

1

00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:01,500

2

00:00:01,500 --> 00:00:05,610

This is a continuation of
United States Holocaust Memorial

3

00:00:05,610 --> 00:00:08,640

Museum Volunteer
Collection interview

4

00:00:08,640 --> 00:00:13,910

with Ruth Harvey conducted by
Margaret Garrett on August 22,

5

00:00:13,910 --> 00:00:16,800

1997 in Bethesda, Maryland.

6

00:00:16,800 --> 00:00:21,690

Tape number two side
A. During the break

7

00:00:21,690 --> 00:00:24,930

you were talking about your
father's first marriage.

8

00:00:24,930 --> 00:00:30,000

Yes, he has always been
a stage-door Johnny,

9

00:00:30,000 --> 00:00:31,440

a man about town.

10

00:00:31,440 --> 00:00:32,580

He really was.

11

00:00:32,580 --> 00:00:34,830

He once had a
violent love affair

12

00:00:34,830 --> 00:00:37,265

with a young actress
named Ellen Victor,

13
00:00:37,265 --> 00:00:38,700
and he was so jealous of her.

14
00:00:38,700 --> 00:00:40,530
He was all set to shoot her.

15
00:00:40,530 --> 00:00:43,140
He was a very
passionate young man.

16
00:00:43,140 --> 00:00:44,790
Well, he got over that.

17
00:00:44,790 --> 00:00:48,450
But he did marry an
artist as his first wife.

18
00:00:48,450 --> 00:00:53,160
She was prima ballerina
of the Berlin opera.

19
00:00:53,160 --> 00:00:55,380
Her name was Elizabeth Grub.

20
00:00:55,380 --> 00:00:58,860
She was non-Jewish, and
she was a very good dancer.

21
00:00:58,860 --> 00:01:01,120
They were married
about four years.

22
00:01:01,120 --> 00:01:04,920
And then she ran off with the
stage designer, a Greek stage

23
00:01:04,920 --> 00:01:06,330
designer.

24

00:01:06,330 --> 00:01:12,810

And then he was a
divorced man, and I

25

00:01:12,810 --> 00:01:16,020

think it was a very good thing
when my mother-to-be walked

26

00:01:16,020 --> 00:01:19,320

into his life as his secretary.

27

00:01:19,320 --> 00:01:21,990

So he had no children
from his first marriage?

28

00:01:21,990 --> 00:01:26,370

No. and she later married
some titled German

29

00:01:26,370 --> 00:01:29,850

and barely escaped
with her life when

30

00:01:29,850 --> 00:01:33,870

the Russians overran their
estate that they lived on.

31

00:01:33,870 --> 00:01:34,870

Barely escaped.

32

00:01:34,870 --> 00:01:35,550

She later died.

33

00:01:35,550 --> 00:01:36,510

I met her once.

34

00:01:36,510 --> 00:01:39,690

She was a very charming lady.

35

00:01:39,690 --> 00:01:42,690

OK, let's go back
to New York, and you

36

00:01:42,690 --> 00:01:44,430
went to high school where?

37

00:01:44,430 --> 00:01:47,130
I went to the High
School of Music and Art,

38

00:01:47,130 --> 00:01:50,940
which had always been a fond
project of Mayor La Guardia's,

39

00:01:50,940 --> 00:01:52,710
Fiorello La Guardia.

40

00:01:52,710 --> 00:01:58,110
And you could only go in there
by passing certain tests,

41

00:01:58,110 --> 00:02:00,420
and I'm happy to
say I passed them.

42

00:02:00,420 --> 00:02:03,250
And there were two
categories in those days.

43

00:02:03,250 --> 00:02:05,970
Now it's the High School
for the Performing Arts.

44

00:02:05,970 --> 00:02:10,680
But in those days it
was just Music and Art.

45

00:02:10,680 --> 00:02:12,345
I belonged with the artists.

46

00:02:12,345 --> 00:02:15,450

47

00:02:15,450 --> 00:02:18,180
It was a regular

high school, but they

48

00:02:18,180 --> 00:02:21,180
were these two different
things that we concentrated on,

49

00:02:21,180 --> 00:02:24,960
a career for music or a career
as an artist in addition

50

00:02:24,960 --> 00:02:26,700
to high school subjects.

51

00:02:26,700 --> 00:02:30,450
So you graduated from
high school in what year?

52

00:02:30,450 --> 00:02:31,920
I think maybe '48?

53

00:02:31,920 --> 00:02:34,890
I was always one year
behind because of my

54

00:02:34,890 --> 00:02:36,690
having been a refugee.

55

00:02:36,690 --> 00:02:40,320
I believe I graduated in
'48 if I'm not mistaken.

56

00:02:40,320 --> 00:02:42,340
And then what happened?

57

00:02:42,340 --> 00:02:44,880
Well, I went to Cooper
Union for a time.

58

00:02:44,880 --> 00:02:46,800
I did not graduate from there.

59

00:02:46,800 --> 00:02:48,510

I was-- that's another thing.

60

00:02:48,510 --> 00:02:51,120

You had to take an
exam to get into that.

61

00:02:51,120 --> 00:02:53,790

I passed that for
the day courses.

62

00:02:53,790 --> 00:02:57,750

And then my parents took
me aside and said, Ruthie,

63

00:02:57,750 --> 00:03:00,590

there just isn't
the money there.

64

00:03:00,590 --> 00:03:02,870

You just going to have
to take a daytime job

65

00:03:02,870 --> 00:03:04,710

and go to night school.

66

00:03:04,710 --> 00:03:06,780

Well, I was very
upset about that.

67

00:03:06,780 --> 00:03:10,020

All my friends who were
able to go to Cooper Union

68

00:03:10,020 --> 00:03:13,320

were going in the daytime,
and it was very hard

69

00:03:13,320 --> 00:03:17,220

for me to work at
jobs, sales jobs.

70

00:03:17,220 --> 00:03:21,180

The worst job I ever had

as a very young person--

71
00:03:21,180 --> 00:03:22,980
oh, this was ghastly--

72
00:03:22,980 --> 00:03:26,640
was in some horrible
neighborhood downtown

73
00:03:26,640 --> 00:03:30,660
where we spray painted
little monkey masks.

74
00:03:30,660 --> 00:03:32,910
You know the little
faces of little monkeys?

75
00:03:32,910 --> 00:03:34,800
We spray painted them.

76
00:03:34,800 --> 00:03:38,850
Every time I sneezed I'd get
out a different rainbow color.

77
00:03:38,850 --> 00:03:41,750
It was unhealthy and unpleasant.

78
00:03:41,750 --> 00:03:44,190
It was, I would
say, factory work.

79
00:03:44,190 --> 00:03:45,780
It was just ghastly.

80
00:03:45,780 --> 00:03:50,520
Well, I did-- the jobs I got in
those days were not very good.

81
00:03:50,520 --> 00:03:55,110
And it was a great strain
to work that and then

82

00:03:55,110 --> 00:03:56,610
go to night school.

83
00:03:56,610 --> 00:04:00,300
And after a while
I just dropped out.

84
00:04:00,300 --> 00:04:03,780
And much to my regret really.

85
00:04:03,780 --> 00:04:11,790
And then I eventually, after
many lesser and less enjoyable

86
00:04:11,790 --> 00:04:15,570
jobs, I found a
lovely secretarial job

87
00:04:15,570 --> 00:04:19,060
with Paramount Theaters
in the Paramount Building

88
00:04:19,060 --> 00:04:22,140
in Times Square where I
stayed for four years,

89
00:04:22,140 --> 00:04:24,370
and I really enjoyed it.

90
00:04:24,370 --> 00:04:27,270
I was ordering candy
for the theater chains

91
00:04:27,270 --> 00:04:28,620
and doing secretarial--

92
00:04:28,620 --> 00:04:31,590
Candy was bigger with
them than the films were.

93
00:04:31,590 --> 00:04:33,910
They got more revenue from that.

94

00:04:33,910 --> 00:04:37,110

And I stayed with them--

95

00:04:37,110 --> 00:04:40,470

oh, I must tell you how I got
the job at the State Department

96

00:04:40,470 --> 00:04:41,400

in Washington.

97

00:04:41,400 --> 00:04:43,005

Would you like to
hear how I got that?

98

00:04:43,005 --> 00:04:45,540

Well, now, were you
in New York when you

99

00:04:45,540 --> 00:04:47,100

got the State Department job?

100

00:04:47,100 --> 00:04:48,300

Yes, I'll tell you how.

101

00:04:48,300 --> 00:04:49,890

OK.

102

00:04:49,890 --> 00:04:54,750

My parents went for
a vacation to Nassau.

103

00:04:54,750 --> 00:04:58,800

And it was February, and I
was alone in the apartment

104

00:04:58,800 --> 00:05:02,190

and feeling a little woebegone.

105

00:05:02,190 --> 00:05:05,850

Things were not going
terribly smoothly in my life.

106

00:05:05,850 --> 00:05:07,890

And late at night

I had the radio on

107

00:05:07,890 --> 00:05:10,560

and I heard an

announcer say, would you

108

00:05:10,560 --> 00:05:13,070

like a career in

the Foreign Service?

109

00:05:13,070 --> 00:05:16,950

If so, apply for

the State Department

110

00:05:16,950 --> 00:05:20,430

at Center Street downtown

and get your form.

111

00:05:20,430 --> 00:05:23,220

Well, I took off from

work the very next day

112

00:05:23,220 --> 00:05:26,460

and took the subway all the

way down the Center Street

113

00:05:26,460 --> 00:05:32,370

near Wall Street and applied

for form 57 for employment

114

00:05:32,370 --> 00:05:35,910

with the State Department

in quintuplicate.

115

00:05:35,910 --> 00:05:39,210

Why were you interested

in applying for the job?

116

00:05:39,210 --> 00:05:44,700

New York was not a healthy

environment for me.

117
00:05:44,700 --> 00:05:51,120
I had been there 16 years,
and I was not flourishing.

118
00:05:51,120 --> 00:05:53,730
Things were not
happening well for me,

119
00:05:53,730 --> 00:05:57,224
and I felt that I needed
a change of life--

120
00:05:57,224 --> 00:05:59,700
lifestyle, surroundings,
everything.

121
00:05:59,700 --> 00:06:03,000
What was not happening
that you wanted to?

122
00:06:03,000 --> 00:06:08,190
I met a lot of people who I
thought were rather neurotic.

123
00:06:08,190 --> 00:06:12,030
There was something unhealthy
about life in New York.

124
00:06:12,030 --> 00:06:15,600
If you were not well
cushioned by money,

125
00:06:15,600 --> 00:06:17,850
if you had to
struggle, it could be

126
00:06:17,850 --> 00:06:20,340
downright depressing at times.

127
00:06:20,340 --> 00:06:22,320
And I felt that I
was young enough

128
00:06:22,320 --> 00:06:25,020
and I owed it to myself
to go someplace else

129
00:06:25,020 --> 00:06:27,600
and try something new.

130
00:06:27,600 --> 00:06:29,910
So the very next
day I got the form.

131
00:06:29,910 --> 00:06:32,190
My parents were
still on vacation.

132
00:06:32,190 --> 00:06:34,590
Every night after
work I would lie

133
00:06:34,590 --> 00:06:37,320
on the floor on the
carpet on my stomach

134
00:06:37,320 --> 00:06:42,090
and fill out some more of this
huge, positively endless form

135
00:06:42,090 --> 00:06:43,320
in quintuplicate.

136
00:06:43,320 --> 00:06:47,400
You had to go back to your
very first beginnings of life,

137
00:06:47,400 --> 00:06:48,720
everybody you ever knew.

138
00:06:48,720 --> 00:06:51,090
You had to get
references and schools.

139

00:06:51,090 --> 00:06:55,230

It took a week to fill
it out conscientiously.

140

00:06:55,230 --> 00:06:59,010

I did that, and I listed
references here and there

141

00:06:59,010 --> 00:07:00,040

and whatnot.

