery where my great-great grandparents, great grandparents, my grandmother all are buried. And my – and my mother's twin sister, who died of a – of the influenza epidemics after the first World War. All these people are buried there, at

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this little cemetery in **Eilendorf**, and it's still there, those stones are still standing. So that was a bit of a – a – that sort of gives you an – at a time now, you know, you've heard these stories, but to actually see it, actually see where these people are buried, and to see that, give you a sort of a more immediate – more immediacy to – to all the things that you heard. It gives it a mo – a newer reality, so to speak. It was interesting, we also – we also spoke there to one of the school groups there, they had asked us to do – whether we would do that, speak to a group of children. That occurred both in the – in the – in **Cologne** when my wife went back there last year, and this year when we were in **Aachen**. Both times the – the people there asked us to speak to some school groups. So we did, we spoke to a group in the school called the **Pius** gymnasium, named after Pope pa – one of the popes, Pope **Pius**, one of the **Pius's**, I guess. And –

Q: So this was a Catholic school?

A: It – yes, but it's a public school in **Germany**.

Q: What does that mean?

A: Well, it means that it is – in **Germany** they – these schools are also supported by the state. In other words, they're not private schools in the sense that we have here.

And –

Q: So it's supported financially by the state –

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A: Partly, yes.

Q: – but the Catholic –

A: Yes, but it's a –

Q: – church runs the school?

A: Yes, yes, it's a Catholic – well, yes, the people there are – they – they te – yes, they – they have religious classes as well, as well as the usual school classes. So it's – but we spoke to a group of children, two classes wa – and – the ages of 12 to 13. And they had done a project on Jewish life in that area before the war. So they were somewhat familiar about the history of the Jews in that area, and they had studied about the – they had sort of a course on comparative religion, so they'd study something about the Jewish religion as well. So they were interested to hear from us about our experiences. And we did it on a sort of a question and answer basis, rather than just sort of lecture to the students. We s – we did it on the basis of answering their questions, which wy – th-the – the children got very much involved, we were really surprised at how involved the children got in this question and answer period. They really seemed to show considerable interest in what happened, and – but wa – what it meant to be Jewish and what – a little bit about the Jewish religion, and what had happened to the Jews in **Germany** during the period of – of the Nazi regime.

Q: So they were interested and curious. Did you notice any reactions to all this?

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A: Yeah, there was one reaction from the second class. They got very much involved in – particularly the – well – well – well, the girls particularly, for some reason, I think they're more outgoing and are willing to – at that age I think they are a little more mature than the boys. And after the class was over, they stayed, and they wanted to know about, you know, where we lived and – and what it was like to be Jewish in the **United States**, and th – so they – I mean, they carried on even after – after the period was over. So they were – they – they had – they showed quite a bit of interest.

Q: So they showed interest, did they express any feelings or reactions to the information they were getting?

A: Not directly. I mean, they didn't evaluate it. It's just that their response was so positive, that we really felt very good about it.

Q: Positive as far as strong interest?

A: Yeah, strong interest, and the kind of reaction they had, and what they said. And we promised to send them – the teacher asked us in – also to send us – her some information, books and so forth, about the Holocaust, since we were working at the museum. And we said we would, and we did.

Q: In English?

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A: In – well, unfortunately they're all in English. And we sent them, and we just got back – course, that t-took us a little bit of time after we got home to get it all together. And then when you send a package like that, it takes awhile to get over there. And we just got this weekend, we just got a letter from a man who was the head of this **Heimatverein**, this organization, that we've gotten somewhat close with him, he's a younger man. He's an engineer, he speaks English very well, comes to this country frequently on business. And we've been running this through him. In fact, the school that we went to was the school his children go to. So we sent the books to him to pass along to the teacher, and he just – they just got that the other week, and he sent us back a long letter saying how much they appreciated it, and that the teacher was beginning to get into these books, but could we send them something in German, because they found it more difficult to handle it in English. Now the children have – do study English, and these children had one year of English already when we spoke to them. But obviously that – they – it's easier for them to handle the German. But I don't know whether we can get some of these things in German, or – but they – they were very appreciative of getting this information.

Q: And so what was that like for you to speak to the children and to get involved with the school?

