

Ok, thank you Stelman for agreeing. There are three parts, the first two are small, and the third part is. The point of the interview, the first part is about life before the war, and your family. The second part is a little bit about the war, and then after the war, how you came to Canada, why, and what life was like in Montreal when you came. So let's begin with day one of your life, when were you born, where were you born?

I was born in 1921 in the (00.45.0) and we lived there for 10 years, up to 1939, when the war broke out.

Ok hold on, just talk to me about your parents a little bit?

Well my parents, what about my parents?

Who were they? What they did?

They came off the ..(01.25.0 can't hear). and settled in the big city. And my father was a shoe maker, and we had a store. Make to measure shoes. You could not buy ready-made shoes at that time. Every shoe had to be made to measure. And my mother was a housewife. And that's about it.

So your father was a cobbler, your mother was a housewife

And I was the only child

You were the only child. Was that unusual?

It was, but they really had a daughter before I was born, and when she died she was two years old. And I was born, and they didn't have any more children.

And were you middle class?

I suppose we were a little more comfortable than the others, because we had a business. But there was nobody that I know that was hungry, before the war. It was just that we lived in like a ghetto, in a Jewish ghetto. I was only ten years old

When the war started. Were you religious? Was your family religious?

Not really, no. We would go to Shul on holidays, occassions, other days (laughing). We were not, it was... My parents were already enlightened. They came out of the village into a big city, in the early 20s, and I suppose not before the 20s, but in their teens. My mother was born in 1902, my father was born in 1898, so when they were teenagers it was in the early 20s they came up to the big city.

Ok, and what did you speak at home? Yiddish, or Polish?

We spoke Yiddish at home, and we spoke Polish at school. My first language was Yiddish.

And what was the cultural life of the family?

My mother was very much involved in, my mother was not my father, in all different organizations, I don't know if you are familiar, but the (04.22.0 Bund?) She was involved with

the (? Bund?) and she was involved with the May 1st, you know this I remember, because you used to have meetings in the home, all kinds of. And the cultural, she used to go, she used to shop all the time, go to the theatres. A lot of church plays, because it was a big city. And we had a lot of Jewish teenagers, a lot of performances, and people coming in. So it was quite a big cultural, events going on. I was, of course, I was very young. It's just what I remember.

What did your parents want you to be? What were their hopes and aspirations for you?

For me? I don't know. I lost my parents pretty young. I don't know. My father disappeared in 1942, and my mother died in 1946.

After the war.

After the war. So I didn't really know much about them.

So before the war, was going to school important?

Naturally. In the Jewish upbringing, school comes first. Everybody has to go to school. Even now and today, you know. I went, I remember, my mother used to teach me, I was 6 years old. She was teaching how to read the newspaper. When I came to school, at the age of, I don't remember, was it 6 or 7, I didn't go to first grade, I just went right into second grade. Because I knew already, so I never went to first grade.

Ok, so you skipped a grade.

Yeah I skipped a grade.

So 1939 you were 10 years old, that's when the ghetto enlarged, right?

The ghetto started in 1940. That's when we left Poland.

In 1940?

Yea, we smuggled to Warsaw, we closed up and left everything standing, and we started walking. And we walked East. To Bialystok, there was a Russian border. And we smuggled over, and went across to Russia. And we were promptly arrested, and sent into Siberia.

So you were in Siberia the whole time?

5 years.

Siberia. And your father died there?

My father disappeared there. He was also, he was taken away and we never saw him again.

And you have no idea what happened to him?

I have no idea at all.

He was taken away right then? When you guys got arrested?

No, before he was sent to a camp, and they were building a factory, an ammunitions factory. Actually it was in the Ural Mountains. And we went there in 1940. And in 1942 I was walking on a night shift, when I came home my father was gone. The (18.05.0) what's it called, the Russian militant police, I don't know. Anyways, they came in the night, and they took a lot of men out, and they disappeared.

All the men disappeared?

No, whoever they took. They took, I don't know how many. We were a big, there must have been a thousand people in the barracks, they had. And we slept three families in one room, about the size of this, there was three families. And each had a corner, and they came in and then I didn't see any more. I don't know what happened. We tried to find out, couldn't, because my (08.55.0 ?) was on the Russian gentleman, was KS. And this continued, so I was working (09.05.5 ?) in the factory. I started, I was 12 years old. And went to work. I was actually learning a trade.

What were you learning?

I was working on a machine, a lathe, a wooden lathe.

So you were a wood turner.

Well yeah. And I was working and I was making these, uh handles for the machine guns. The wooden parts.

Handles?

Handles. That was my job. And so I'd get little pieces of wood, and with the lathe vroom vroom vroom.

You were 12 years old?

When I went there I was 12 years old, and when I got the job I was about 13.

And you did that till the end of the war?

Yeah.

What did your mother do?

My mother was working, she worked in the, what do you call it, the brick laying. She lost a lot of weight. My mother was a big woman. She must have been about 160 pounds, after the war she was down to 90. She had a stroke, and she died. It was in 1946 when the transport went to Szczecin, Poland.

So you were, after the war, where were you? Did you stay?

Germany. When I was in Poland, they shipped us back to Poland, after we went through the 5 years they decided whoever wants to go back goes back. So we registered and they put all of us in cattle trains, and started shipping back. So they shipped us back to a city called Szczecin, it's on the Baltic Sea. And the city, at one time was Poland, one time was Germany, so this time

when Poland took over Szczecin, all the Germans left and they left their houses, so we moved into a house. And my mother was with me then. Which was, you know. So I went down to the docks and I got a job right away.

Doing?

Doing the same thing, except different. It was woodworking. So I got a job woodworking. And my mother was not doing anything. She had very high blood pressure. And one day somebody called me to go home, and I came home and my mother was dead. That was in 1946. So you were 17?

I was 17. Yeah.

So what did you do?

Well, I, cause I was alone, I moved. My father had three sisters living in New York.

New York?

Yeah.

And they had been there before the war?

Yes, they got there in the 30s and the 20s. As a matter of fact we had papers laid out, to go, but we just missed it, because the war broke out in '39. Otherwise we would have been coming too. So anyways, my idea was to go to family. So I was going out of Poland, so I was what do I do? I knock on door, till I was uh. A Zionist Organization, and they got all the young people together. So I said look, I'm going to join them, you know, so I won't be alone. But instead, they usually transported... I went there as a child. I was 17. I was considered too young to be an adult for some reason. Because they took me in as a child (laughs)

Who took you in as a child? The Zionist organization?

Yeah. I don't remember what the faction was, it wasn't religious. It was some kind of communist organization. Because they had all different groups.

Hashomer Hatz'air?

Maybe Hashomer something, I don't know. So I stayed there for about a few months, 6 months, I don't remember. And then they started transporting to Berlin. Originally we were supposed to go to Israel. And my idea instead was to go to the States. I didn't want to go to Israel.

So it was a way to get out of Poland for you?

To get out of Poland, we travelled all night by track, and we smuggled, we were smuggled, we had to pay off the border guards. And I got to Berlin, (14.34.0 Schlachtensee?) and it was in 1946. And I was in Schlachtensee till, the thing is when I came to Berlin I didn't have anything. All my belongings I left behind. Just came to Berlin. But the organization looked after me. They gave me clothes, and then the American army was supplying the food. Cause I was in the American, section of the American (15.04.0 ?).

Were you in a DP camp there?