142

00:07:00,040 --> 00:07:02,610

And I mailed it off,
and this was February.

143

00:07:02,610 --> 00:07:05,240

And I forgot about it.

144

00:07:05,240 --> 00:07:09,770

In May, I'm sitting in my
office at the Paramount Theaters

145

00:07:09,770 --> 00:07:15,620

when the phone rang, and it was
Washington offering me a job.

146

00:07:15,620 --> 00:07:19,490

Well, my father was so
pleased because he had always

147

00:07:19,490 --> 00:07:23,810

had a high regard for
diplomats, the diplomats life,

148

00:07:23,810 --> 00:07:27,110

and here was his little
Ruthie entering, true,

149

00:07:27,110 --> 00:07:29,885

at the very bottom, but still
it was the State Department.

150

00:07:29,885 --> 00:07:32,720

He couldn't have
been more pleased.

151
00:07:32,720 --> 00:07:38,480
So I gave up my job at Paramount
and traveled to Washington.

152
00:07:38,480 --> 00:07:41,780
Now, you had been living
still in your parents' home?

153
00:07:41,780 --> 00:07:43,820
Well, at first in
their home, and then

154
00:07:43,820 --> 00:07:47,780
I managed to get a room in
the same building above them.

155
00:07:47,780 --> 00:07:50,390
But I left all
that quite happily

156
00:07:50,390 --> 00:07:53,450
and settled in Mount
Pleasant and worked

157
00:07:53,450 --> 00:07:55,820
for the State Department
for about four years.

158
00:07:55,820 --> 00:07:58,220
Did you know anyone
in Washington?

159
00:07:58,220 --> 00:08:02,390
I had had a boyfriend who had
lived in Washington on and off.

160
00:08:02,390 --> 00:08:04,340
He was a flight engineer.

161
00:08:04,340 --> 00:08:07,160

And I had visited him
once, and the first thing

162
00:08:07,160 --> 00:08:12,150
I saw from Union Station was
the Capitol and trees everywhere

163
00:08:12,150 --> 00:08:12,650
I looked.

164
00:08:12,650 --> 00:08:14,900
I fell hook, line, and sinker.

165
00:08:14,900 --> 00:08:19,130
I fell in love with Washington,
and I wanted to live here.

166
00:08:19,130 --> 00:08:21,050
So when the State
Department job came

167
00:08:21,050 --> 00:08:22,870
I thought this is wonderful.

168
00:08:22,870 --> 00:08:25,710
This is a wonderful way to
get where I wanted to go.

169
00:08:25,710 --> 00:08:28,400
So you came down by yourself and
you found housing by yourself?

170
00:08:28,400 --> 00:08:32,150
Yes, my father treated me to
my first night's hotel room.

171
00:08:32,150 --> 00:08:35,030
And then at the State Department
I went to the registry

172
00:08:35,030 --> 00:08:39,260
for housing, and they
found me a pleasant place

173
00:08:39,260 --> 00:08:40,320
on Mount Pleasant.

174
00:08:40,320 --> 00:08:42,140
Yes, it was nice.

175
00:08:42,140 --> 00:08:46,010
A group home with lots
of other young women.

176
00:08:46,010 --> 00:08:49,250
And that job worked out
pretty well for you?

177
00:08:49,250 --> 00:08:50,600
Oh, indeed I had a wonderful--

178
00:08:50,600 --> 00:08:52,340
I loved working for these.

179
00:08:52,340 --> 00:08:57,320
The odd thing is I wanted to
go as a foreign secretary,

180
00:08:57,320 --> 00:09:00,620
and they offered me such
a hideous assignment

181
00:09:00,620 --> 00:09:05,900
that I simply just switched
to domestic because I

182
00:09:05,900 --> 00:09:08,000
thought I'd be happier than--

183
00:09:08,000 --> 00:09:08,975
what this country?

184
00:09:08,975 --> 00:09:12,960
It was landlocked, and I can't
think of the name right now.

185
00:09:12,960 --> 00:09:16,910
But it was the least appealing
country in Latin America.

186
00:09:16,910 --> 00:09:18,950
No ocean, no nothing.

187
00:09:18,950 --> 00:09:23,150
And I thought to myself, to
lose two years of my life

188
00:09:23,150 --> 00:09:26,330
in this boondocks,
that didn't seem right.

189
00:09:26,330 --> 00:09:27,410
And so I simply--

190
00:09:27,410 --> 00:09:30,350
and in those days you
can get a second choice.

191
00:09:30,350 --> 00:09:33,830
And so I switched
to domestic, and I

192
00:09:33,830 --> 00:09:35,690
worked on the Latin
American division

193
00:09:35,690 --> 00:09:38,730
with my previous
knowledge of Spanish.

194
00:09:38,730 --> 00:09:42,050
And I had a very good time as
a single girl in Washington.

195
00:09:42,050 --> 00:09:43,460
I enjoyed myself.

196

00:09:43,460 --> 00:09:46,940
Then I met my husband-to-be,
and that starts

197
00:09:46,940 --> 00:09:48,350
another chapter in my life.

198
00:09:48,350 --> 00:09:50,190
And how did you meet him?

199
00:09:50,190 --> 00:09:52,250
Very romantic.

200
00:09:52,250 --> 00:09:55,520
In those days the
Park-Sheraton Hotel

201
00:09:55,520 --> 00:09:59,240
had a magnificent
Olympic-size pool.

202
00:09:59,240 --> 00:10:02,540
Now it's been paved
over as a parking lot.

203
00:10:02,540 --> 00:10:03,590
Can you imagine?

204
00:10:03,590 --> 00:10:06,710
But in those days it
was a very refreshing,

205
00:10:06,710 --> 00:10:09,170
beautiful blue-green water.

206
00:10:09,170 --> 00:10:13,850
And one Labor Day--
it was Labor Day 1957.

207
00:10:13,850 --> 00:10:15,290
It was very hot.

208

00:10:15,290 --> 00:10:17,480

My girlfriend and
I decided to go

209

00:10:17,480 --> 00:10:20,030

to that pool for a nice swim.

210

00:10:20,030 --> 00:10:22,470

And so we went, and that's
how I met my husband.

211

00:10:22,470 --> 00:10:22,970

At the pool?

212

00:10:22,970 --> 00:10:24,410

He was sitting next to me.

213

00:10:24,410 --> 00:10:27,090

Mm-hmm.

214

00:10:27,090 --> 00:10:29,660

And what was he doing?

215

00:10:29,660 --> 00:10:31,275

Well, this is so strange.

216

00:10:31,275 --> 00:10:34,350

217

00:10:34,350 --> 00:10:36,900

He said he was also in
the foreign service.

218

00:10:36,900 --> 00:10:39,580

And what he couldn't
tell me in those days

219

00:10:39,580 --> 00:10:43,470

but what I can tell now because
he's been dead since 1972

220

00:10:43,470 --> 00:10:45,535

he was with the CIA.

221

00:10:45,535 --> 00:10:47,160

Only he didn't tell
me that, of course.

222

00:10:47,160 --> 00:10:52,655

He just-- we exchanged
telephone numbers, and he said,

223

00:10:52,655 --> 00:10:54,030

if you call me
and I'm not there,

224

00:10:54,030 --> 00:10:56,780

just leave a message because
that's the way it is.

225

00:10:56,780 --> 00:10:59,550

I didn't know that, so he
called me and he missed me,

226

00:10:59,550 --> 00:11:01,890

so I called him and
he wasn't there.

227

00:11:01,890 --> 00:11:04,470

And I wasn't going to leave
a message, so I just hung up.

228

00:11:04,470 --> 00:11:06,780

This way we never would
have gotten together.

229

00:11:06,780 --> 00:11:09,690

But finally he got me
at home because I'd only

230

00:11:09,690 --> 00:11:11,190

given him my office number.

231

00:11:11,190 --> 00:11:13,830

My boss took pity

on him and he said,

232

00:11:13,830 --> 00:11:16,290

I'll give you her
home phone number.

233

00:11:16,290 --> 00:11:18,330

God bless him.

234

00:11:18,330 --> 00:11:21,510

And then we saw each other
every day for about nine months.

235

00:11:21,510 --> 00:11:25,200

And then he was assigned
to Athens, Greece.

236

00:11:25,200 --> 00:11:29,200

And that's when he asked me to
share his life there with him.

237

00:11:29,200 --> 00:11:32,520

And we got married,
and we went to Athens

238

00:11:32,520 --> 00:11:35,040

and lived happily
there for five years.

239

00:11:35,040 --> 00:11:38,040

And two of my three
children were born there.

240

00:11:38,040 --> 00:11:40,890

Now, when did you learn
he was with the CIA?

241

00:11:40,890 --> 00:11:44,700

He told me after much hemming
and hawing months and months

242

00:11:44,700 --> 00:11:45,452

later.

243
00:11:45,452 --> 00:11:46,410
Before you get married?

244
00:11:46,410 --> 00:11:47,730
He had to because I was--

245
00:11:47,730 --> 00:11:48,990
oh, let me see.

246
00:11:48,990 --> 00:11:51,120
No, I was aware of
what he was doing

247
00:11:51,120 --> 00:11:54,990
before we talked marriage, yes.

248
00:11:54,990 --> 00:11:56,700
So before you
talked marriage you

249
00:11:56,700 --> 00:11:58,180
knew that he was with the CIA.

250
00:11:58,180 --> 00:12:00,000
Yes.

251
00:12:00,000 --> 00:12:00,990
Was he Jewish?

252
00:12:00,990 --> 00:12:01,680
Oh, no.

253
00:12:01,680 --> 00:12:08,130
He was-- he came from Milwaukee
of Polish and Welsh stock.

254
00:12:08,130 --> 00:12:12,780
The Welsh or English part
would have been Protestant--

255

00:12:12,780 --> 00:12:14,580
Unitarian.

256
00:12:14,580 --> 00:12:17,820
And the other part
was Polish Catholic.

257
00:12:17,820 --> 00:12:19,980
His mother was Catholic.

258
00:12:19,980 --> 00:12:24,000
She came from Polish peasants,
maybe third generation.

259
00:12:24,000 --> 00:12:27,590
And his father was
first generation who--

260
00:12:27,590 --> 00:12:30,810
they came over from England
and went into real estate

261
00:12:30,810 --> 00:12:32,610
in Milwaukee.

262
00:12:32,610 --> 00:12:34,860
And what religion was he?

263
00:12:34,860 --> 00:12:37,410

264
00:12:37,410 --> 00:12:43,780
Well, like his-- well, he was
not Catholic like his mother.

265
00:12:43,780 --> 00:12:45,330
He was like his father.

266
00:12:45,330 --> 00:12:49,980

267
00:12:49,980 --> 00:12:51,710

Could you stop it for me?

268

00:12:51,710 --> 00:12:52,210

Yeah, sure.

269

00:12:52,210 --> 00:12:55,833

I'm trying to--

[AUDIO DROPS] Unitarian.

270

00:12:55,833 --> 00:12:56,750

It was congregational.

271

00:12:56,750 --> 00:12:58,080

Oh, would you say that again?

272

00:12:58,080 --> 00:13:00,290

That tape didn't

start when you spoke.

273

00:13:00,290 --> 00:13:01,610

So would you just repeat that.

274

00:13:01,610 --> 00:13:06,440

Yes, I had said

Unitarian, but I misspoke.

275

00:13:06,440 --> 00:13:10,280

He's congregationalist, In

fact, our three children

276

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

were baptized at Plymouth

Church in Milwaukee

277

00:13:13,280 --> 00:13:17,330

on different home leaves when

we came back to visit his folks.

278

00:13:17,330 --> 00:13:21,050

And he had them

christened right there.

279

00:13:21,050 --> 00:13:25,620
Now, did you consider yourself
at that point Jewish, not

280
00:13:25,620 --> 00:13:26,120
Jewish?

281
00:13:26,120 --> 00:13:28,830
This is the story of my life.

282
00:13:28,830 --> 00:13:32,780
I've never figured
out exactly what I am.