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A: Well, we were very happy to pass along to them some firsthand experience. In other words, we were – as they say, and there's a German phrase for it, which really says you're a witness of the event. We were witnesses of the events that occurred. I mean, they're young children, to them this history is almost like reading history about Ancient **Rome** in a way. But – but here were people who actually had the experience – lived in that time period, and had experienced some of these things, and they found it very interesting, and they seemed to take to it very readily, and they were very interested in our experiences. They wanted to hear what had happened – what we had – you know, what had happened to us, and why it happened to us. Of course, we couldn't really tell them why in – in one sense, but on the other hand, it made what they had learned in class that much more immediate and real for them, as well. And we felt very good about being able to pass this along to this generation, because those are the people we have to – hope to – to get to understand what occurred.

Q: We have to turn the tape.

End of Tape Two, Side A

Beginning Tape Two, Side B

Q: This is a continuation of the **United States Holocaust Memorial Museum** volunteer collection interview with **Kurt Pauly**, tape number two, side **B**.

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A: Yes, you were asking about our – what our feelings were about going to **Germany**, and they are very much a mixed – a mixed emotional bag. On one side, of course, it's very sad and not happy to go to a place where those thing that we know happened, and some of them which we experienced ourselves happened, that – so that's the sad side of it. On the other hand, it was good to see where our families lived, and also to meet people who showed some sincere interest and understanding of what occurred, and really wanted to know what happened, and what our feelings were. Now obviously the people we met in these circumstances, are people who have – well we – shall we say a positive attitude toward what occurred in the Holocaust. I mean – so in the – in the sense that they know what happened, and feel that they want to try to make good in some sense, to the limited extent that they can, the terrible – make goods – you know, the – it's – from the terrible things that occurred. So it's very good to meet those kind of people now. Obviously we know that there's still anti-Semitism in **Germany**, and that there are still people running around in **Germany** who were perhaps directly involved in some of the atrocities that occurred in the Holocaust. So, you know, and so that gives you kind of a terrible feeling when you're just walking down the street and you see someone of an age that you know went through the period as an adult; period of the Holocaust, period from '33 through '45; and you wonder, you know,

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you have this – this – this nagging feeling about, you know, who are these people? You know, were they perpetrator, were they di – were they directly involved? And that's a very, very difficult emotion to deal with. But on the other hand, I guess it's – in a way it's a good thing to face up to that, and to know that both of these sides of **Germany** still exist, and the hope we have is for this younger gener – these younger generation to really understand and that – what happened, and therefor try to make sure it doesn't happen again.

Q: How do you think your experience has affected your current or past political views, or your opinions about national and international issues?

A: Well, I think it pr – the fact that it happened, and happened to our families, happened to us, that pe – you know, that here are people who have lived in a country for hundreds of years, as my family and **Jill's** family had done, and really felt German, no question about it. I mean, my father was a soldier in the first World War. And the Jews of **Germany** were as patriotic Germans as the Jews of **America** are patriotic Americans. I mean, they felt German. And to think that what happened could happen, and did happen, is in a way very disturbing to us individually, because [**phone ringing**] somehow you have that nagging feeling that maybe it could happen again, and maybe even could happen here. I mean, I think survivors had more of that feeling than people who did not go through that.

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Q: And you had that feeling more than people who did not –

A: I think so. I think, based on my – our experiences with people who were not survivors of the Holocaust, who were not in **Europe**, who were Americans, and have lived here, didn't have that experience directly, I think we feel differently than they do. And I get th – I get the same reaction from other friends of ours who are also survivors, that they have those feelings and those emotions. I just – you ju – they – I mean, I guess you can never quite feel as certain about what's going to happen, and that it'll be that – or that something like that occurred in the Holocaust can't happen again, or can't happen to Jews again, or can't happen in this country again, as people who didn't have that experience. I think that also makes the state of **Israel** for us, much more important in that sense. That that is something that was not there when the Holocaust occurred, and had it been there, probably things would have been somewhat different, because at least Jews would have had a place to go.

Q: How does this feeling affect your politics or your participation in the community?

A: Oh, I think – I don't know. But I thi – I don't know whether it has some of that direct effect – maybe I'm – I'm [**indecipherable**] our politics might be otherwise, but it definitely, I think, has an effect on how we interpret the events, and what

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people say and do. And when something occurs, maybe we feel – you know, if we see something – maybe we are more apt to interpret something as being anti-Jewish or anti-Semitic than others, because we said, hey, wait a minute, is that really – you know? And it may not be, but I think you have that reaction more quickly than people who have not gone through something like that.

Q: Does an example come to mind?

A: Well, let me try to think. All right, when we had this – oh, what was this fellow down in **Louisiana**? Can't think. He ran for the **U.S.** Senate from **Louisiana** –

Q: **Huey Long**?