No, (15.07.0 Schlachtensee?) was a big, 8,000 people camp.

Schlachtensee?

Schlachtensee. You speak German?

Well, Yiddish, but not...

Anyway, what happened is I was there for about 8 months, and they liquidated, this organization is going to Israel. And I didn't want to go, I wanted to go to the States. So I met somebody there and he says 'you know I have a sister that's in another camp and she wants to go there' so he says 'come with me' and I said 'ok.' I had not much belonging, a little shirt, another couple of shirts i think, so I jumped on a train...

Were you working at that DP camp, or no?

Not over there, no. Over there I wasn't working. We were training. We were training for the army. I went to , another camp was (16.17.0 Wedstlar?). Wedstlar was just outside of Frankfurt. It was a big camp. So it was a DP camp. You come in and there's a gate, and a man standing, it's a Jewish camp. All Jews. So I come up with his sister and him, and there is a little room, and the sister is there with another family, and yet there's no room for me. No room to sleep. So I go up to the administration and I say 'look, I'm here and I need (16.51.0) and he said Ok, I'm going to sleep in the office. So I make a bed over here, and anyways finally the administrator said 'you know what, come with me.' So I went with him and he was in a room with three bunk beds, (laughing) and he said 'do you want top or bottom.' I stayed there for three years (laughing).

Really? In the bunk beds.

I got a job on the radio, doing announcements. Over there I was getting extra rations of milk.

What type of announcements?

(17.32.0 ?) You know, in Jewish. Yiddish.

It was a PA system?

Yeah, it was just the camp. Because we had one two three, about four or five big blocks, buildings. They used to be army buildings. And it was a camp. So that was my job, and every block got the rations, so and I was in charge of my block's rations, and the only thing is now, my idea about how to get to the States. Meanwhile, I didn't know how to get in touch with my family. So what happened, one day, in the main gate, comes in two motorcycle MPs, with a big news thing, and two in the back, and they drive in to the front, and they come up to the administration and they asked for me. It appears my aunt, they owned a hotel in Rhinebeck, New York, it's next to the Hyde Estate. My Aunt knew Mrs. Roosevelt.

Eleanor.

Yeah, Eleanor. They used to shop together...

Staying out

She mentioned Mrs. Roosevelt about me, Mrs. Roosevelt picked up and called a captain or somebody, and next thing you know this woman kept in this limousine comes up looking for me. Anyway, papers had been made for me to go to New York. And here I'm 17 years old already.

You're older, it's almost 1949 now.

1948.

9?

No. It all started in 1947.

50. Cause you said you were there for 3 years.

No.

Ok, I'm sorry, go ahead.

Wait a minute. She came to see me in 47.

Ok.

In 1947.

To come as a child... after about 6 months of back and forth, they decided I'm too old. I'm not a child anymore.

To go to the States

Yeah. So now, the call had changed, and I have to wait another 5 years. To go to the States.

Even with Mrs. Roosevelt?

Even with Mrs. Roosevelt. It was such a hassle. So my aunt decided that a new tactics. They came to Canada, people that they knew in Montreal, and they put up a bond here, and the people here sponsored me, to come as a worker. And that is what happened. Within a year or so, 1949, I came up.

You were 19 years old?

I was 19, almost 20.

And what type of work?

Oh, I had a licence as an electrician, a license as a carpenter, a license as a tailor, I had all kind of licenses. So I went into the (21.11 old? Ault?) I went to the old school and we organize. Do you know what organize means?

Yeah.

The Jewish Organize.

Wait a minute, what does organize mean in Jewish? What does it mean?

It's hard to explain (laughing). You, uh, how should I explain organize. You (21.36 ?finagle?).

You finagle. Ok, right, like finagleago.

You organized.

You take care of it.

We had to do things to survive. Because the story that I tell you now is only a quarter of the story. You know, because things that we didn't (21.56.0 ?), if I was to share you don't want to hear. Ok.

So let's go back, so in the DP camp, you got your licenses,

Yeah.

While you were in the DP camp?

Ok what I did was, anything, you can do anything, you can buy anything for a buck. I was in charge of the distribution on my part of the food. So they used to come in and dump everything to my place, and I used to distribute everything. And there was a lot of leftover. Since I am in charge of it, what's left over is mine. So I used to go out and sell them on what was the black market. So I accumulated a few dollars. So if I needed a license I would uh, this, the oil teacher, for five dollars. That's all. 5 dollars is a lot of money. For 5 dollars in 1936 they made a wedding. Ok, for 5 dollars.

So you were in the DP camp from 46-49?

That's right.

Ok, so how did you come to Montreal?

Ok, so finally, papers came to me, I went from what's now Bremerhaven, Bremerhaven is a port, I stayed in Bremerhaven a couple of months. For some reason, waiting for a ship or whatever. And next thing a ship came and I went, it was Cynthia. It was a tube ship.

What type of ship?

Tube.

There must have been around 300 people (24.02.9) in the bottom. No bunks. There must have been about 300, and it didn't take long, we went through about 7 days, I think.

When was that?

We went to Halifax.

What month?

May 13 through...

So you landed in Halifax, do you remember that?

Yes

And what was that like?

It was alright. I was about 19, 20 years old. Life was great.

So you had one suitcase?

We didnt think that anything after the war... that was... it was good. Compared to what we had before. You understand? We came here and this country was beautiful. So we came here, and I had no money.

So you had one suitcase?

I had one suitcase. I had... a rucksack.

Backpack.

Yeah. I had no money, but when I came out from Halifax they put us right on the train, shipped to Montreal.

You spoke no English, right?

No

French?

No

You spoke...

Jewish

German, and Russian

Polish and Russian, yeah. I could speak Polish or Russian.

Did you meet people on the boat?

Oh yeah. People that we travelled together from Germany. Families came with children, and...

So what was your first memory, as you're standing...

When I came to Montreal the first memory is somebody came up on the train, I think it was a woman, walking down from the Jewish Organization, I can't remember what

(26.00.0 Jias?)

Jias (?). They had money, to give us 10 dollars. I'm Jewish, that was my first 10 dollars (laughs) So I thought, when I came down, when I...My aunt, one of my aunts, came to Montreal, and she came to meet me.

At the train station.

Yeah. I had to wait. So then we stayed downtown in a motel for 3 days, until they arranged for me to get lodgings. Are you familiar with Montreal?

You know there is a street called Cuthbert.

What?

Cuthbert. Between Bagg and Pins Avenue. It's not very familiar street, you know. I got a room, I got a room there, and lodgings.

That was a Jewish family?

Oh sure, yeah.

Immigrant, or?

Oh no. She was an old lady, with five children. But they were all grown up. There was only three of them in the house. And so we had a room, and I was rooming with another boy, also. He had come from Hungary.

And he was on the train with you?

No. He came a year before me.

Ok.

So he lived there anyway. And I moved in with him.

And how much was it?

I was paying 15 dollars room and board. Room and board 15 dollars. So my aunt stayed with me for about 3 days, and she left. The only thing is they arranged looking for a job. So I went looking for a job. Tailor, carpenter, you know. My aunt knew somebody here who had a printing shop. So she approached him, and he said 'sure, let her come up.' So I went up, it was on top of a huge sky cafe in modern day downtown. He was paying me 15\$ a week, so I got 15\$ and gave it to the lady (laughs). Well that was only for the first three or four months, and then I got a raise, to 18\$, so I had an extra 3 dollars.