283
00:13:32,780 --> 00:13:36,660
I certainly feel more
Jewish than anything else.

284
00:13:36,660 --> 00:13:41,090
And yet I am not really
a practicing Jew.

285
00:13:41,090 --> 00:13:44,690
I don't follow the high
holidays or the customs

286
00:13:44,690 --> 00:13:48,360
because I was raised
so differently.

287
00:13:48,360 --> 00:13:54,020
And so there is sort
of a conflict within me

288
00:13:54,020 --> 00:13:55,460
as to what exactly--

289
00:13:55,460 --> 00:13:58,190
where do I belong.

290
00:13:58,190 --> 00:14:01,662
So your children
were christened in

291
00:14:01,662 --> 00:14:02,870
the congregationalist church.

292
00:14:02,870 --> 00:14:03,370
Yes.

293
00:14:03,370 --> 00:14:07,100
Now, they're fully aware
that my background is Jewish,

294
00:14:07,100 --> 00:14:11,750
that some of their blood is
Jewish, and they know all this.

295
00:14:11,750 --> 00:14:13,070
And they are simply--

296
00:14:13,070 --> 00:14:15,290
all three of them,
I have tried to get

297
00:14:15,290 --> 00:14:19,250
them to go to Sunday school
or have given them bibles,

298
00:14:19,250 --> 00:14:20,270
and they're just--

299
00:14:20,270 --> 00:14:22,520
they're wonderful, they've
got good characters,

300
00:14:22,520 --> 00:14:25,070
but they're
non-religious totally.

301
00:14:25,070 --> 00:14:27,110
And I couldn't get
anywhere with them.

302
00:14:27,110 --> 00:14:30,500

Why did you try to get them
to go to Sunday school?

303
00:14:30,500 --> 00:14:33,710
Because we were in the
Foreign Service overseas.

304
00:14:33,710 --> 00:14:36,110
There was a lot of
people going to church.

305
00:14:36,110 --> 00:14:38,480
It was a social thing for
the people to get together.

306
00:14:38,480 --> 00:14:40,048
Their children went
to Sunday school,

307
00:14:40,048 --> 00:14:41,840
and I thought it'd be
kind of good for them

308
00:14:41,840 --> 00:14:44,990
to learn the stories
of the Bible, you know?

309
00:14:44,990 --> 00:14:46,160
But I couldn't get them.

310
00:14:46,160 --> 00:14:49,190
They didn't want to.

311
00:14:49,190 --> 00:14:53,990
And in your home did you
celebrate Christmas and--

312
00:14:53,990 --> 00:14:57,410
Christmas, Easter,
Thanksgiving, and birthdays.

313
00:14:57,410 --> 00:14:58,284
That was about it.

314
00:14:58,284 --> 00:14:58,784
Mm-hmm.

315
00:14:58,784 --> 00:15:02,660

316
00:15:02,660 --> 00:15:07,513
So you were in Athens with
your husband for five years.

317
00:15:07,513 --> 00:15:08,180
Yes, five years.

318
00:15:08,180 --> 00:15:09,472
And you had two children there.

319
00:15:09,472 --> 00:15:11,520
Well, two were born there, yes.

320
00:15:11,520 --> 00:15:15,400
The third was born in
Fairfax Hospital later.

321
00:15:15,400 --> 00:15:17,170
How do you think the--

322
00:15:17,170 --> 00:15:21,940
having been a refugee and
that entire experience,

323
00:15:21,940 --> 00:15:26,230
how do you think that affected
your life when you went back

324
00:15:26,230 --> 00:15:29,230
overseas to Athens?

325
00:15:29,230 --> 00:15:31,600
This is interesting
that you should ask this

326

00:15:31,600 --> 00:15:35,440

because the Greeks,
down back into history,

327

00:15:35,440 --> 00:15:40,240

have always been known
to honor the stranger,

328

00:15:40,240 --> 00:15:44,510

to give hospitality to the
stranger, to the visitor.

329

00:15:44,510 --> 00:15:46,360

Xenos, a stranger.

330

00:15:46,360 --> 00:15:49,270

They couldn't have been more
hospitable or welcoming.

331

00:15:49,270 --> 00:15:50,620

It's in their blood.

332

00:15:50,620 --> 00:15:53,420

And I compare that to
the German character

333

00:15:53,420 --> 00:15:57,970

of mistrusting instinctively
the foreign element,

334

00:15:57,970 --> 00:16:00,770

the alien right away.

335

00:16:00,770 --> 00:16:03,160

And I thought to
myself, what a shame

336

00:16:03,160 --> 00:16:06,080

that the people have
to be so different.

337

00:16:06,080 --> 00:16:08,400

So the Greeks were hospitable.

338

00:16:08,400 --> 00:16:13,090

How about other people in the
foreign service and in the CIA?

339

00:16:13,090 --> 00:16:13,710

Did you feel--

340

00:16:13,710 --> 00:16:15,700

Well, those were
the days when there

341

00:16:15,700 --> 00:16:18,310

was a very idealistic
bunch of people

342

00:16:18,310 --> 00:16:21,670

there like my husband
and his friends.

343

00:16:21,670 --> 00:16:25,660

Very good sort of
people and true patriots

344

00:16:25,660 --> 00:16:27,250

and risking their lives.

345

00:16:27,250 --> 00:16:32,208

And we had a very high opinion
of the people we worked with.

346

00:16:32,208 --> 00:16:33,750

In fact, I didn't
realize-- you know,

347

00:16:33,750 --> 00:16:37,330

in those days I didn't think
about liberal or conservative,

348

00:16:37,330 --> 00:16:39,190

Democrat or Republican.

349

00:16:39,190 --> 00:16:41,740

In those days, in
the '50s, there

350

00:16:41,740 --> 00:16:48,280

were so many moderates on both
sides that they sort of melded.

351

00:16:48,280 --> 00:16:51,850

It wasn't really until
the '80s and '90s

352

00:16:51,850 --> 00:16:55,930

that you see this really
ugly tooth and nail

353

00:16:55,930 --> 00:16:59,650

attitude between the Democrats
and the Republicans, the ultra

354

00:16:59,650 --> 00:17:03,130

conservatives, and liberal
has become a dirty word.

355

00:17:03,130 --> 00:17:05,890

This is something that
didn't exist then.

356

00:17:05,890 --> 00:17:08,109

Did you feel there
was any discrimination

357

00:17:08,109 --> 00:17:10,300

about you being Jewish?

358

00:17:10,300 --> 00:17:11,770

I must say no.

359

00:17:11,770 --> 00:17:14,770

360

00:17:14,770 --> 00:17:16,420

So you were in Athens for five--

361

00:17:16,420 --> 00:17:18,280

However-- excuse me
for interrupting--

362

00:17:18,280 --> 00:17:22,690

had there been anything like
that I would not have hidden.

363

00:17:22,690 --> 00:17:24,460

I would have spoken out.

364

00:17:24,460 --> 00:17:27,640

But I was fortunate in
that that never came up.

365

00:17:27,640 --> 00:17:30,280

Do you think that's because
of your previous experience

366

00:17:30,280 --> 00:17:34,300

that you would have been
more likely to speak up?

367

00:17:34,300 --> 00:17:35,500

Oh, definitely.

368

00:17:35,500 --> 00:17:38,560

Of course, yes.

369

00:17:38,560 --> 00:17:41,050

And what about having children?

370

00:17:41,050 --> 00:17:45,370

Was that for you, do you think,
a different experience because

371

00:17:45,370 --> 00:17:49,300

of your previous
life in Germany?

372

00:17:49,300 --> 00:17:53,180
I would not wed these
two ideas together.

373
00:17:53,180 --> 00:17:55,220
It was something
entirely different.

374
00:17:55,220 --> 00:17:57,670
A totally different
trip, and nothing

375
00:17:57,670 --> 00:18:01,690
to do with religion
or past or anything.

376
00:18:01,690 --> 00:18:05,095
It was something new, a new
world that I was going into.

377
00:18:05,095 --> 00:18:06,340
Yes.

378
00:18:06,340 --> 00:18:08,560
And so that was--

379
00:18:08,560 --> 00:18:12,400
Oh, it was the best thing I ever
did or went through and gave

380
00:18:12,400 --> 00:18:14,150
meaning to my life.

381
00:18:14,150 --> 00:18:16,810
I mean, this is what
I had been born for.

382
00:18:16,810 --> 00:18:21,250
And raising the-- and then later
when my husband died fairly

383
00:18:21,250 --> 00:18:25,550
early we had only

been married 14 years,

384

00:18:25,550 --> 00:18:26,950
leaving me with three children.

385

00:18:26,950 --> 00:18:31,210
And their ages were at
the time 11, 10, and 8.

386

00:18:31,210 --> 00:18:34,240
And fortunately the
government provided pensions

387

00:18:34,240 --> 00:18:35,830
so we didn't suffer hardship.

388

00:18:35,830 --> 00:18:39,970
But still, I was the one
to raise these three.

389

00:18:39,970 --> 00:18:43,210
And this is interesting.

390

00:18:43,210 --> 00:18:48,550
Maybe my past experiences
in dealing with hardships

391

00:18:48,550 --> 00:18:52,450
gave me the strength to
endure this terrible shock

392

00:18:52,450 --> 00:18:56,260
of losing him so young and being
in charge of three young lives.

393

00:18:56,260 --> 00:18:58,930
And I must say, they
had such good character.

394

00:18:58,930 --> 00:19:01,210
it was so easy to raise them.

395

00:19:01,210 --> 00:19:04,750
I thoroughly enjoyed
being a parent.

396
00:19:04,750 --> 00:19:08,200
And I must say, they didn't
give me much grief at all.

397
00:19:08,200 --> 00:19:10,480
They were good kids.

398
00:19:10,480 --> 00:19:12,430
I raised them instinctually.

399
00:19:12,430 --> 00:19:13,450
All of us do.

400
00:19:13,450 --> 00:19:16,660
I mean, there's no handbook
for being a parent.

401
00:19:16,660 --> 00:19:18,610
And it came out well.

402
00:19:18,610 --> 00:19:21,250

403
00:19:21,250 --> 00:19:22,510
You have boys?

404
00:19:22,510 --> 00:19:26,470
I have two boys and the
girl is in the middle.

405
00:19:26,470 --> 00:19:29,650
Now of course they're
men and a young woman.

406
00:19:29,650 --> 00:19:33,100
Jenny just moved to
Brooklyn to follow

407

00:19:33,100 --> 00:19:35,650

her man who got a
job there, and she

408

00:19:35,650 --> 00:19:37,780

is a clinical social worker.

409

00:19:37,780 --> 00:19:41,500

She just got her master's
last year, a year ago.

410

00:19:41,500 --> 00:19:43,210

And Michael is an honors--

411

00:19:43,210 --> 00:19:44,140

the oldest boy.

412

00:19:44,140 --> 00:19:47,200

He's an honors
professor in Milwaukee

413

00:19:47,200 --> 00:19:50,260

at the University of Wisconsin.

414

00:19:50,260 --> 00:19:51,960

What is his field?

415

00:19:51,960 --> 00:19:53,920

He's teaching an honors course.

416

00:19:53,920 --> 00:19:54,985

An honors course, OK.

417

00:19:54,985 --> 00:19:56,610

Which will be up next
year, and then he

418

00:19:56,610 --> 00:19:58,587

has to struggle to
get another job.

419

00:19:58,587 --> 00:19:59,170

It's not easy.

420

00:19:59,170 --> 00:20:03,370

So an honors course would cover
a number of different subjects?

421

00:20:03,370 --> 00:20:07,510

Yes, arts, politics.

422

00:20:07,510 --> 00:20:09,440

And those things are
only for three years.

423

00:20:09,440 --> 00:20:10,570

So when that's over--

424

00:20:10,570 --> 00:20:14,800

the present problem with
teaching and professors

425

00:20:14,800 --> 00:20:18,920

not having tenure, he'd be lucky
if he gets another teaching

426

00:20:18,920 --> 00:20:19,420

position.