A: No, no, no, no, no, much later, recently. A few years ago. No, not **Huey Long**, much earlier – much later than that. I can't think of his name. He was a really – I mean, he really was someone who not so much – not necessarily anti-Semitic direct, but he was just sort of anti a lot of things, and he had – obviously was a person with a great deal of – of – of prejudices, in terms of minorities and other people who were not, you know, quite Anglo-Saxon Americans. And when you – you know, so I think our reaction to that was much more fearful in a way, than other Americans who said, oh well, you know, he's out on a far limb, he's far – you know, he's way out of the political s – on the side of some extreme side of the political spectrum, because we said, well, people like that who were on the far side of the political

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spectrum in **Germany**, finally got into power, and we said, you know – so we're much more – I think perhaps we're much more concerned about those things than people who don't have those experiences. And when we see it in other parts of the world also, we're – we s – we – we perhaps in si – always more fearful that people who have such negative views, in terms of other minority groups, whether it's here or in **Europe**, or in **Asia**, can get into a position where they can create the kind of regime that did the sort of thing that happened in **Germany**. I do think that that's something that impacts survivors more than others.

Q: And it impacts you more than others.

A: Oh yes, yes, as – me as well, yes. But overall, I think we're, you know, basically, because of our age when we left **Germany**, I think we're pro – we are, on the other hand, not as much affected as people who even went – or, you know, who – who went through the camps, who went through the actual events of the – that occurred in **Europe** in the Holocaust, I don't think we are – we don't – I don't think we have quite their emotions, cause they must have a whole other set of emotions, and concerns and reactions. But I do think we are also – but we – I think we're somehow different emotionally than people who haven't had any – the experience even we've had.

Q: So it's had a major, lasting impact on –

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A: Yes, and I think it had it – and the other thing is, I think it had a – a terrible impact on our families, our parents. I th – don't kn – you know, there've been – there's been a lot written about people who were in **Europe** and – and survived the Holocaust in **Europe**, or – and what happened to them, people who were in the camps, or hidden, or so forth. I don't think there's been much written about people who got out of **Europe**, but had the experiences that our parents had, and what – what that meant for them, because here were people who were just, you know, ripped out of their environment, and ripped out of everything that they were used to, and were thrown into another world, other countries, and had to adjust, you know, to – try to establish a whole new life for themselves. Now, obviously their experiences were not as horrible as the people who were involved in the camps, but they certainly, I know, are – both of our families suffered a great deal as a result of that as well. It's a different kind of suffering and it's a different kind of experience.

Q: But it's suffering.

A: But it's there, nevertheless, yeah. So, I – I know our children and our nieces and nephews and all the people of the next generation, they have again different experience and different feeling because they're again another step removed from the events in **Europe**. But I think even those people are somewhat impacted by our experiences, because they've heard it.

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Q: Mm-hm. So it's a part of their world.

A: Yeah. Now, their children, again, now they're gonna be another – further removed from it, and now it really becomes ancient history, in a way. And that's why I think the museum is very important, because it brings that history to these people, to these young people, and to the people who had no experience with the Holocaust, and says oh hey, wait a minute, here it is, and it's – it's more immediate than just reading about it, or hearing about it, sort of on the background noise, and hopefully it brings it up as a more – as a – as a more real experience, that it really did happen, and it happened fairly recently, and it happened to people that are still alive today. That was an interesting experience once I had in the museum when I was at the elevators. A young group came – some young people came through, oh, young teenagers, maybe again, 12, 13. And one of the boys came up to me while we were waiting – while they were waiting for the elevator, and he says, is there anybody still alive who – who experienced this? So to him this was already, you know, really, you know, ancient history. So what I told him I had – had an experience – you know, that I had lived through that, I guess it was sort of like, you know, meeting **Julius Caesar** or something, I don't know. But – so that – our whole experience was – you know. Now, we don't want to make the Holocaust, you know, sort of a religion of life now because I think that's a negative. But I

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think we have to remember what happened, and – and live our life knowing those events occurred, and what those mean.

Q: Is there anything else you can think to say?

A: No, I think that's – I think that's about it.

Q: Well –

A: I see – I appreciate being able to – to – to – you know, pass this along.

Q: Well, we appreciate very much your contribution to making this history live.

Thank you very much.

A: Okay, thank you.

Q: This concludes the **United States Holocaust Memorial Museum** volunteer collection interview with **Kurt Pauly**.

End of Tape Two, Side B

Conclusion of Interview

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