So they paid you 15\$ a week but rent was 15\$ a week?

15\$ for rent was room and board. She used to feed me.

For the week?

For the week, yeah.

Ok, now how did your aunt know this printer?

My aunt was here, visiting in her late 20s, and at that time she was a single woman, and she had a date with this guy. And they went out. (laughs) So she knew him, and, I don't know.

And was she the same aunt that knew Eleanor Roosevelt?

No, no not this one. I have 3 aunts.

I know, you have three, and you had never met them.

The oldest was Kenya (29.57.0 ?), they owned a big hotel, a vegetarian hotel

Vegetarian hotel?

A vegetarian hotel, and I was there. They grew their own vegetables, everything that they ate on the table was grown in their own backyard. They had a huge farm.

Do you know what it was called, do you remember?

Geology something, geology farm..

And this was down near New York?

This was in the Rhinebeck

Around the Rhinebeck area, ok.

So you said that your aunt got you the job, did you go looking anywhere else?

No, no. I like printing. So i started, I start there, and of course my language, I didn't speak, so I had a hard time because the foreman didn't quite take to me. I don't know, some reason, but I let it slide.

Who was the foreman?

Another, he was a guy, I don't know.

Jewish?

Yeah.

Jewish Canadian.

Yeah. But then, at the end it was alright. Cause once I learned the language, and I stayed there, I worked there till the 1970s, it was 21 years.

So how did you learn English?

So then I went, so what happened was, I learned! I learned fast, because, first of all, we met, few people there I knew come from overseas, and there was like a bunch. Most of us boys we had no family, so if you have no family you all got together, you know. The boys were your family.

Where did you get together?

We would meet, in all group, like after work, you gotta eat supper, so we used to say 'where are we going to eat tomorrow?' 'ok tomorrow I meet you there,' 'tomorrow i'll meet you at Feldmans' 'tomorrow i'll meet you at Jenny's,' They were all restaurants, I don't know if you've ever been there. We used to eat in restaurants.

Where was Feldmans?

Feldmans was in Montreal, near you know uh, Feldmans. We used to eat at Hookerage (32.35.0 ?). We used to eat at.. I don't know, wherever. There was a lot of restaraunts! So each time, so these boys, we used to meet.

So who were these boys? Jewish?

Some of them. Hungary, some of them. Some were from Poland, some were from Hungary, some were from Berlin, so all over.

How many were there?

Oh, we were a crew. There must have been some 20-odd people. And I stayed in this place for about 6 months. With this, his name was Harry Heller (33.12.0 ?). Harrt Heller. He owned a big century carpet. He passed away already. He was my roommate. We stayed in this room, the room was a little tiny room with a carpet, the window was going into the alley. Summertime, you could cut air with a knife, it was so hot. There was no such thing as air conditioning. So you know Howe says 'we gotta move. why do we pay? we can pay somewhere and move, a little better neighbourhood.' and so we found a place on Esplanade between Mont Royale and the Villeneuve, it was 8 rooms, downstairs, you know when you go right through, with the balconies up. The problem was, we were reluctant to tell her that we wanted to move, because we felt that, obligated, for some reason. It took us about a month, (laughing) to tell that we wanted to move. Finally we did, we moved. Both of us, both of us got a room. Nice size room, two beds.

And how much was that?

We were paying, for the two of us we were paying 20\$ or something?

A month or a week?

I forget what we paid. We paid... unbelievable. I remember the first one. It could have been, you know, like maybe, 10\$ a week each for the room, but it was a 2 person.

Who owned that?

Mrs. Leibowitch. Had a husband, passed away, she remarried. And she owned the house. She owned the property. They used to go to Florida for the winter, and we stayed in the house, Harry and I, take care of the house. And then we had, you know, all of my friends would come in, and sit, and some were playing cards, some were playing chess, some were playing, you know. We all had the gang. And that lasted until I got married.

So after 6 months you moved there, and then, so your whole life began to shift, right?

Well, you know, thinking back, we didn't know that good life was supposed to be, cause I don't remember what it was like to live, you know. Every little thing was good. I don't know how to explain this. If we had no, lots of times some of us guys didn't want to do for supper tonight. Ok. We lay off. We lay off. That was fine! In fact that was supposed to be like that. We were really very poor. Because each one of us would just barely make rent.

Did you go to the Y (YWCA)?

Yes. I got free grocery from the Y for one year. The Y was one, it was right to me in Montreal, we used to hang out in the Y, and every once in a while they used to have a dance at the Char Chemine(37.25 ?) at that time.

Where was the Char Chemine at that time? Where was it?

Where it is now. It hasn't moved.

Ok, in Westmount?

Yeah. They used to make a dance over there. So, we would go, dance, that's where I met my wife, at one of these dances.

We'll get to that. She's a Canadian? And immigrant?

Yeah. She was born in England. Anyway, so in those years there was, the only bad part was when it came to the holidays. You know, the huge holidays. Yom Kippur, Rosh Hashanah, because everybody had families, they had everybody sitting around, we didn't have. We just walked the streets. I remember that was the only part that was...

Did you talk about it?

Um, we don't talk. At that time we don't talk about it. But I felt, you know, that it's like you're looking in the window, and looking at other people, you know.

And did anyone ever invite you over? No one invited you?

No, we didn't know anybody the first couple of years. I didn't know any families. We just, friends that I had that we came together, all these friends had no family either, because they were single boys. There was, that was the only bad part. I had I job, we had weekends, go to the movie, sometimes in summertime we would go maybe to St. Rosewood (39.34.0 ??), what was it called, Cozy Corner, I don't know if you're familiar with Cozy Corner, you're too young.

What is it?

It was a dance hall.

And where was it?

It was in St. Rosewood. 25 cents by bus. We would take a bus for 25 cents and if another 25 cents you sleep over.

Did you like to dance?

Oh yes. I was slim, I'm not this fat. (laughing)

So it was easy to meet girls for you?

I had no problem with girls. I had girls wherever I went. In Germany, in Russia, in Poland. That's how I got to travel to Poland, I had a girl, she vouched for me, because I wasn't allowed to go across from Poland to Germany, I was too old. It was only for little kids. So we smuggled across and they put me in a truck, it was truck. So the children would sit one beside another in the truck, in rows, and they put a tarpaulin on top, and middle of the night, we left there around 11 o'clock at night, to go across. Three borders, Polish, German, Russian. We had to cross. To go from Schtezten to Berlin. I wasn't allowed to be there because I was too old. But I had a girlfriend, she was a child, child's age, she was about 17, my age. So we spoke, I said 'I want to go with you' so she boosted the tape. So I stayed in Poland, we had this organization with a building. And in Germany and Poland, and most of Europe, when you have a building, a building has a hoff. A hoff is a yard, a big yard, all buildings have a yard in the back. So the truck came in, over there, and they had auto plumbing. Which means toilets outside. So I hid in one of the toilets. And then, 11 o'clock at night I came out and I jumped into the truck, and I hid. But, I don't remember what you call it, they were from Israel, and there was a special branch, transporting children,

The breha (42.30.0 ?)

The Breha. They came around, I was, with guns, they came around, looking inside the truck, and they saw me. 'Who am I'. And she came around and said "oh he's in charge of the children" and they let me go.

So what happened to that girlfriend?

We were together but she went to Israel. We were together in Berlin for 8 months, cause I left. I didn't want to go there so I had to go somewhere else.