427

00:20:19,420 --> 00:20:22,210

Although he's very good
and the students love him.

428

00:20:22,210 --> 00:20:25,720

And my youngest is working
here in Washington.

429

00:20:25,720 --> 00:20:26,920

He's got a nice job.

430

00:20:26,920 --> 00:20:29,200

He just got married recently.

431

00:20:29,200 --> 00:20:32,890

And nice young couple,
very happy with life.

432
00:20:32,890 --> 00:20:36,200
So I can gratefully say that--

433
00:20:36,200 --> 00:20:41,140
I would say the
most creative thing

434
00:20:41,140 --> 00:20:43,780
and the most constructive
thing in my life

435
00:20:43,780 --> 00:20:47,020
would be raising these three
children having gotten them

436
00:20:47,020 --> 00:20:50,970
in the first place born healthy,
and I'm very, very grateful

437
00:20:50,970 --> 00:20:51,470
about that.

438
00:20:51,470 --> 00:20:54,120
And that's what helped
me through my widowhood,

439
00:20:54,120 --> 00:20:56,860
having them to take care of.

440
00:20:56,860 --> 00:20:59,140
Did you work after
your husband died?

441
00:20:59,140 --> 00:20:59,800
Oh, yes.

442
00:20:59,800 --> 00:21:02,260
I remember that I had worked--

443

00:21:02,260 --> 00:21:05,200
I had a little part-time
job at an insurance company

444
00:21:05,200 --> 00:21:08,380
when Johnny was still
working for the agency here.

445
00:21:08,380 --> 00:21:09,820
And then he left.

446
00:21:09,820 --> 00:21:13,420
And a month after he left
I got the death notice.

447
00:21:13,420 --> 00:21:17,620
And struggled a little
bit longer at that job.

448
00:21:17,620 --> 00:21:19,390
And then they replaced
me with somebody

449
00:21:19,390 --> 00:21:21,010
who'd been there before.

450
00:21:21,010 --> 00:21:24,130
And like a homing pigeon
I fled to the agency

451
00:21:24,130 --> 00:21:27,790
that he'd worked for
and told them my story,

452
00:21:27,790 --> 00:21:29,870
and they gave me
a part-time job,

453
00:21:29,870 --> 00:21:33,190
which I kept for eight years
while raising the children.

454
00:21:33,190 --> 00:21:35,320

I couldn't take a full-time job.

455

00:21:35,320 --> 00:21:36,800

I had a part-time job.

456

00:21:36,800 --> 00:21:39,160

I was home when they
came home from school.

457

00:21:39,160 --> 00:21:42,400

And then I switched to
full-time for a few more years

458

00:21:42,400 --> 00:21:47,140

when they were bigger, and
then I took early retirement.

459

00:21:47,140 --> 00:21:49,510

Now I'm retired,
and it's amazing

460

00:21:49,510 --> 00:21:52,750

how full one's days can
be although retired.

461

00:21:52,750 --> 00:21:55,420

462

00:21:55,420 --> 00:22:02,080

And so have your friends been
some refugees, not refugees?

463

00:22:02,080 --> 00:22:06,070

Well, there's still Vera,
although she's far away.

464

00:22:06,070 --> 00:22:08,920

I've had friends from all over.

465

00:22:08,920 --> 00:22:14,980

Refugees and Native Americans
and Cubans and, oh yes.

466

00:22:14,980 --> 00:22:17,780

I just take people as they come.

467

00:22:17,780 --> 00:22:20,260

I don't have groups, you know.

468

00:22:20,260 --> 00:22:25,660

So you haven't felt limited to
having other refugees who have

469

00:22:25,660 --> 00:22:27,250

similar experiences to yours?

470

00:22:27,250 --> 00:22:29,320

That is a feeling
I had in New York

471

00:22:29,320 --> 00:22:32,140

when I was a
teenager by 13 or so.

472

00:22:32,140 --> 00:22:35,110

And those days, all
those poor, frightened,

473

00:22:35,110 --> 00:22:38,890

sick people who had survived
Nazi Germany had all

474

00:22:38,890 --> 00:22:42,220

come to Manhattan, had all
settled on the West side.

475

00:22:42,220 --> 00:22:44,680

And I remember how
terribly depressing

476

00:22:44,680 --> 00:22:51,040

it was as a young teenager to
see these poor, old, pale, gray

477

00:22:51,040 --> 00:22:54,830

shadows of themselves
walking around Broadway,

478
00:22:54,830 --> 00:22:56,245
each one a tragic story.

479
00:22:56,245 --> 00:22:57,370
There were so many of them.

480
00:22:57,370 --> 00:23:01,150
I remember the feeling I had at
the time of how tragic this was

481
00:23:01,150 --> 00:23:03,130
and how I wanted to
get away from it.

482
00:23:03,130 --> 00:23:05,740
So that was part of your
wanting to come to Washington?

483
00:23:05,740 --> 00:23:07,750
Well, by the time--

484
00:23:07,750 --> 00:23:11,680
yes, you know, by the time
that I was ready to leave,

485
00:23:11,680 --> 00:23:13,750
those people were still there.

486
00:23:13,750 --> 00:23:18,280
Oddly enough, many, many
decades later I went back.

487
00:23:18,280 --> 00:23:21,700
They were all gone, and their
offspring was doing well,

488
00:23:21,700 --> 00:23:24,850
and the places had been--

489

00:23:24,850 --> 00:23:27,370
bad neighborhoods had
been made wonderful.

490
00:23:27,370 --> 00:23:29,755
And New York was
totally different,

491
00:23:29,755 --> 00:23:32,350
a completely
different stage set.

492
00:23:32,350 --> 00:23:35,980
All those poor, poor
shadows had vanished.

493
00:23:35,980 --> 00:23:40,090
And you saw nice young people
jogging along, healthy,

494
00:23:40,090 --> 00:23:44,030
and it was just like it was when
I went to Germany and I said,

495
00:23:44,030 --> 00:23:45,850
this is a brand new country.

496
00:23:45,850 --> 00:23:49,720
New York was a brand new
country decades after I left it.

497
00:23:49,720 --> 00:23:53,290
But at the time when we were
all refugees there together

498
00:23:53,290 --> 00:23:57,010
I found it very, very sad.

499
00:23:57,010 --> 00:23:58,870
But when you came
to Washington you

500
00:23:58,870 --> 00:24:01,130

did not have that feeling
of all refugees together?

501
00:24:01,130 --> 00:24:01,630
Oh, no.

502
00:24:01,630 --> 00:24:06,280
In fact, you know, New Yorkers
had this unhappy reputation

503
00:24:06,280 --> 00:24:09,610
for not being terribly polite.

504
00:24:09,610 --> 00:24:11,800
Well, I thought
everyone in Washington

505
00:24:11,800 --> 00:24:14,560
seemed so healthy
and so pleasant,

506
00:24:14,560 --> 00:24:17,650
and I really enjoyed
the people here.

507
00:24:17,650 --> 00:24:18,520
I liked it very--

508
00:24:18,520 --> 00:24:22,640
I mean, I must admit, I had
gotten fed up with New York.

509
00:24:22,640 --> 00:24:26,320
And considered this place a
place to get my health back,

510
00:24:26,320 --> 00:24:28,420
and I did.

511
00:24:28,420 --> 00:24:31,480
And you went back
to Germany when?

512

00:24:31,480 --> 00:24:32,680

With my-- oh.

513

00:24:32,680 --> 00:24:37,240

After I became widowed
in '72, my mother and I

514

00:24:37,240 --> 00:24:39,550

managed to plan to
go back to Germany.

515

00:24:39,550 --> 00:24:42,190

I think it was '76 or '78.

516

00:24:42,190 --> 00:24:43,540

I don't remember which.

517

00:24:43,540 --> 00:24:47,890

And the sad thing about my
husband is he died in Vietnam,

518

00:24:47,890 --> 00:24:50,200

and when he left
here we had decided

519

00:24:50,200 --> 00:24:52,780

that when he had finished
his tour, which was supposed

520

00:24:52,780 --> 00:24:56,290

to be 18 months, we
would meet in Germany

521

00:24:56,290 --> 00:24:58,000

and I would show it to him.

522

00:24:58,000 --> 00:24:59,950

He was going to come
straight from Vietnam.

523

00:24:59,950 --> 00:25:02,050

I was going to go

straight from Washington.

524

00:25:02,050 --> 00:25:04,270

We were going to meet
there, and I told you

525

00:25:04,270 --> 00:25:06,100

we're going to
paint the town red.

526

00:25:06,100 --> 00:25:08,100

And I was so looking
forward to that.

527

00:25:08,100 --> 00:25:10,750

He was in Vietnam with the CIA?

528

00:25:10,750 --> 00:25:11,290

Yes.

529

00:25:11,290 --> 00:25:12,910

And how did he die?

530

00:25:12,910 --> 00:25:15,860

Well, there's several
versions about it,

531

00:25:15,860 --> 00:25:19,300

which I don't know
that I want to go into.

532

00:25:19,300 --> 00:25:22,960

One is that he died
in a swimming pool

533

00:25:22,960 --> 00:25:25,180

and the other one is
a different version

534

00:25:25,180 --> 00:25:31,270

that somebody got to
him from North Korea.

535

00:25:31,270 --> 00:25:34,510

And so not knowing the full
truth, it's best not to--

536

00:25:34,510 --> 00:25:35,410

I mean, I don't know.

537

00:25:35,410 --> 00:25:36,700

I'll never know the truth.

538

00:25:36,700 --> 00:25:39,290

So I can't really tell you.

539

00:25:39,290 --> 00:25:43,270

But anyway, the idea being that
when he had finished this tour

540

00:25:43,270 --> 00:25:44,794

we were going to
reunite and I was

541

00:25:44,794 --> 00:25:46,780

going to show him my hometown.

542

00:25:46,780 --> 00:25:48,940

So you can imagine
the state of mind

543

00:25:48,940 --> 00:25:52,120

I was in when I went years
later with my mother.

544

00:25:52,120 --> 00:25:54,940

I remember being very
unhappy and very unpleasant

545

00:25:54,940 --> 00:25:56,410

and very crabby.

546

00:25:56,410 --> 00:25:58,000

And I apologized to her.

547

00:25:58,000 --> 00:26:00,710

I said, Mutti, I'm sorry,
but I'm just so sad.

548

00:26:00,710 --> 00:26:02,780

I pictured this so differently.

549

00:26:02,780 --> 00:26:05,530

And she said, apologies
are not necessary, my dear.

550

00:26:05,530 --> 00:26:07,510

I fully understand.

551

00:26:07,510 --> 00:26:09,520

But then after
I'd gotten there I

552

00:26:09,520 --> 00:26:12,430

discovered that everything
was so different from what

553

00:26:12,430 --> 00:26:13,690

I remembered.

554

00:26:13,690 --> 00:26:15,490

And people were pleasant.

555

00:26:15,490 --> 00:26:21,010

And this was before the
return of the skinheads.

556

00:26:21,010 --> 00:26:24,400

At this point I thought,
oh my, this is marvelous.

557

00:26:24,400 --> 00:26:25,900

The new Germans are great.

558

00:26:25,900 --> 00:26:27,070

This is a democracy.

559

00:26:27,070 --> 00:26:28,120

How nice.

560

00:26:28,120 --> 00:26:31,540

And it was only later when I
was back home a few years later

561

00:26:31,540 --> 00:26:35,320

and I read about these outrages
against the Turkish laborers

562

00:26:35,320 --> 00:26:37,930

and the skinheads
setting houses on fire

563

00:26:37,930 --> 00:26:42,070

and just being generally nasty
to the alien labor forces

564

00:26:42,070 --> 00:26:42,760

that they had.

565

00:26:42,760 --> 00:26:46,040

And skinheads with
swastikas and whatnot.

566

00:26:46,040 --> 00:26:49,540

And I get so fed up and
so disgusted, you know.

567

00:26:49,540 --> 00:26:53,590

So as you can see, I've
always had a roller coaster

568

00:26:53,590 --> 00:26:55,760

feeling about Germany.

