

Interview with Barbara Goldman, Marty Goldman and Joan Ginsburg  
for the New Mexico Jewish Historical Society

*(Participants: Harvey Buchalter interviews Barbara Goldman, Marty Goldman and Joan Ginsburg)*

Harvey: Okay so thank you all for participating here. This is Harvey Buchalter speaking. And we're with Barbara Goldman and Marty Goldman and Joan Ginsburg. These are the children of Rebecca and Simon Goldman.

I'm just going to throw out some questions and just speak. There'll be maybe 15 questions or so and you know, you can speak as long as you want, and just kind of go into other areas. You don't have to just answer the question. If something else occurs to you, while you're answering the question, just go ahead and tell us what it is. So, let me go with the first question. We'll need the full name, the date of birth, place of birth, of Simon and Rebecca, so one of you can take that if you --

Barbara: Go, Joanie, go!

Joan: Rebecca Goldman was Rebecca Bayles and she was born in Rishnoi and I could not possibly tell you how to spell it.

Harvey: R-I-S-H-N-O-I. I have that.

Joan: Well, okay. And it's really – In the Pale of Jewish Settlement area. She was born in 1914, October 2. That's when we celebrated her birthday. My father, Simon Goldman, was born in a town called Kovel, again in the Southern tier of the Pale.

Marty: I never knew that.

Barbara: I didn't either, Joanie.

Joan: Kovel.

Barbara: Kovel.

Joan: Yeah, and it also was in the Ukraine, but it was in the southern part of the Ukraine. My mother's town was more towards the north. He was born in 1912, May 14, is when we celebrated his birthday. Of course, those dates are kind of arbitrary, I would think. I don't know whether they really, really knew when their birthdays were.

Harvey: Yeah, what could you tell us about their families, back in the old country?

Joan: Poor. Poor.

Marty: It was unbelievable the coincidences between my mom's upbringing and my dad's. They were both the youngest of seven children, each of them. And both of them -- their fathers left when their mother was pregnant with them, so neither one of my parents met their father until they were seven years old. Their fathers both went to the United States to earn money to send for their family. So, the mothers were strong and kept these seven kids together enough for the length of time it took to save the money to bring them over.

Joan: Well, it was not just the question of length of time, Marty. It was also because there was World War I that intervened and then the Russian Revolution, so there was no bringing them over through either of those occurrences.

And it wasn't until 1921 and 1922 that they were able to -- I do believe that Zeda (Joan is here referring to Simon Goldman) did know his dad before

he left. He was born in 1912. I think they both left around 1914. Papa Zeda, my mother's father, to avoid -- so we've been told, the draft. The Russian Army was drafting all Jews for 20 years and not paying them. And he didn't see that as being a good thing for him.

Barbara: Papa's -- did you know Papa -

Harvey: Yeah, I knew Papa Bayles, yes.

Barbara: Well, he was a remarkable man who died, some say at 104. I think it was 105 years, but nonetheless, he remembered being in the Czar's Army. And told stories to us as kids about how they stole his hat. I mean, remarkable little pieces of minutiae that he remembered from that, so he was an historical icon who was clever until the day he died.

Harvey: I remember him still working in Simon's in the store into his late 90s.

Barbara: Marty can probably tell us about -

Joan: Well, let me tell you the story about that.

Barbara: Yes.

Joan: So my dad got cancer -- our dad got cancer and was told he only had a short time to get his business in order. Of course, at that time, that's what they thought. My grandfather -- our grandfather was so angry and this was -- he was 98, 99, right, guys? He made my mother take him to the unemployment office because he still wanted to work.

Barbara: You know, Papa Zeda was maybe five feet one, maybe. He was a little teeny tiny man. Which explains why he had a grandson who is six feet nine inches

tall. But at any rate, my father used to entrust him with carrying a cash bag in downtown Albuquerque to the bank. And he was set upon by some thieves, and he actually fought them off! Can you believe that? I mean, he was feistier than hell.