And she wanted to go to Israel?

She wanted to Israel. And then I went in (43.07.0 ?) I had a girlfriend. With a family. She was very nice.

So what happened?

She had a mother and a father there, a sister and a brother, two brothers. And we were going out for about a year. And they went to Israel.

Did they put pressure on you to go too?

Ooh. A lot of pressure. I had guys coming in with guns, coming in to say 'gotta go.' I said "I want my family there, I want to go to family. I'm all alone." they said "we all gotta go," I said, "well that's your business."

Can we stay there one more minute, in Redstar, you were in the front office, so you were watching people come and go, right?

Not a lot, it's a big building. It was an office building. My building was the office building. The others, there were four or five other buildings the same, which was just people living in rooms. My room had two floors of offices, and on top we had a couple of rooms where I stayed. Those people only had two floors, two floors were offices.

The question I wanted to ask was, people, like the Israelis, came, and they wanted people to come...

No no, not the Israelis. In the camp, the pressure was put on the camp from the people in the camp. Not strangers.

But there were people that came to the camps?

Oh, there were organizers, yes, but these were not the ones who... The pressure was more from people that I knew. But it didn't bother me that much. It wasn't this...

So Sam, when you were here did you not go to English classes at JIAS?

Oh, I went to (45.36.0 ?) Baranbing. Oh, by the way, I forgot to mention. I got the job, I worked there, and, I don't remember the time, maybe 6, 8 months later, they decided they're going to send me to graphic arts school. Means I'm going to work 4 days a week, and one day I go to school for the whole day.

Cause you showed a talent for graphic?

Yes. I was the one that worked the machine. I worked in a printing press.

What did you do exactly on the printing press?

I worked a lot of presses. Commercial printing, ok? So first, I started off working on a hand press, you feed the press by hand. There's a thing that opens up and closes, and you put the printer paper in, and you take it out this side, and I used to do this all day long. I would do that for 8 hours a day.

And that printed?

And that printed. I did this, not too long. Maybe 4 or 5 months. Then, I graduated to the automatic press. It was called a windmill. Takes a sheet of paper, puts it in, and then when it's printed, takes it out again, and it goes in and in, it's a windmill! That's what it's called. So I worked on that for about two years. No, wait a minute. Not two years. Less. Because in 1953, or 52, my boss decided to go to rotary presses. Rotary presses is from a roll, a roll. So they

bought two presses, and they had an expensive, and they put me to learn. I worked on that tape for 20 years.

What did you do with that?

Now this is a press that does, it prints two sides, two colours, it punctures, it perforates, it numbers, it does all that, all these operations. So when you put it in one side, it comes out, at that time, we used to make what they called snapsets (48.13.5 ?). You don't know what snapsets, you're so young.

Tell me what it is.

A snapset is carbon interleaved set. Carbon interleaved sets. Where you write with the carbon, and you take them all apart?

Oh yeah!

That's what I was doing. I was doing the printing, from the roll, back to a roll. Then these rolls, so let's say if its a 5 part, or a 4 part, so you get 4 different rolls, could be they're all different colored paper, it goes in the water machine, one two three four, and you put it all together, and it's glued together, it's stripped, and it's interleaved with carbon at the same time. Ok?

Ok.

So I worked on that, it was called the OPM, the offset printing machine, I worked there for 21 years, and I worked in this place, and another, I worked all over. I was very...

Did you like doing it?

It was alright. I liked doing it. And I was very good at it. And the only problem was, the problem was I got married, and then we had a family...

Ok, let's go back , so when did you go to Baranbing (49.47.0 ?) night school?

Ok, yeah. I started going to Baranbing I think a month or two after I came.

Who told you to go there?

Well I lived in the neighbourhood, I don't know. Maybe it was arranged, I can't remember. Oh maybe it was some other ties.

Were you involved with JIAS at all?

I never got, I got 10\$, that was it.

That was it. Did you ever go and ask them for anything?

No.

How come?

I never asked anybody for anything.

How come?

It wasn't... I don't know. I never asked... I never asked them for, I never registered to get free money from Germany or anything. I didn't believe in it. It was blood money. I didn't ask. I didn't need it. I can take care of myself. Maybe I was wrong! I have no idea.

It's not too late.

It's too late (laughs)

Is it?

I don't know. Anyway, so what was the question?

Baranbanque.

Oh, Baranbanque. Yeah, I went to Baranbanque. But the English part, to learn, I had a couple of boys, friends, that came here, originated from Poland, but they were from England. In the war they went to England. They spoke English. And I, we hung out together, and I picked up the language fast. Within 6 months I was speaking the language.

So what did you do in Baranbanque?

We learned, I don't know, we learned some English. It wasn't, I didn't go too much. Wasn't necessary.

So it wasn't for a high school degree, or...

No no. Never. I never went to high school. I never went further than 5th grade. I went to 5th grade in Poland, and I came to Russia, as a little kid, I went to school in Russia in the 10th grade. So that didn't last long because the war broke out. Once the war broke out, I was, I think I went from 3rd to 5th again and then I went to work. Then I came to Germany. It was, there were no schools to go to, so I never finished 3rd or 5th grade.

So they wanted to send you to this graphic arts, where was this?

It was on (52.37.0 ?) Kimbert.. It was a street called Kimberly. It was between Sherbrooke and Ontario, the street, next to Jeanne-Mance. It doesn't exist anymore. They've long built, there was a technical building, a school. I went there for three years.

When was that?

For three years.

When?

51, 52, 53 I think. These three years.

And what did you learn?

I learned a lot. Graphic art. I got good. I learned printing. You know. The problem was, the printing that I learned there does not exist today. It is sad. Because we learned, you are not familiar with it, but we learned letterpress. In 1956 or 7, something, they came in with letography. It was called offset printing. Letterpress was gone out. I was learning letterpress. (laughing)

And then did you, but then you learned...

I learned printing. I knew colours. I had to mix ink. I had to mix a colour. In those days, if a custom came in, something printed in color, they used to give us a swatch, see this? So I had to mix ink to match that colour. So we had courses on mixing. We had courses on different presses. We had different, I would go once a day for 3 years. And it was great. They were paying me for employment. Not very much, but I was paid.

And you loved that?

Yeah. I enjoyed it. I liked my work. I was enjoying it.

So you had a good relationship with the boss at work?

I mean, I didn't bother much. He didn't come into the shop much. He just walked by, and mostly in the printers was the foreman and the workers.

Were you the only immigrant working there?

At that time, yeah.

Did they ever ask you about your background, what you came from, at work? The foreman, anybody?

No

No one showed an interest?

Nobody asked me. First of all, the workers there were mostly French. So when I started, there were two boys, two brothers, started at the same time. My age. They spoke French. I spoke English. The problem was, they didn't want to speak French to me, because they wanted to learn English. They refused to speak French.

Did you learn French?

So they learned English, I never learned French. Cause my foreman was English, the boss was English, the office was English. Everybody was English. And I worked for 21 years, there was no French in there. Now I had no problem with anybody in the shop. I was always, in the end I was the highest paid worker. You know, in the end.

So you hung out mostly with the immigrant community?

In the community? Not necessarily. I had a few friends, Canadian born boys.

When was that? That was later on?

We're still friends. Even now! One is Ralphie boy, he was born in (56.46.8 ?). You know where \_\_\_ is?

No

\_\_\_\_. It's in the, what do you call it, near the Canadian-USA border.