569

00:26:55,760 --> 00:26:57,640

It'll always be with me.

570

00:26:57,640 --> 00:27:00,130

My daughter said, maybe

you should see a therapist.

571

00:27:00,130 --> 00:27:02,980

And I-- I don't know.

572

00:27:02,980 --> 00:27:03,820

I just don't know.

573

00:27:03,820 --> 00:27:05,020

Should I or shouldn't I?

574

00:27:05,020 --> 00:27:05,800

I don't know.

575

00:27:05,800 --> 00:27:06,760

She thinks I should.

576

00:27:06,760 --> 00:27:11,560

577

00:27:11,560 --> 00:27:15,340

Let's talk about your experience
with the Holocaust Museum.

578

00:27:15,340 --> 00:27:16,720

Yes.

579

00:27:16,720 --> 00:27:18,910

It's funny, people
had always told me

580

00:27:18,910 --> 00:27:22,660

through the years,
Randy, why don't you

581

00:27:22,660 --> 00:27:26,130

be a docent maybe at the
Smithsonian or something.

582

00:27:26,130 --> 00:27:27,430

And I'd say, yeah, yeah.

583

00:27:27,430 --> 00:27:29,260

I didn't really want to.

584

00:27:29,260 --> 00:27:30,610

I had no desire to.

585

00:27:30,610 --> 00:27:32,298

They thought you
needed an interest

586

00:27:32,298 --> 00:27:33,340

or you had too much time?

587

00:27:33,340 --> 00:27:36,460

Yeah, besides I'm garrulous
and I like people.

588

00:27:36,460 --> 00:27:38,170

They thought it'd be terrific.

589

00:27:38,170 --> 00:27:40,720

And I said that
nothing tugged at me.

590

00:27:40,720 --> 00:27:43,840

And then I read an article
in the "Washington Post"

591

00:27:43,840 --> 00:27:48,850

about the new Holocaust Museum
and the idea that I adored.

592

00:27:48,850 --> 00:27:52,060

In those days they still
had those past machines

593

00:27:52,060 --> 00:27:58,720

where you would take one of
those ID cards or pamphlets

594

00:27:58,720 --> 00:28:01,785

from the machine

and you would read--

595

00:28:01,785 --> 00:28:03,910

people who had been through
the Holocaust and you'd

596

00:28:03,910 --> 00:28:05,380

read their story.

597

00:28:05,380 --> 00:28:08,200

And in those days you would
have to go to a different floor

598

00:28:08,200 --> 00:28:09,910

and get the second page.

599

00:28:09,910 --> 00:28:11,890

You couldn't just
read the whole thing.

600

00:28:11,890 --> 00:28:15,820

As you went from floor to
floor, the fate of this person

601

00:28:15,820 --> 00:28:17,260

unfolded.

602

00:28:17,260 --> 00:28:19,420

They got rid of those
machines because they

603

00:28:19,420 --> 00:28:20,600

were used to death.

604

00:28:20,600 --> 00:28:21,575

They died.

605

00:28:21,575 --> 00:28:22,450

They got rid of them.

606

00:28:22,450 --> 00:28:23,890

They were always breaking down.

607
00:28:23,890 --> 00:28:26,710
Now you get the whole
little passbook,

608
00:28:26,710 --> 00:28:29,390
and unless you control
yourself and wait,

609
00:28:29,390 --> 00:28:32,350
you can read the whole thing
while waiting for the elevator.

610
00:28:32,350 --> 00:28:35,770
The idea being that you didn't
know then would this person

611
00:28:35,770 --> 00:28:37,690
make it or would they perish.

612
00:28:37,690 --> 00:28:39,340
And that was rather dramatic.

613
00:28:39,340 --> 00:28:42,280
I thought the idea was
phenomenal, you know.

614
00:28:42,280 --> 00:28:46,270
And then I read that they
were looking for volunteers.

615
00:28:46,270 --> 00:28:48,820
And all of a sudden
it was like boing.

616
00:28:48,820 --> 00:28:51,400
All of a sudden
I was interested.

617
00:28:51,400 --> 00:28:53,020
My heart was in this.

618

00:28:53,020 --> 00:28:55,150

This was something
that I felt I could

619

00:28:55,150 --> 00:28:57,940

do so well with my background.

620

00:28:57,940 --> 00:29:01,220

And so I wrote a letter,
and they replied,

621

00:29:01,220 --> 00:29:02,980

and I came for an interview.

622

00:29:02,980 --> 00:29:03,970

And I was accepted.

623

00:29:03,970 --> 00:29:05,450

I was thrilled.

624

00:29:05,450 --> 00:29:06,940

I love the museum.

625

00:29:06,940 --> 00:29:08,680

I love what they're doing.

626

00:29:08,680 --> 00:29:10,510

And I enjoy being a volunteer.

627

00:29:10,510 --> 00:29:15,640

And were it not for
my bad ankle and knee,

628

00:29:15,640 --> 00:29:19,030

I would be there much
more often than I am.

629

00:29:19,030 --> 00:29:21,760

But fortunately they
have an opening for me

630

00:29:21,760 --> 00:29:23,620

here in the oral
history department,

631
00:29:23,620 --> 00:29:27,580
and I'm very happy
translating and checking

632
00:29:27,580 --> 00:29:29,260
through these documents.

633
00:29:29,260 --> 00:29:32,470
You said that you love the
museum and what they're doing.

634
00:29:32,470 --> 00:29:35,590
What is it that you
love about the museum?

635
00:29:35,590 --> 00:29:38,110
It's a learning museum.

636
00:29:38,110 --> 00:29:41,350
It teaches people,
often to young people

637
00:29:41,350 --> 00:29:45,490
who otherwise might be totally
unaware of the Holocaust,

638
00:29:45,490 --> 00:29:48,580
that there was such a thing
and that those flakes who

639
00:29:48,580 --> 00:29:52,210
keep claiming that it
never happened are flakes

640
00:29:52,210 --> 00:29:53,710
and that this really did happen.

641
00:29:53,710 --> 00:29:56,650
There's enough evidence in
this Museum to show that.

642
00:29:56,650 --> 00:30:00,830
I love that that somebody
took the trouble to build it.

643
00:30:00,830 --> 00:30:05,650
And I love the architect
who went to the camps

644
00:30:05,650 --> 00:30:07,840
and got the idea
for the architecture

645
00:30:07,840 --> 00:30:11,950
directly from the
camps, James Ingo Freed.

646
00:30:11,950 --> 00:30:13,750
And I love what he did.

647
00:30:13,750 --> 00:30:16,090
It's a magnificent building.

648
00:30:16,090 --> 00:30:20,800
And the strange thing
is when I applied

649
00:30:20,800 --> 00:30:24,318
I said, please don't put
me near scenes of horror.

650
00:30:24,318 --> 00:30:25,360
I don't want to see them.

651
00:30:25,360 --> 00:30:26,890
Put me anywhere.

652
00:30:26,890 --> 00:30:30,760
Well, sure enough, they
did just the opposite,

653
00:30:30,760 --> 00:30:34,090

and I found myself walking
through the permanent exhibit.

654
00:30:34,090 --> 00:30:36,490
But I learned to live with it.

655
00:30:36,490 --> 00:30:40,960
What was your first
assignment there?

656
00:30:40,960 --> 00:30:44,800
To be a walker through
the different floors

657
00:30:44,800 --> 00:30:47,080
of the permanent exhibit,
make sure everything

658
00:30:47,080 --> 00:30:48,310
was going along well.

659
00:30:48,310 --> 00:30:50,320
You know, as you come
out of the elevator

660
00:30:50,320 --> 00:30:52,840
you see a horrible thing
on the fourth floor up

661
00:30:52,840 --> 00:30:55,390
against the wall
with all the corpses.

662
00:30:55,390 --> 00:30:57,670
I mean, this is what
I had tried to avoid.

663
00:30:57,670 --> 00:30:59,660
But somehow they
got me into that.

664
00:30:59,660 --> 00:31:00,160
But--

665
00:31:00,160 --> 00:31:01,930
Did you ever ask
to be transferred?

666
00:31:01,930 --> 00:31:06,520
No, once I was there I
decided that having seen it

667
00:31:06,520 --> 00:31:10,840
once I could live with it
and do the job that they

668
00:31:10,840 --> 00:31:12,230
wanted me to do.

669
00:31:12,230 --> 00:31:14,410
And of course,
there's many others.

670
00:31:14,410 --> 00:31:16,990
You're not constantly walking
through the permanent exhibit.

671
00:31:16,990 --> 00:31:19,190
There's many other areas.

672
00:31:19,190 --> 00:31:20,710
So I do it.

673
00:31:20,710 --> 00:31:24,520
And unfortunately,
because of my bad foot now

674
00:31:24,520 --> 00:31:26,470
I don't go as often.

675
00:31:26,470 --> 00:31:29,740
I intend to go perhaps once
a month on a weekend when

676
00:31:29,740 --> 00:31:31,060

they need people.

677

00:31:31,060 --> 00:31:35,170

Keep my foot in, so to
speak but concentrate more

678

00:31:35,170 --> 00:31:38,110

on oral histories
of translations.

679

00:31:38,110 --> 00:31:42,670

You said that when you read
about the need for volunteers

680

00:31:42,670 --> 00:31:44,330

something leapt--

681

00:31:44,330 --> 00:31:46,180

Oh, my heart just jumped.

682

00:31:46,180 --> 00:31:49,810

I said to myself, god, if
anybody can show the public,

683

00:31:49,810 --> 00:31:50,770

it's me.

684

00:31:50,770 --> 00:31:52,780

And I think any one
of those volunteers

685

00:31:52,780 --> 00:31:55,743

must have had that same zing
when they read about this.

686

00:31:55,743 --> 00:31:56,410

Don't you think?

687

00:31:56,410 --> 00:32:00,880

And can you say more about
that feeling that you would

688

00:32:00,880 --> 00:32:02,500
be able to show the public--

689
00:32:02,500 --> 00:32:04,720
I had a feeling that
my life-- remember now

690
00:32:04,720 --> 00:32:07,600
that I was a middle
aged retired woman

691
00:32:07,600 --> 00:32:10,660
without a husband in her
life, children grown up,

692
00:32:10,660 --> 00:32:12,790
life a little empty.

693
00:32:12,790 --> 00:32:16,840
And all of a sudden here is
something that totally engaged

694
00:32:16,840 --> 00:32:18,910
me, my mind and my heart.

695
00:32:18,910 --> 00:32:21,910
And I said, this is
what I was put here for.

696
00:32:21,910 --> 00:32:24,610
I must say I was in
this guilt complex

697
00:32:24,610 --> 00:32:27,590
because I didn't suffer
as much as the others.

698
00:32:27,590 --> 00:32:30,970
I said, this is maybe
how I can atone for that.

699
00:32:30,970 --> 00:32:35,530
I can tell people what

these people went through

700

00:32:35,530 --> 00:32:37,130

and where they ended up.

701

00:32:37,130 --> 00:32:39,760

And I can be more

dramatic perhaps

702

00:32:39,760 --> 00:32:44,050

than somebody who wasn't as

close to the subject, you know?

703

00:32:44,050 --> 00:32:46,330

And I had the feeling

that this museum

704

00:32:46,330 --> 00:32:50,800

gave more meaning to my life.

705

00:32:50,800 --> 00:32:53,510

We have to turn over the tape

then we can talk more about it.

706

00:32:53,510 --> 00:32:54,010

Yes.

707

00:32:54,010 --> 00:33:01,210

708

00:33:01,210 --> 00:33:04,990

When we stopped you were

talking about your work

709

00:33:04,990 --> 00:33:07,750

at the museum giving

meaning to your life.

710

00:33:07,750 --> 00:33:09,430

Can you say more about that?

711

00:33:09,430 --> 00:33:15,180

Yes, first of all, when I
was an only child and shy

712
00:33:15,180 --> 00:33:17,980
I didn't know that I
really loved people.

713
00:33:17,980 --> 00:33:20,650
But as I got more
mature and more worldly

714
00:33:20,650 --> 00:33:23,510
I discovered that I really
like people very much,

715
00:33:23,510 --> 00:33:27,070
and it's wonderful
working with the public.

716
00:33:27,070 --> 00:33:29,200
You meet so many
different people,

717
00:33:29,200 --> 00:33:31,330
different outlooks on life.

718
00:33:31,330 --> 00:33:34,450
I'm able to use by two
foreign languages on them.

719
00:33:34,450 --> 00:33:37,390
When I speak Spanish to
some bewildered family

720
00:33:37,390 --> 00:33:41,170
from Argentina their
faces just light up,

721
00:33:41,170 --> 00:33:43,270
and I can convey to
them the things they

722
00:33:43,270 --> 00:33:45,340

want to know about the museum.

723

00:33:45,340 --> 00:33:47,260

And when Germans come to visit--

724

00:33:47,260 --> 00:33:48,760

And this is a strange thing.

725

00:33:48,760 --> 00:33:51,790

I've seen young

German people come in,

726

00:33:51,790 --> 00:33:55,630

and they have the strangest
expressions on their faces.

727

00:33:55,630 --> 00:33:58,880

Maybe I read more into it
because of my background.

728

00:33:58,880 --> 00:34:00,100

But maybe not.

729

00:34:00,100 --> 00:34:06,790

There's a mixture-- sort
of fear and shame and more.

730

00:34:06,790 --> 00:34:08,840

It's a combination
of impressions.

731

00:34:08,840 --> 00:34:10,600

Like if I look at
the young faces,

732

00:34:10,600 --> 00:34:12,340

they know what their
country has done,

733

00:34:12,340 --> 00:34:15,460

and I'm sure they feel
terrible about it.

734

00:34:15,460 --> 00:34:19,060

And they feel embarrassed and
guilty but eager to see this

735

00:34:19,060 --> 00:34:20,320

and afraid to see it.

736

00:34:20,320 --> 00:34:22,270

It's a fascinating expression.

737

00:34:22,270 --> 00:34:24,219

I've seen it various times.

738

00:34:24,219 --> 00:34:26,230

And I try to put them at ease.

739

00:34:26,230 --> 00:34:28,460

I mean, they didn't cause this.

740

00:34:28,460 --> 00:34:29,530

How do you do that?

741

00:34:29,530 --> 00:34:30,800

Try to put them at ease?

742

00:34:30,800 --> 00:34:32,830

I speak their language to them.

743

00:34:32,830 --> 00:34:33,959

I look at them kindly.

744

00:34:33,959 --> 00:34:37,179

745

00:34:37,179 --> 00:34:38,710

I'm gentle with them.

746

00:34:38,710 --> 00:34:41,260

But I say how happy I
am that they're here.

747

00:34:41,260 --> 00:34:44,260

Then I emphasize--
but you of all people,

748

00:34:44,260 --> 00:34:45,850

you have to know this.

749

00:34:45,850 --> 00:34:50,560

And that's all I say,
and they nod, you know?

750

00:34:50,560 --> 00:34:54,730

And I have a feeling I'm
getting my point across.

751

00:34:54,730 --> 00:34:57,940

Do you think any of
the visitors pick up

752

00:34:57,940 --> 00:34:59,590

that you were a refugee?

753

00:34:59,590 --> 00:35:03,430

Oh, this is interesting
because one of those minutes

754

00:35:03,430 --> 00:35:05,290

suggestions was--

755

00:35:05,290 --> 00:35:08,050

the minutes from the
meeting of the survivors--

756

00:35:08,050 --> 00:35:15,050

that the survivors ought to have
special badges saying survivor.

757

00:35:15,050 --> 00:35:16,450

Some people want that.

758

00:35:16,450 --> 00:35:20,140

Others, myself included, do not

think it's such a great idea.

759

00:35:20,140 --> 00:35:22,270

But whenever I think
it's appropriate

760

00:35:22,270 --> 00:35:25,360

to a particular group of
people given the situation,

761

00:35:25,360 --> 00:35:26,830

I'll mention.

762

00:35:26,830 --> 00:35:29,540

There's one place, my
favorite in the whole museum,

763

00:35:29,540 --> 00:35:32,530

and that's Remember the
Children, Daniel's House.

764

00:35:32,530 --> 00:35:35,980

That is my favorite exhibit
because that is partly

765

00:35:35,980 --> 00:35:38,830

my youth growing up in Germany.

766

00:35:38,830 --> 00:35:40,810

Many of the things
in that exhibit--

767

00:35:40,810 --> 00:35:44,950

it's like walking through
a series of stage sets--

768

00:35:44,950 --> 00:35:47,290

remind me of my own
childhood, although it

769

00:35:47,290 --> 00:35:50,500

didn't have the terrible
ending pictured there

770
00:35:50,500 --> 00:35:52,450
like the ghetto and the camps.

771
00:35:52,450 --> 00:35:54,400
I left before then.

772
00:35:54,400 --> 00:35:57,070
But very often when
I have a nice family

773
00:35:57,070 --> 00:36:00,280
who brought their children
I'll put the emphasis--

774
00:36:00,280 --> 00:36:02,200
I'll look at the
children and I'll say,

775
00:36:02,200 --> 00:36:04,330
that's just like
my childhood was.

776
00:36:04,330 --> 00:36:06,720
I grew up under
those circumstances.

777
00:36:06,720 --> 00:36:09,580
And then I say, but I
didn't have the sad ending.

778
00:36:09,580 --> 00:36:12,550
But I say this makes me
remember my own childhood there.

779
00:36:12,550 --> 00:36:15,330
And the children look
at me with big eyes.

780
00:36:15,330 --> 00:36:17,500
It's very useful
to be able to do

781

00:36:17,500 --> 00:36:20,560

that convincingly because
it's the truth, you know.

782

00:36:20,560 --> 00:36:23,290

And I do that when
I like a given group

783

00:36:23,290 --> 00:36:26,423

and I want to add
to their knowledge.

784

00:36:26,423 --> 00:36:28,715

I don't feel that I want to
go around with a badge that

785

00:36:28,715 --> 00:36:31,120

says survivor though, you know?

786

00:36:31,120 --> 00:36:32,110

I wouldn't do that.

787

00:36:32,110 --> 00:36:35,535

788

00:36:35,535 --> 00:36:37,160

Was there anything
else on this subject

789

00:36:37,160 --> 00:36:40,160

that you wanted to know?

790

00:36:40,160 --> 00:36:42,160

Oh, my interaction with people.

791

00:36:42,160 --> 00:36:42,660

Yes.

792

00:36:42,660 --> 00:36:46,760

Once this sweetest
little old peasant woman

793

00:36:46,760 --> 00:36:51,110

from some East European
country talking Yiddish came.

794

00:36:51,110 --> 00:36:54,620

She had misplaced some
objects, lost something

795

00:36:54,620 --> 00:36:56,940

that your granddaughter
had given her.

796

00:36:56,940 --> 00:37:00,050

And it had been found
in the lost and found,

797

00:37:00,050 --> 00:37:02,840

and I got it for her
and handed it to her.

798

00:37:02,840 --> 00:37:04,550

And she didn't
speak the language.

799

00:37:04,550 --> 00:37:06,720

She grabbed my
hand and kissed it.

800

00:37:06,720 --> 00:37:10,040

And I thought that was the
sweetest, most touching thing.

801

00:37:10,040 --> 00:37:13,190

And I was smiling
the rest of the day.

802

00:37:13,190 --> 00:37:14,750

Embarrassed, but also touched.

803

00:37:14,750 --> 00:37:17,810

You meet so many
different people.

804

00:37:17,810 --> 00:37:22,250

Sometimes you see a lady,
middle aged, totally overcome.

805

00:37:22,250 --> 00:37:24,860

There was one where she'd come
out of the Hall of Remembrance,

806

00:37:24,860 --> 00:37:28,110

and she was just standing there
and her shoulders were shaking.

807

00:37:28,110 --> 00:37:31,400

She was leaning against the
column, her face to the column.

808

00:37:31,400 --> 00:37:32,840

And I just gently--

809

00:37:32,840 --> 00:37:35,690

I know we're not supposed
to touch the public,

810

00:37:35,690 --> 00:37:39,350

but sometimes the human
touch is sort of instinctive.

811

00:37:39,350 --> 00:37:42,680

And I just gently patted her
shoulder and stood by her,

812

00:37:42,680 --> 00:37:44,360

and she calmed down.

813

00:37:44,360 --> 00:37:46,580

You had the feeling that
you are an ambassador

814

00:37:46,580 --> 00:37:48,650

between the museum
and the public,

815

00:37:48,650 --> 00:37:53,480
and you try to be
a good influence

816
00:37:53,480 --> 00:37:59,650
and help and represent
the museum and all that.

817
00:37:59,650 --> 00:38:01,430
Many other stories.

818
00:38:01,430 --> 00:38:06,320
How has it been working with
the other volunteers there?

819
00:38:06,320 --> 00:38:07,940
Well, I met the nicest bunch.

820
00:38:07,940 --> 00:38:10,670
First I went on
Wednesday afternoons.

821
00:38:10,670 --> 00:38:14,215
And then Larry asked if
they were anybody there

822
00:38:14,215 --> 00:38:16,010
who would be willing
to work on weekends

823
00:38:16,010 --> 00:38:18,480
because that's when
they really need help.

824
00:38:18,480 --> 00:38:20,670
So I decided, sure, if
that's what's wanted.

825
00:38:20,670 --> 00:38:22,220
And I worked on Saturdays.

826
00:38:22,220 --> 00:38:24,590
First in the afternoons

and in the morning

827

00:38:24,590 --> 00:38:26,360
every second Saturday.

828

00:38:26,360 --> 00:38:28,010
And that worked out very well.

829

00:38:28,010 --> 00:38:30,710
As I said, everything was
fine until I got my trouble

830

00:38:30,710 --> 00:38:32,510
with the knee and the
ankle, which I hope

831

00:38:32,510 --> 00:38:34,760
will improve so I can do more.

832

00:38:34,760 --> 00:38:38,030
But I found it very
challenging and very nice.

833

00:38:38,030 --> 00:38:42,090
There's always the odd
pill in every crowd.

834

00:38:42,090 --> 00:38:44,030
There was one that
was particularly odd,

835

00:38:44,030 --> 00:38:47,030
but she's no longer
there I'm happy to say.

836

00:38:47,030 --> 00:38:52,190
And on the whole I found
them very pleasant.

837

00:38:52,190 --> 00:38:57,440
Not everybody is pleasant,
but most of them are.

838

00:38:57,440 --> 00:39:00,140

And some of them have
stories to tell, again,

839

00:39:00,140 --> 00:39:02,508

which makes me feel
guilty because I didn't go

840

00:39:02,508 --> 00:39:03,800

through what they went through.

841

00:39:03,800 --> 00:39:06,350

It's always that conflict.

842

00:39:06,350 --> 00:39:08,126

So you mean the
other volunteers?

843

00:39:08,126 --> 00:39:09,500

The volunteers, yes.

844

00:39:09,500 --> 00:39:11,660

Survivors that have
stories to tell.

845

00:39:11,660 --> 00:39:14,090

And how does that come up?

846

00:39:14,090 --> 00:39:18,050

Well, I know that Nesse Godin
for one, she's legendary.

847

00:39:18,050 --> 00:39:21,150

When we had our training
she was the speaker.

848

00:39:21,150 --> 00:39:23,330

She told us about when
she was a young girl.

849

00:39:23,330 --> 00:39:26,480

I think she was 15 and she

was in one of the worst camps.

850

00:39:26,480 --> 00:39:28,820

And told of life in camp.

851

00:39:28,820 --> 00:39:30,620

And you know, ever

since then whenever

852

00:39:30,620 --> 00:39:33,080

I see her I throw my arms

around her and hug her.

853

00:39:33,080 --> 00:39:37,160

And compared to

her I feel guilty.