By Vermont?

Eastern Townships. And he was born there. And another one was born (57.09.0 ?). And he's still a friend of mine.

So this was after a few years here, or?

I met these fellas, actually we met because some of my friends were... knew their parents from the old country. These were like, sons of parents that knew each other from the old country. Somebody knew somebody. Before I was married, I was friends with a lot of boys.

But mostly the immigrants.

Mostly the immigrants, yeah. A lot. Every weekend we'd get together with another group. This group, that group. Cause most of us had no family. We were each others' family. So, then we all dispersed, got married, and we lost touch with each other.

Was there much relationships or integration with the Jewish established community? Do you have a lot to do with them? or...

I don't follow.

There was the immigrants,

Yeah

And then the Jewish born Canadians.

Ah, I don't know. They didn't, we didn't, socialize too much. For some reason we felt that they are looking down on us.

Why did you, could you talk about that a little bit?

We felt... nothing that was said, it's just a feeling that we had. You know?

Why did you feel that?

I don't know. Because we didn't speak the language that well, and they were like... First of all, you come in and you feel like a stranger in a country. So for the first couple of years, we didn't mix, too much. Except the couple of friends that I had, Canadian born, nice boys. The funny part is, these two I'm talking about, they're not Montreal born, they're also...

They're from out of town, you're from out of town too

But for some reason, I didn't have any friends, Canadian born boys. I had acquaintances. People that I knew. As a matter of fact, where I lived, the first, I lived in Cupman street, there were two boys there that lived in the family. But we weren't friends to socialize, to go out together, we just knew. But as far as being friends, I only had people that came across. And in the (1.00.34.0 ?). I was in the \_\_\_\_\_ practically every night. I lived around the corner, and I was, that was the thing to do. And I joined, I played volleyball. I was very good at it. As a matter of fact, I was on the national team, I was travelling around three months, all around North America, we would fly to Chicago, to Boston, to play. You know? But in the beginning, when I started at the day, I was sitting on the bench. Even though I was better.

Why?

I was a newcomer.

Did they say that?

They didn't say it. No, they didn't say it. Of course they were older, some other ones. I was 19, 21, 22. They were in their 30s. So it was a senior group.

And was there a league?

Yeah, we played here in Montreal, in a league. And then once a year we would go on a, what do you call it, a circuit of the Jewish (1.01.48.0 ?). The circuit. There was a lot of cities, and they would have a tournament each year in a different city. All of the Jewish organizations. It was going on for about 10, 15 years, and I was going every year.

So how did they treat you? They wouldn't let you play?

Oh yeah, no in the beginning. I'm talking about the first 8 months, then I played. But then I fit in. First of all, in the beginning I was still a single boy, and they were all married, and they were well-to-do, some of them were.

And they knew you had survived?

They knew names. If I mentioned Henry Blatt, owned a big big factory, electrical outlets, they remembered, Abe Aushvitzer (1.02.48.0), insurance company. Lefty Boxer, Lefty Boxer was the, what do you call it, the Y florist. Who else was there. Mitch... I forget them.

They knew you came from Europe, right?

Yeah.

And they knew you survived the war?

Yeah.

Did they ever talk to you, ask you about your home?

No.

Showed any interest?

No.

Why do you think so?

I have no idea. Nobody asked me. We didn't talk about it then. I didn't talk about (1.03.30.0) until about three years ago (laughs)

How come?

Its... not very... comfortable to talk about things that were bad. I didn't tell you anything. What I'm telling you know, I didn't tell you anything.

Yeah no, I know that.

And our focus, of course, on the study, is about Montreal.

That's what we're talking about. Anything else that happened,

Yeah, I know you were in Siberia, and I know it was awful there, worse than awful.

So that's why, when we came here, I don't know, I don't remember sitting down to discuss anything with anybody. First of all, between us we didn't talk because each one of us could write a book. There is nothing to discuss. I have friends now, over here now, they are much worse than me. They came out from Auschwitz, you know? We don't talk about these things. You don't know. But... so that's why, in Montreal, when we came here, this is a beautiful country. I enjoy this country very much. Although, you know, I'm not a rich man. I don't have much. But, I appreciate, because for 20 years of my life I know what it is like to live somewhere else.

So, you would go to the dances, you danced mostly with immigrant girls? Or..

No, there was all different kind of, of course, girls at that time looked down on us a little bit. (1.05.23.5 ?)

Did they say that to you, or they just shunned you?

They didn't say it. Mind you, I met this girl, Rita, she was a tall blonde, and she took a liking to me. And we went out, for quite a while.

And she was a Canadian girl?

She was a Canadian girl. Shapiro. Invited me to the house, nice family, but I didn't have any money. We used to go for walks in the Fletchers Field. (laughing)

That was your big date.

And you'd hold hands, or something? And walk around?

I remember. I used to walk on Fletchers Field. But I was too young then.

So Rita, how did her family accept you?

They were always nice. I went over for supper a couple of times, they invited me over. They lived on St. Urbain Street.

How come that ended?

I was too young.

Did you end it?

I didn't want to get tied down.

And they wanted to get tied down?

I think so, yeah. I didn't want to pursue... she wasn't the only one. A few, that I had, others, they always invited me to the house. There was Marcia, there was... I don't remember. And, you know, they did invite me to the house, and you know, because they all have daughters, they all want daughters to get married, and I wasn't ready. (laughing) No, that wasn't a problem.

Were you comfortable with them?

Yes. yes yes. The mothers of the daughters, they all liked me, the mothers liked me.

That's a good sign!

The mothers would sit down and talk.

Did they ask you about the war or did they...

No, I don't remember. But I'm saying is they, I always get along with the mothers. But I didn't pursue anything. I met my wife, she was only 16.

What's her name?

Jackie. She was 16 years old, and I met her at one of the dances in (1.08.00.05), I really don't remember which.

So she came over from England on her own?

No, with a big, big family. They came in '47.

And they're English, or?

Yes. Except for their parents, which their father was born in Poland. And came to England in the '20s. But the whole family, they all came out of England. What happened was there were four sisters and two brothers. The oldest sister met a Canadian soldier in (1.08.40.0) and they married, the oldest sister. She came here, and she took the whole family. When my wife came here she was only 13 years old. 12, 13. She came here. But she still has an accent.

A British accent?

A British accent.

And where did she live, when you met her?

Over here? I think they lived on Hutchinson Street. When I met her she was 16, and I didn't start going to her till 3 years later. The only thing is, she was a very good dancer. Excellent dancer. She was a jazz ballet dancer. And she does now, she goes to Zumba and all these things. She's going to be 80 soon. Anyway, so I enjoyed dancing with her. So every once in a while there was a dance, I'd call up, and we'd go dancing. But I never went out any other time, or any other social, just for dancing. So I knew her for about three years. And it's a long story, how I got married is because her older sister met a friend of mine, and they started going steady. And then, because of him, I used to get invited to their house every Friday night for supper. And her mother used to be a good cook. She used to cook, they would cook. And we used to go Friday night supper.

And you enjoyed that family?

That was in 53, and I enjoyed it, yes. That was a nice family. And then my friend, one day, says he wants to get married. And they're looking for a synagogue, he says 'come with me.' So, 'ok,' so we went looking, and St. Josef, I don't remember the synagogue on St. Josef, and we start bargaining. "How much do you want?" "Blah blah blah." So expensive. He says, "Ah, you know what, why don't you chip in half," he says, he says "You know, get married too." I say "You know what, ok." (Laughing)

How old were you? You were 24?