854

00:39:37,160 --> 00:39:39,080

It's not my fault, mind you.

855

00:39:39,080 --> 00:39:40,230

I know that.

856

00:39:40,230 --> 00:39:42,350

But the interesting

thing is I discussed this

857

00:39:42,350 --> 00:39:44,870

with another volunteer, and

she looked at me and she said,

858

00:39:44,870 --> 00:39:46,305

you have the same feeling?

859

00:39:46,305 --> 00:39:47,930

She said, I thought

I was the only one.

860

00:39:47,930 --> 00:39:49,370

And I said, oh, thank god.

861

00:39:49,370 --> 00:39:50,390

There's more.

862

00:39:50,390 --> 00:39:52,880

And it's a common
feeling for those of us

863

00:39:52,880 --> 00:39:56,150

who have not had the utmost
pain that the others did.

864

00:39:56,150 --> 00:39:59,930

So have you had more
contact with survivors

865

00:39:59,930 --> 00:40:03,950

and other refugees through
your work at the museum

866

00:40:03,950 --> 00:40:08,170

than you had before as far as an
opportunity to talk about this?

867

00:40:08,170 --> 00:40:08,670

Oh yes.

868

00:40:08,670 --> 00:40:11,180

Opportunity arose there
which I didn't have before.

869

00:40:11,180 --> 00:40:15,290

Uh-huh, and has that been
helpful to you to have a chance

870

00:40:15,290 --> 00:40:17,210

to talk about some
of these things?

871

00:40:17,210 --> 00:40:19,040

Absolutely, I mean,
it's fascinating.

872

00:40:19,040 --> 00:40:20,610

There's some such dear people.

873
00:40:20,610 --> 00:40:23,330
I look at them, and I
listen to their past

874
00:40:23,330 --> 00:40:25,040
as very young
people in the camp.

875
00:40:25,040 --> 00:40:27,410
And I say to myself,
how can this man be

876
00:40:27,410 --> 00:40:31,800
so pleasant and so normal after
what he went through, you know?

877
00:40:31,800 --> 00:40:34,940
Are those things that you
didn't think about before?

878
00:40:34,940 --> 00:40:37,490
Well, those are things which
I thought about before but had

879
00:40:37,490 --> 00:40:40,520
not being confronted
with in the flesh.

880
00:40:40,520 --> 00:40:42,710
And you meet these
people actually,

881
00:40:42,710 --> 00:40:46,190
and you wonder about
the human spirit,

882
00:40:46,190 --> 00:40:49,610
how much it can take
and stay normal.

883
00:40:49,610 --> 00:40:53,500
So overall would you say it's

been more upsetting for you

884

00:40:53,500 --> 00:40:57,950
or it's been more helpful
to you to have the volunteer

885

00:40:57,950 --> 00:40:59,120
experience?

886

00:40:59,120 --> 00:41:02,720
Oh, it's been heartwarming.

887

00:41:02,720 --> 00:41:04,670
It has filled an empty place.

888

00:41:04,670 --> 00:41:09,470
I wanted to do something
important, something necessary.

889

00:41:09,470 --> 00:41:13,430
I was feeling too comfortable
here, a little isolated with

890

00:41:13,430 --> 00:41:15,510
not terribly much to do.

891

00:41:15,510 --> 00:41:18,800
And I think that for
the rest of my life

892

00:41:18,800 --> 00:41:21,050
until I'm no longer
able to, I want

893

00:41:21,050 --> 00:41:22,970
to be involved with this museum.

894

00:41:22,970 --> 00:41:24,590
I just love it.

895

00:41:24,590 --> 00:41:26,420
And you started as

a volunteer when?

896

00:41:26,420 --> 00:41:29,090

At the very beginning
when they were first open.

897

00:41:29,090 --> 00:41:31,940

I was there before
they opened the museum

898

00:41:31,940 --> 00:41:33,830

to the public, the day before.

899

00:41:33,830 --> 00:41:35,090

Here's another little story.

900

00:41:35,090 --> 00:41:38,360

I went with my very nice,
mature daughter, Jenny.

901

00:41:38,360 --> 00:41:42,860

And we went to the museum,
and she went, you know,

902

00:41:42,860 --> 00:41:46,010

where those boxes are
where adults look down

903

00:41:46,010 --> 00:41:48,590

at a series of clips below--

904

00:41:48,590 --> 00:41:52,640

pictures and film clips about
the really horrendous things

905

00:41:52,640 --> 00:41:54,740

that you don't want kids to see.

906

00:41:54,740 --> 00:41:57,920

Nazi experiments and that,
beatings and that sort

907

00:41:57,920 --> 00:41:58,490
of thing.

908
00:41:58,490 --> 00:42:00,740
It's kind of sad how
many people are always

909
00:42:00,740 --> 00:42:02,390
eager to look down at that.

910
00:42:02,390 --> 00:42:05,300
Jenny came up to me and
she said, Mom, she said,

911
00:42:05,300 --> 00:42:07,490
don't ever look at those.

912
00:42:07,490 --> 00:42:09,290
And I knew exactly
what she meant

913
00:42:09,290 --> 00:42:13,820
because I'm the type if I see
an animal being treated cruelly,

914
00:42:13,820 --> 00:42:15,050
I can't get over it.

915
00:42:15,050 --> 00:42:18,290
And you see some of these
things, it sears your soul.

916
00:42:18,290 --> 00:42:19,520
You can't forget.

917
00:42:19,520 --> 00:42:21,590
She did me a big favor.

918
00:42:21,590 --> 00:42:23,840
And I've been working
there since the beginning,

919

00:42:23,840 --> 00:42:28,340
and I have never gone and
looked at those things.

920
00:42:28,340 --> 00:42:29,240
Never.

921
00:42:29,240 --> 00:42:30,410
And she warned me.

922
00:42:30,410 --> 00:42:31,730
I'm very grateful to her.

923
00:42:31,730 --> 00:42:34,400
Had I looked at that,
I probably couldn't

924
00:42:34,400 --> 00:42:36,890
continue working at the museum.

925
00:42:36,890 --> 00:42:40,460
You have to shield yourself
against the utter horror.

926
00:42:40,460 --> 00:42:42,620
There's limits to
what you can take.

927
00:42:42,620 --> 00:42:46,490
In fact, I'm going
to travel to Eastern

928
00:42:46,490 --> 00:42:48,440
Europe in the late fall.

929
00:42:48,440 --> 00:42:52,820
And on the way there'd be a
chance to go to the camps.

930
00:42:52,820 --> 00:42:54,540
And I'm not going to go.

931

00:42:54,540 --> 00:42:56,465
I don't think I can face it.

932
00:42:56,465 --> 00:42:59,230
It's enough that I go
through a permanent exhibit.

933
00:42:59,230 --> 00:43:02,220

934
00:43:02,220 --> 00:43:04,320
It's not because I
don't care but maybe

935
00:43:04,320 --> 00:43:07,370
because I care too much
that I don't want to go.

936
00:43:07,370 --> 00:43:14,000

937
00:43:14,000 --> 00:43:18,490
So now you are working
less with visitor services,

938
00:43:18,490 --> 00:43:22,855
and you're spending some
time doing translations.

939
00:43:22,855 --> 00:43:24,220
See this purple folder?

940
00:43:24,220 --> 00:43:30,720
It's full of a document which
was on videotape in German.

941
00:43:30,720 --> 00:43:36,490
First I took it down word by
word in German, 39 pages of it.

942
00:43:36,490 --> 00:43:41,110
And now I'm translating it
from the German to English.

943
00:43:41,110 --> 00:43:47,260
Unfortunately I'm not ready yet
for word processors and things

944
00:43:47,260 --> 00:43:47,980
like that.

945
00:43:47,980 --> 00:43:50,590
I understand the museum
might give courses on that.

946
00:43:50,590 --> 00:43:51,640
I'd like that.

947
00:43:51,640 --> 00:43:53,090
I'm doing it by hand.

948
00:43:53,090 --> 00:43:55,540
It would be lovely if I could
just sort of take it off

949
00:43:55,540 --> 00:43:56,120
like this.

950
00:43:56,120 --> 00:43:57,760
So you do this in longhand?

951
00:43:57,760 --> 00:44:00,700
Oh yes, that's why it's
taking a little longer.

952
00:44:00,700 --> 00:44:03,193
And do you go down to
the museum to do this?

953
00:44:03,193 --> 00:44:04,360
When it's done I'll go down.

954
00:44:04,360 --> 00:44:05,160
In the meantime--

955

00:44:05,160 --> 00:44:05,660

No, but--

956

00:44:05,660 --> 00:44:07,120

--once I have a
sufficient amount

957

00:44:07,120 --> 00:44:09,370

I'll mail it to Miss Rubin.

958

00:44:09,370 --> 00:44:10,180

Amy Rubin.

959

00:44:10,180 --> 00:44:10,870

I work for her.

960

00:44:10,870 --> 00:44:14,650

She's a lovely girl, and
I want to have her know

961

00:44:14,650 --> 00:44:15,960

that I've been working on this.

962

00:44:15,960 --> 00:44:17,380

It's taking quite a while.

963

00:44:17,380 --> 00:44:19,300

No, I wanted to
understand the process.

964

00:44:19,300 --> 00:44:21,295

The museum lends you the video.

965

00:44:21,295 --> 00:44:23,560

I could do it all
there in the library.

966

00:44:23,560 --> 00:44:25,240

But I've chosen
to do it at home.

967

00:44:25,240 --> 00:44:26,230

It makes no difference.

968

00:44:26,230 --> 00:44:29,840

OK, so you put the video--

969

00:44:29,840 --> 00:44:32,890

I take that information from
the video at the library,

970

00:44:32,890 --> 00:44:34,870

of course, with their machines.

971

00:44:34,870 --> 00:44:37,180

And then when I have
the document I go home

972

00:44:37,180 --> 00:44:38,440

and I translate it.

973

00:44:38,440 --> 00:44:39,990

I see.

974

00:44:39,990 --> 00:44:45,490

And what is that like for you?

975

00:44:45,490 --> 00:44:46,930

Fascinating.

976

00:44:46,930 --> 00:44:48,970

For instance, I'll
tell you, there

977

00:44:48,970 --> 00:44:50,740

is this wonderful video out.

978

00:44:50,740 --> 00:44:52,990

It's called Weapons
of the Spirit,

979

00:44:52,990 --> 00:44:56,500

and it's about the wonderful

French Huguenot mountain

980

00:44:56,500 --> 00:44:58,840

village of Le Chambon.

981

00:44:58,840 --> 00:45:00,910

And they're
legendary for the aid

982

00:45:00,910 --> 00:45:02,770

that they gave to
Jewish refugees.

983

00:45:02,770 --> 00:45:03,770

They're famous for it.

984

00:45:03,770 --> 00:45:06,550

In fact, if you'd like me to
lend you this, it's wonderful.

985

00:45:06,550 --> 00:45:08,740

It's called Weapons
of the Spirit.

986

00:45:08,740 --> 00:45:13,150

And it's this very stirring,
which I've always been so moved

987

00:45:13,150 --> 00:45:16,270

by, that this
particular translation

988

00:45:16,270 --> 00:45:21,610

is of a man who was a French
Swiss who worked at Le Chambon

989

00:45:21,610 --> 00:45:26,200

during the war helping numerous
children, caring for them,

990

00:45:26,200 --> 00:45:29,690

nourishing them,
helping them escape,

991
00:45:29,690 --> 00:45:33,290
and how the village of Le
Chambon worked with him.

992
00:45:33,290 --> 00:45:36,565
And it was a very famous
priest, Father Trocme.

993
00:45:36,565 --> 00:45:37,840
He's legendary.

994
00:45:37,840 --> 00:45:40,130
And he's mentioned
in this manuscript.

995
00:45:40,130 --> 00:45:45,610
So I have been so thrilled to
be working with this material

996
00:45:45,610 --> 00:45:48,490
because even before
I knew of the museum

997
00:45:48,490 --> 00:45:51,400
I was touched by the
story of Le Chambon

998
00:45:51,400 --> 00:45:53,740
and how they helped
the Jews there.

999
00:45:53,740 --> 00:45:55,870
They were all Huguenots,
not Catholics.

1000
00:45:55,870 --> 00:45:58,690

1001
00:45:58,690 --> 00:46:00,100
So working--

1002

00:46:00,100 --> 00:46:01,690
It's very thrilling material.

1003
00:46:01,690 --> 00:46:04,300
First I did the
story of his wife,

1004
00:46:04,300 --> 00:46:06,250
and now I'm doing his story.

1005
00:46:06,250 --> 00:46:09,580
And it's absolutely
thrilling work.

1006
00:46:09,580 --> 00:46:13,630
And it shows you the heroism
the people are capable of.

1007
00:46:13,630 --> 00:46:18,250
This is a particularly-- this
is not a story only of suffering

1008
00:46:18,250 --> 00:46:22,900
and victimization, but it's
what one man with goodwill

1009
00:46:22,900 --> 00:46:26,680
can do to prevent
horrors from happening,

1010
00:46:26,680 --> 00:46:29,710
and together-- he always
emphasizes in this report

1011
00:46:29,710 --> 00:46:31,360
that he didn't do it by himself.

1012
00:46:31,360 --> 00:46:32,980
He had the help of
the village people

1013
00:46:32,980 --> 00:46:34,930
and of the priests

and many others.

1014
00:46:34,930 --> 00:46:38,890
But he had this gift of
networking, which is a gift.

1015
00:46:38,890 --> 00:46:42,310
And he used it to full
advantage to save many lives.

1016
00:46:42,310 --> 00:46:48,100
You can imagine how honored I
am to be working with his story.

1017
00:46:48,100 --> 00:46:53,500
You said some minutes ago
that working with the museum

1018
00:46:53,500 --> 00:46:55,990
is heartwarming for you.

1019
00:46:55,990 --> 00:46:58,520
Could you say how that is?

1020
00:46:58,520 --> 00:47:01,360
Well, maybe that's
the wrong phrase.

1021
00:47:01,360 --> 00:47:05,620
I just have the feeling that it
engages my heart, my emotions.

1022
00:47:05,620 --> 00:47:09,520
I'm fully committed
to bring out the best

1023
00:47:09,520 --> 00:47:12,550
that this museum has to
offer and to share it

1024
00:47:12,550 --> 00:47:13,660
with the public.

1025

00:47:13,660 --> 00:47:17,980

I have had no dealings with
creating it or furnishing

1026

00:47:17,980 --> 00:47:19,210

it or anything.

1027

00:47:19,210 --> 00:47:24,640

But what I am able to do
is be in between the Museum

1028

00:47:24,640 --> 00:47:27,490

and the public and
convey to them some

1029

00:47:27,490 --> 00:47:29,080

of what the Museum is about.

1030

00:47:29,080 --> 00:47:32,140

And I feel that I'm uniquely
qualified to do that.

1031

00:47:32,140 --> 00:47:33,850

And that is satisfying.

1032

00:47:33,850 --> 00:47:37,180

And what do you think is
the best that the museum has

1033

00:47:37,180 --> 00:47:37,970

to offer?

1034

00:47:37,970 --> 00:47:39,428

What is it that
you want to convey?

1035

00:47:39,428 --> 00:47:41,500

It teaches the world
about the Holocaust.

1036

00:47:41,500 --> 00:47:44,300

That is its purpose.

1037
00:47:44,300 --> 00:47:48,710
And sometimes I look
through the book

1038
00:47:48,710 --> 00:47:52,870
that visitors who leave data
on their thoughts about it,

1039
00:47:52,870 --> 00:47:57,680
and it's marvelous, wonderful
what they have to say about it.

1040
00:47:57,680 --> 00:48:00,950
You get the occasional oddball
who'll say something horrible,

1041
00:48:00,950 --> 00:48:03,360
but fortunately they
are few and far between.

1042
00:48:03,360 --> 00:48:07,860
The majority of people are
absolutely enthralled by it.

1043
00:48:07,860 --> 00:48:10,460
What kinds of things do
you remember people saying.

1044
00:48:10,460 --> 00:48:13,430
How wonderful for you
to be here and show

1045
00:48:13,430 --> 00:48:17,570
the world, or this sort of
thing must never happen again,

1046
00:48:17,570 --> 00:48:21,540
and may God prevent this
from happening again,

1047
00:48:21,540 --> 00:48:23,870
and thank you so

much for showing

1048
00:48:23,870 --> 00:48:26,120
gratitude and astonishment.

1049
00:48:26,120 --> 00:48:29,665
And you know, it's
just fascinating.

1050
00:48:29,665 --> 00:48:31,040
But I don't know
what people know

1051
00:48:31,040 --> 00:48:32,940
that they can go up
to the second floor

1052
00:48:32,940 --> 00:48:35,660
and look through these books
of what others say about--

1053
00:48:35,660 --> 00:48:39,290
at the end of the
exhibition it crosses

1054
00:48:39,290 --> 00:48:40,520
the Hall of Remembrance.

1055
00:48:40,520 --> 00:48:42,980
And then when you go
through the little corridor

1056
00:48:42,980 --> 00:48:45,650
there are these big books
that you can write in.

1057
00:48:45,650 --> 00:48:49,730
And it shows you that the public
really does appreciate it.

1058
00:48:49,730 --> 00:48:52,580
Do you feel that your
work is appreciated?

1059
00:48:52,580 --> 00:48:53,300
Definitely.

1060
00:48:53,300 --> 00:48:56,270
I've had numerous-- we have
one little gimmick that's

1061
00:48:56,270 --> 00:48:57,530
very satisfying.

1062
00:48:57,530 --> 00:49:01,130
Each one of us receives
every month 10 tickets.

1063
00:49:01,130 --> 00:49:02,870
Now, you know the
tickets are free,

1064
00:49:02,870 --> 00:49:05,600
but you have to wait in
line for a long time.

1065
00:49:05,600 --> 00:49:09,050
And it's very convenient
to be handed a ticket.

1066
00:49:09,050 --> 00:49:12,010
Now, I don't always
have 10 family members

1067
00:49:12,010 --> 00:49:14,150
or intimate friends that
I give these tickets to,

1068
00:49:14,150 --> 00:49:17,180
so I keep them on my person
when I'm at the museum.

1069
00:49:17,180 --> 00:49:19,310
And when that hour
finally arrives

1070

00:49:19,310 --> 00:49:20,780

when there's no
more tickets and I

1071

00:49:20,780 --> 00:49:24,020

see some desperate young
visitor from a far off country,

1072

00:49:24,020 --> 00:49:27,020

I'm so happy to slip
her a ticket or him.

1073

00:49:27,020 --> 00:49:31,130

And ooh, right after
the Oklahoma bombing

1074

00:49:31,130 --> 00:49:34,400

I had the attorney
general of Oklahoma.

1075

00:49:34,400 --> 00:49:36,710

He was in the news
just the other day.

1076

00:49:36,710 --> 00:49:38,150

I forget his name right now.

1077

00:49:38,150 --> 00:49:40,100

It's Rasmussen or something.

1078

00:49:40,100 --> 00:49:41,960

Very nice man.

1079

00:49:41,960 --> 00:49:44,060

And he looked at me.

1080

00:49:44,060 --> 00:49:46,130

I had no idea who he was.

1081

00:49:46,130 --> 00:49:48,110

And he said, oh, what a shame.

1082

00:49:48,110 --> 00:49:51,620

He said, I can't get any ticket,
and I'm only here for the day.

1083

00:49:51,620 --> 00:49:53,495

I said, where are you from?

1084

00:49:53,495 --> 00:49:54,245

He said, Oklahoma.

1085

00:49:54,245 --> 00:49:56,540

He said, I'm the
attorney general.

1086

00:49:56,540 --> 00:49:58,055

No, he didn't say that then.

1087

00:49:58,055 --> 00:50:00,620

He just said he
was from Oklahoma.

1088

00:50:00,620 --> 00:50:02,630

I liked the way
he looked, and he

1089

00:50:02,630 --> 00:50:04,138

seemed like a nice human being.

1090

00:50:04,138 --> 00:50:05,930

And so I reached into
my pocket and I said,

1091

00:50:05,930 --> 00:50:07,670

here, let me give
you this little pass.

1092

00:50:07,670 --> 00:50:09,650

I'd hate for you to
be here for nothing.

1093

00:50:09,650 --> 00:50:14,390

And he thanked me so

much and dashed off.

1094

00:50:14,390 --> 00:50:17,630

Hours later he found me
where I was collecting

1095

00:50:17,630 --> 00:50:18,990

tickets or something.

1096

00:50:18,990 --> 00:50:22,280

And he said, I want to thank you
so much for making it possible

1097

00:50:22,280 --> 00:50:23,090

for me to see.

1098

00:50:23,090 --> 00:50:25,700

He said, I'm the attorney
general of Oklahoma.

1099

00:50:25,700 --> 00:50:27,230

And I said, oh my god.

1100

00:50:27,230 --> 00:50:28,940

I said, your poor state.

1101

00:50:28,940 --> 00:50:31,550

I'm so sorry for what
you had to go through.

1102

00:50:31,550 --> 00:50:33,530

And it was just like
instant friendship.

1103

00:50:33,530 --> 00:50:34,910

We'll never see
each other again,

1104

00:50:34,910 --> 00:50:36,920

but I don't think we'll
ever forget each other.

1105

00:50:36,920 --> 00:50:41,150
And it's that sort of human
story that is so enriching,

1106
00:50:41,150 --> 00:50:42,470
you know?

1107
00:50:42,470 --> 00:50:44,660
And many other instances
that I can't all

1108
00:50:44,660 --> 00:50:48,730
remember of a direct
contact with another life.

1109
00:50:48,730 --> 00:50:51,440
Brief, but you don't forget it.

1110
00:50:51,440 --> 00:50:53,120
I just-- I can't remember.

1111
00:50:53,120 --> 00:50:54,560
But you know what I mean.

1112
00:50:54,560 --> 00:50:56,930
Different various instances
remain in the mind.

1113
00:50:56,930 --> 00:50:59,630

1114
00:50:59,630 --> 00:51:03,060
What else would you
like to talk about?

1115
00:51:03,060 --> 00:51:07,040
Well, OK, let me say
that I appreciate

1116
00:51:07,040 --> 00:51:11,990
that the museum gives us
folks a chance to voice

1117

00:51:11,990 --> 00:51:17,720

our experiences from where
we came from and here we are

1118

00:51:17,720 --> 00:51:20,370

and how it felt and how it was.

1119

00:51:20,370 --> 00:51:24,200

This is a wonderful thing
that you're letting us do,

1120

00:51:24,200 --> 00:51:27,710

and it's always nice to have
a voice and to be counted

1121

00:51:27,710 --> 00:51:29,060

and to be heard from.

1122

00:51:29,060 --> 00:51:31,120

And I appreciate
that, and I want

1123

00:51:31,120 --> 00:51:34,190

to repeat that I
really love the museum.

1124

00:51:34,190 --> 00:51:37,940

And I'm terribly glad
it came to this city.

1125

00:51:37,940 --> 00:51:41,840

And I think that's
all, don't you?

1126

00:51:41,840 --> 00:51:43,580

Well, you've told
us quite a lot,

1127

00:51:43,580 --> 00:51:46,820

and your story has
been very important.

1128

00:51:46,820 --> 00:51:49,530

Thank you very much for
sharing your testimony.

1129

00:51:49,530 --> 00:51:51,000

Thank you very much.

1130

00:51:51,000 --> 00:51:53,690

And you're very welcome.

1131

00:51:53,690 --> 00:51:57,350

This concludes the United
States Holocaust Memorial Museum

1132

00:51:57,350 --> 00:52:01,210

Volunteer Collection
interview with Ruth Harvey.

1133

00:52:01,210 --> 00:52:03,000