I was 25.

And she was how old?

She was 5 years younger. She was 19 and she didn't even turn 20 at the... So I say "You know what, ok." So we rented a suit together, at Camerons, and we said "we're getting married, gotta get engaged." So I had to go look for a ring. It was a cock-eyed story. You know, it wasn't very romantic.

Well, it kind of is, actually. It kind of is. So what was she doing? Was she in school, finished school?

No, she was working at that time at the Canadian Factors. It was a factory. She worked in an office. She was taking care... actually she was the youngest. She was the youngest in the family, and they all worked, and she used to come home early and make supper for the whole family. So she was into cooking.

Jackie?

Jackie.

And she was good too?

She's a good cook. Even now. Very good cook. So then we had a double wedding.

So how long after your engagement did you get married?

I don't remember, it wasn't very long. It wasn't very long, a couple of months, maybe.

Do you remember how much they charged you? To get married?

No, maybe my wife remembers. I have no idea.

Someone said, who was that? I can't remember, it was yesterday or today, said they had to pay 35\$ to get married.

And the Rabbi said "it's 35\$ and another like 10\$ or 15\$ you know my wife will sing here comes the bride."

No, I didn't pay any of it. The father paid. I had no money. I had no money.

So was it a big wedding?

We had quite a, well it was a double wedding. So this friend of mine had a sister here and a brother, and there was extended family, cousins...

And your friends? You invited your friends?

I just invited my friends. I didn't have many people. My aunts came from the states.

Oh they came.

Yeah, but as far as mine, I maybe had 10 people. He had a lot. But that's all right. We hired music, I didn't pay for any of it, I had no money.

So what did you do?

We got married, we rented an apartment, I remember paying 75\$ a month.

Where was the apartment?

By the extension.

Oh, so you went out.

Yeah, by the extension, but we were walking. So the only thing is, we got married, we got our kitchen set, a present, and we bought, got together, we bought a bedroom set, and it was nothing else. That's it. And in three years we furnished an apartment. Both of us walking. Three years.

So did she make as much money as you?

She was making it, she became a qualified bookkeeper. Working for, she was running an office in a construction business. An office in a construction business. She was running the whole

office. And then she went, even now, it comes tax department, the tax time, for two years she goes to the accountant. And she works for the accountant, only for two weeks a year. Because, you know. She's a president of building. That's how I got the keys.

So you talk about this group of boys, there were a lot of single young boys, what about single young girls, from after the war. There weren't many, right?

There weren't many, no. A couple, but we didn't... there was a family that lived across the street, they had a girl about my age, also a newcomer, her name was Toby, I remember. A pretty girl. I took her out a couple of times.

And?

I don't know. Didn't. She didn't know how to dance. (laughs) I don't know. She was pretty, Toby. But no, I didn't know any girls that came over, I didn't know.

So do you think it was harder for single girls? young girls? After the war, coming here?

Well, I don't know if they were single girls without families, I don't know. There were only a few boys that we had a family, but I suppose other people had families that came, parents that came, brothers, sisters. I don't know anybody, the boys that I knew, we were all alone. The girls, I don't know if they had families or not. I don't know. The only girls I ever met were all Canadian born girls. But it wasn't... It was, you know... some of us, we were not, how should I say, we didn't think life was so hard here. You know. Looking back, maybe we should have thought it was hard, but we didn't think it.

You were alive.

Because we didn't know difference. I don't know. I mean at times, I remember we had a couple of friends of mine, we're still friends now, they were peddlars. They couldn't make a living. We used to buy, they were selling out of the bakery, we would buy loaves that week old, after one week, they were selling it at a quarter of the price, we used to buy the rolls. And they were peddling, so they had a second hand car, they used to put it in the back (1.18.22.8) soften the rolls, so they can eat it. (laughs) That was good! It was all right.

You were free.

Yeah. Because we went, we could get rolls, I didn't see a piece of white bread in five years. So, and I didn't see an apple, I didn't see a roll, I didn't see any fruit, so anything here was good.

So no matter how hard it was, it was good?

It was good. All things considered.

So did you have children? You have children, since you have grandsons.

I have two sons.

And when was the first one born?

The first one? We have two sons. You mean what year? Oh, one was born in 59 and one was born in 61.

So you waited to have children.

Well, I didn't wait, she was, she had a few miscarriages.

Oh, sorry.

About 4 or 5 years, about 2 or 3 miscarriages. But then we have two sons. And I was working, the only thing is, in 1970 I was tired when the kids were little, my wife was home, I was working on the job, and no matter how much I got paid there wasn't enough. So I was working from 8-4, and I had a half an hour lunch, from 4-6 I used to work at the shop at the end of the street, big building, so I went out selling, I had 2 hours to sell printing. So I went from office to office knocking on doors, I did that for about, a couple of years, I accumulated, I was selling, just in 2 hours, I was selling about 90,000\$ a year. 90,000\$ a year, giving me a nice, you know. So I decided, I'm going to go in business for myself. Because right now I already had enough clientele that I don't have to worry, you know, I can go by. So I quit in 1970.

And started your own business?

And I opened up, I started, no. First, I started doing paddling, like just selling, only. So rented an office, on Bates Road. A friend of mine owned a furniture store, he had room there. It was like a warehouse, I rented a little room. Put a telephone in, and I was going, (1.21.39.0) they called, \_\_\_\_\_, and I got clientele.

So you would take those orders to some print shops?

Yeah, I had, I had a few people I know in printing business, and I would bring it in, the order, and when it's ready I would pick it up and bring it back, take another order, and go. And I did that for about a year and a half, two years, I did that in two hours. From 4-6, approximately. I built up a business, a clientele. Then when I quit, I did this full time. I did it full time for about a year, and then I met somebody, it was a Greek boy, that I knew, and he already opened up a shop, and he put in machinery, but he had no clientele. Nothing. I was doing 90,000\$, and he only had 30,000\$, it's nothing. I mean you're talking about, at that time, in 1970, 90,000\$ is like, 3, 400,000\$ now. So we got together, and we went into business. And built up shop, we bought more equipment, we were doing good business. We were together for 5 years. The problem was, I couldn't get along. He didn't trust anybody. He didn't trust anybody. He was, you know. And, whatever reason, we couldn't get along. After 5 years, I said, I decided, buy me out i'll, buy you out. You know. It's no use going the rest of my life. The business was good! Nothing wrong with the business.

So what happened?

So he bought me out. He paid me, and whatever he gave me, it's ok. So, the only proviso that he didn't do, which he, I don't know, I guess he overlooked, I left, but I left with all my clients.

They wanted to work with you?

No. They usually when you sell a business, any business, there's a proviso, I'm going to pay you off, but next 5 years you gotta be out of this business. But he didn't do that. So I left, and

the next day I registered a new name, and I'm in business again! I got all my clients. Anyway that was no good, it was no good this way, because I had my son, it was 1970... 1975, 75, and he was born in 61, so he was what, 16 or 17, and he wanted to learn the trade. So I said "you're welcome, I'm going to look around, see what we can do, maybe we can buy something." I checked for about 6 months, I was looking, and finally I found somebody, somebody had passed away, and left, and this family was selling, so I went down and I think I (1.25.26.8) for about 10,000\$. And I shipped it all in, I opened up a little place, on Mozart street, in little Italy. It was all available then, it was like a half a garage space. And I opened up a shop.

A printing shop?

A printing shop. And all my clients, so my son came in, and he was working, and I taught him how to work the press, I taught him how to work all the equipment, there was the two of us, and we hired another guy, there was three of us working. Then we stayed there for about 3-4 years, then the place got too small. So I was looking around, where are we going to move, so I found a place, 9500 St (1.26.28.0), big red, there were spaces, holed into individual spaces.

In a large building?

Yeah, but it's divided. So somebody was selling. So I looked at it, ok, 4,00 square feet, with a helper, but everything has to be built up. I paid him \$25,000, and I bought the space. And I spent another \$10,000 to fix up the floor. My son, I hired two pressmen, I hired another guy, and I hired an office girl, it was a new business. Took about, and it was ok until the place got too small (laughs).

So he kept working for you eh?

So somebody came along and they needed the space next to me, and so I sold it to him for \$40,000. And I rented a space, I couldn't own any more, but I rented a space with 12 month lease, at a certain rate, and I moved into it, 8,000 square feet. And I got a press.

Where was this?

It was in the same building, it was a huge building. It was on the other end of it, a dock. And I bought equipment, I bought four colour presses, I had a full colour press, a console, cutters, the electric cutters. And then I had 8 people working. And that was until... my son was the outside man already, I didn't go anymore out. So he was the outside man.

He was good?

He was selling. You gotta have somebody. And then I was doing business, but then business started going down. They started doing business, another started, and I was specializing in hang tags. When you buy a garment, a garment has a tag. Every garment has a tag. They call a hang tag. Somebody has to make it. I was doing a lot of things. I was doing it for Sears, millions of specialty. In the late 90s, early in the 2000s they started dealing overseas, China, and it killed the trade. Cause everything was done over there. They didn't tag anything here. It was tagged over there. And I used to lose customers, and lose customers, lose customers, down the tube. It wasn't good. It came to a point where I wasn't profiting. So we liquidated. And that's it.

And you retired?

Oh listen, I retired in 2007. About 7 years, 6.

And your son?

My son, he's doing great. He's involved in a home product that he brings in. It's a canvas that's made in China. It's made in the States too but they're mainly made in China, which is better pricing, it's a canvas that's used for printing. You see portraits on canvas, but they're printed, but they're on a canvas! But they're printed. Litographed on canvas. This is something that, it's an invention that's not too old. Now he brings in these canvases, he brings in them.

It's various sizes, right?

He gets shipped. There's one custom in Montreal, that's got their own one. And he's got one in Mexico, he's got specialized things where these people go out, anybody famous, that you print out pictures, Walmart sells them. All the famous hockey players, famous baseball players, famous football players. They all have their pictures. You can get all of this. These pictures, now, they used to be printed on paper. Now it's on canvas.

We have one of our Granddaughter and her mom are there, my daughter.

My son does this. Brings in this canvas. So he's doing alright. He used to be in the printing, he gave it all up. That doesn't pay.

Sam did you do any more wood turning?

No. Last time I did it was in Poland in 1946.

You liked it though?

Yeah, I enjoyed. I used to get a blueprint. When I came here I bought a house, my first house I bought in (1.32.14.0) in 1964, 1964 bought a house, a duplex in \_\_\_\_\_. There was nothing in the basement. At that time it was a rental project, and I only had 2,000\$, and the house was, you needed \$4,000, downpayment. But, since it was a rental project, I got \$1,000 rebate. And, I don't know, I think my Aunt gave me \$1,000. I put that \$4,000 down, it was 25 (1.32.54.0), 25 \_\_\_\_\_ was a lot of money in 1964.

That was a lot of money.

Anyways, I bought this house, and the basement, one room was finished, but there was another room completely just, not brick, cement walls. I finished that room myself. I built the walls, I built the floor, I built the ceiling. I built everything. I finished it. I went in, then I needed, I said "I need a work bench." I built my own work bench. I have a workbench with the vise, you gotta put the vise in and everything. I did that all myself! I used to be very good. I used to build, I built those stairs for the library book, what do you call it, a shelf. Like a bookcase, I built. I did that in spare time.

But you liked that?

Yeah. I enjoy it. But I'm too old already. What would I do now, is I retired. So we sold the house in 85, in (1.34.26)

And you moved here?

Yeah. But what happened is when we got married, my best friend and I, and my wife, two sisters, so we bought a double duplex. And we moved in with one big backyard. I had two sons, he had three children. And they'd play on the big backyard, it was a football field. But in the late 70s, early 80s it deteriorated, the neighbourhood. People that we knew moved out, and then my friend next door moved, so I was talking to my wife, I said "you know, maybe we should move. Maybe we should move." She said "Yup, I think it's time." Cause the company moved in next door, and there was wild children jumping over the hedges, I had beautiful hedges. I trimmed them and they kept jumping over them. One day my son, my older one, he was at that time in real estate, he was selling houses, for somebody, no! He was a business for himself. Yes, at the age of 21 he opened up a brokerage. He was a broker. And he didn't live with me anymore, he moved out. He lived in an apartment, he was 21. So I got a phone call, says the idea. Help us sell the house. I say "sure" he says "where are you?" I say "here" he says "Ok I'm coming down to see you." That was on a Wednesday night, my wife was out, she had some kind of a meeting, my wife always has meetings. This woman comes down, looks up at the house, "How much do you want?" I gave her a price, "Alright." I have a customer. She leaves, I get a phone call, somebody's coming up. Same night. This couple comes in, he's like a mulato, like he's not black, he's not white, and she's a French Canadian woman. He looks around, he likes the house. I mentioned a price, and they gave it to me within \$5,000. You know, I said within \$5,000, you know, I gave it to them for 85 and they want 80 only, I say "you know what, I'll give it to you for 80, but you've got to pay me extra for the this, and for this and this and this, I'll sell it to you." It came to 85.

(1.37.46.0 ?) Shichelgeld?

My wife comes home, and I said "I sold the house." "Wow! What do you mean you sold the house?" "It's sold." "What are we going to do?" "We're going to look." So I said "Call up my son." I said "Hey I sold the house." So he says "Hold on, I'll take care of it." He took care of all the, you know, paperwork, then we started to look. So we said "where is everybody?" and we dragged down to (1.38.18.0). I looked in \_\_\_\_\_, the value was not there. The rooms were small, but they were asking a lot of money! And that's when my son, "you know I know to see a guy (1.38.35.0), he built the house, he built it here," why don't you go have a look. So I (1.38.42.0), and my wife knew him, because he owned a business, and my wife was working in the construction. So we come over here, and he takes me through all of the corners, "here I have a three bedroom, and it's 1,800 square feet. That's where I have here, now. Wrap-around balcony, it's beautiful. Washers, I like it." "How much?" "120." "I'll make you a deal, I'll give you the 120 but I need a two car garage." "Deal." "Ok. It's sold." Never signed, never did that, nothing. I moved in, about 6 months later we went in Rotary. Because we shake hands, that's good enough. That's the way we did business in Europe. That's why I came to be here. That was 1985. And my son lives in Saint-Lazare. Saint-Lazare, is it called? Yeah. Is there anything else?

No, I don't. Do you have any questions, John?

Well, you know I'm still back in Germany with you, at the DP camp, and I remember Canada had an orphan program, right? You were an orphan at that point, weren't you?

I was 6 months in Heidelberg, and Schvartzburg, Schvartzen-something or other. What happened is my aunts, when they arranged, when they came, in order for me to go, I had to be in a childrens camp. As a child. So they arranged for me to go, it was just outside of Heidelberg.

A camp. I picked myself up, I go, I went to this camp, and they took me in, and actually they were small children. You know, and I was already 17, 18. I was smoking. I wasn't allowed smoking. I left a girlfriend. You know, but I stayed there for 6 months. A figured something is going to happen, but it never happened. I had no patience anymore. I had to be in bed by 10 o'clock.

Cause you were a kid suddenly, right.

So after 6 months I left. I left and I went back to my original. So that was the only childrens camp. But there was no, if there was any other organizations to go, the only ones that were there to go was to Israel.

Interesting, OK.

Nothing organized to go for a child, you were on your own. You had to organize your own, whatever you did.

How come you never moved to the States?

Ok, I came here, and the proviso was, I had to stay 1 year. Before I can go. I could go visit, I had to have a special permit to visit, which I did, I used to travel by train, over to New York, you know. But after 1 year, I was settled. I had a job, I had friends, I had this, I was with girlfriends, you know. And I said, you know what, I'll come visit you 3, 4 times a year.

So I forget, who sponsored you here? To Canada?

My Aunts. Oh, the Schulman family, the Shulmans. They were named Schulman. My Aunt in the States, I don't know how, but they knew each other. From somewhere. They approached this family, and I think they paid them, but I'm not sure. But I think they did. And they put their name as a sponsor. Because I never, I knew them, and I visited them once in a while, you know, but it was all done through my Aunts in the States. Not through anybody I ever, not anybody that I knew here. When I came here I was a stranger. Didn't know anybody.

So within a week of being here you had started working?

No, actually it was more than a week. I think it was like a month or so. I remember walking, I didn't know the streets, and I stayed in the rooming house downtown, at first, for 3 days. And then, when we didn't get the room, so I was on St. Laurents, and everybody was saying "oi there's a place, it's called Fletchers Field, everybody gets together," and I said "Oh, where is Fletcher's Field?" So I had a little map, the problem was, the map had only main streets on it. And I look at the map, "Oh, St Larents goes down to St Catherines, and St Catherines goes to Glory, and Glory goes up, and there's Fletcher's! I started walking. I walked all the way down to St. Catherines, and Glory, walked all the way to Fletchers Field, there was no little streets (laughing)

So you had trouble finding work the first couple of weeks?

No, I... I don't remember... No, wait a minute. It's not that I had trouble, my Aunts, when they came here, they arranged with this fella, but he wasn't ready when I moved. When I went to work over there, we stayed only there for about a month, and then we moved. And I don't know, it was something... not ready. So I didn't look for anything.

Oh, because you knew you would be...

That wasn't problem. Actually, that was my only job. I never looked. Wherever I went I found a job. I'm working now. When I retired, I was home for 6 months, so I said what am I going to do? I'll stay home for 6 months, that's no good. So I called up volunteering, CLSC. Called up the CLSC, so I called the one in (1.46.00.0), because my French is not too good. So they say "sure we got room for you, you got a car? Oh yea, you're going to take people to hospitals, and appointments." "Oh that's good." So I gave them my name. They called me. "Go to there and there, pick up this and this man, take him to the Montreal General Hospital. I did that. And I could take him there, and I don't pick him up because I don't know when he's going to be finished. So that was it. And then, two days later they called me again, "take this one," but I had about 2, 3 calls a week. It wasn't enough. That's not enough for me. After 6 months I'm not doing much. So I look in the paper, and somebody's looking for a driver. It was a, what do you call it, a courier service. They're looking for a driver. I said "what have I got to lose." So I went down, to the office downtown. I said "you looking for a driver?" "Yeah." "Well I'm a retired person, I don't do much, I'll drive for you. The only thing is, I don't do any downtown. I don't want to bother with downtown. Anything on the West end, West Island, is alright. I even go to Laval." "Ok." That was 6 years ago. I go out 5 hours a day. 9 o'clock I call in, "ok, go here, here, here, pick up an envelope," It's mostly envelopes. "Pick up an envelope here, take it there," 12 o'clock I come home, I have my lunch, 1 o'clock I go out, 3 o'clock I come home. I've been doing it for 6 years. (laughs)

Good for you

I don't know if I make money or not, I never figure it out. Because the gas is expensive.

They don't pay you specially for gas?

They give you a little, they give you some allowance. You know, that's not important.

You're busy.

The important thing is I'm busy.

You're busy around, you're outside

I'm outside, I see people, I meet a lot of people, all the offices I go to they all know me, you know.

So one last thing Sam, did you go every Sunday to Fletchers Field?

Well, depends. Summertime, yeah. We used to play cards on the Field, Fletchers Field, Gin Rummy, cause most of us, we didn't have much money to go around to nightclub. I used to go to nightclub. You wouldn't remember, the Pollydoor, for dancing. The Pollydoor. That was my Friday night, Saturday night, yeah. It was cheap. You take a streetcar, you go in, it was, I think, 25 cents, 30 cents, go in, and there was no liquor. You could buy a soft drink. And you had two orchestras playing. Live orchestras. Always two bands. One was a latin dance, one was Jazz. They would change around. There's still one, you can still go now, in the Lange street. There they have upstairs and downstairs. Two bands. My wife and I used to go dancing. But at that time, there was danceland, there was pollydoor, then there was the nightclubs. The nightlife was

fantastic then. I used to beat a downbeat every Saturday night. And you sip with a beer, you don't spend much money. And we used to see comedians, they went big, they're now in Hollywood! They used to be, you know, Jerry Lewis, Martin, there used to be, all these guys, there used to be here. Back in the 50s, early 50s. It was fantastic.

So the Fletcher Field people played cards, there were soccer games, what else happened?

We used to go soccer games. And there was all things, but the soccer game. We used to have fights. In the soccer game. I don't like fighting, I have no idea. Another friend of mine, Danny Boxer, he played soccer, he was, I didn't play, but he was a soccer player. He played for the Apoaha, I don't know. So whenever he played, we went. I used to go places..

Oh, different places around town, different places around the city?

We used to go all over, used to travel. One day I went to a place and we had to go, I don't remember where it was, there were so many flies! Flies! They were like, eaten up alive. Sitting they were swarms, and they were playing soccer. Yeah, I remember, (1.51.23.0), who else was there, I don't remember the names. The other soccer. But then I got involved with volleyball.

So you met people

I have pictures with trophies, but I think I threw them out. And I still went, then in 1966 I joined the bowling league, which I still go now. I still bowl every thursday night. Same thing. '66.

10 pin bowling.

Half the guys are dead.

Large balls?

Yeah, 10 pins. I've been bowling for 40 years. (laughing) Now I joined a summer league. I go every Wednesday morning. I don't work Wednesdays in the summer. We have a mens club, you've heard of the men's club? The membership is about 400 people. It's about 70 and up. You can't join it unless you're 70 years old. So we have a club, they have speakers every Wednesday morning. They have a speaker arranged. And I don't go too often, because, I don't know, after a while you sit between the old people, I get depressed. (laughing) I can't talk, I'm 85. So you get a little depressed, I don't know. Same old stories. All they talk about is doctors. (laughing)

Ok, do you have any more questions?

No I don't.

So what is it you wanted to know? I mean the camp, the camp, what did we do in the camp.