Joan: Well, he also had a great reputation with the bank employees because they felt that he was magic, because one time he shook one of the teller's hands and she got pregnant. She had been trying so hard to get pregnant and then she got pregnant.

Harvey: What a great story.

Joan: And after that, every time he came into the bank, all the women oh -- Papa Zeda, Papa Zeda, shake my hand, shake my hand!

Barbara: Marty, tell some stories that you heard when you were working at the store about Papa Zeda, and he was deaf. You have a great story to tell about that. Papa Zeda was deaf. The customers would talk to him when he would say --

Marty: He was at the cash register and the customer said, "Well, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to you!" And Papa Zeda says "Don't mention it!" I remember a story when he took the money to the bank and there was a long line and he just went right to the front of the line, and the person who he got in front of kind of gave him a little bit of business. And Papa Zeda said to the guy, "Listen, sonny, when you get to be 101, you could cut in line too."

Joan: Papa Zeda was amazing. He never went to a doctor. The only time he ever was in the hospital, we checked him in because he had the flu, and he was

really suffering. He used to just wrap a wet cloth around his chest and he would smoke a cigarette because he thought that the smoke would make him cough and it would get out all the flu. He never went to the doctor.

He was in the hospital and he checked himself out of the hospital and took a bus back to his house.

He used to walk every day for a mile or so --

-- to keep up his stamina or whatever. And some old guy was on a walker and

Papa Zeda was walking back and he said, he told the guy, he says, "Listen,

Sonny!" And he said, "How old are you?" and he says, "Oh, well, I'm 90."

Papa Zeda said to him also, "When you get to be 104, I'll call you something other than Sonny."

There were these stories about Papa Zeda, -- all of his poetry and short stories that he wrote, which Barbara, by the way, helped to translate. They were given to YIVO which is now part of the Jewish Heritage Museum.

Barbara: Joanie, I didn't help to translate. What do I speak, Yiddish? No, how would I translate?

Joan: No, no, no, he wrote - Barbara, I have papers from you, letters from you, thanking you because you had straightened out some of the language.

Barbara: Oh, because he translated -- I remember that. He translated in his broken English and then I got that down, like I was sure he wanted it. But you know, Papa Zeda was married three times. So, you can call him a lot of stuff but optimistic would be appropriate.

Joan: His third time, he took his wife to Paris and Israel on their honeymoon and then he moved their beds together. I mean, that's optimistic. He was in his nineties.

Barbara: One of my favorite stories about him is when he came to tell everybody that he was getting married and he says, "Oh boy," he says, "This time, I really got a good one." We said, "What do you mean, Papa Zeda?" and he says, "this time I'm marrying a spring chicken!" We said, "How old is she?" and he said, "Ninety-one."

Harvey: So, tell us something about how --

Joan: And by the way, she was wonderful. She was a wonderful wife. What she put up with. She put up with such crap.

Barbara: Yes. She was so feisty.

Harvey: How old was he when he started working at the store?

Joan: Papa Zeda was -- Zeda opened up his store in 1945, I guess. 1946, maybe? When we moved to Albuquerque, back from Denver. I was born in Albuquerque in 1940, and my folks were married in 1939. They decided to settle in Albuquerque because they felt there was a Jewish community there that they liked. My -- our father -- I keep saying "mine," I'm sorry, Barbara and Marty.

Our father was a traveling salesman, and he knew the territory very well and he had been very welcomed in the Albuquerque. At the time, I think it was the Ravels, and some of the other old-time Jewish families that had started a

synagogue and he felt very welcome here, so they moved here after they were married. My mother was going to travel with him, so they only had a small apartment. But then she got pregnant, by the way, so they ended up staying. And Cody writes about it -- a very cute story of it, that it's apropos that -- we don't know for sure but apparently Zeda was offered to take over a store in Reno which now has one of the largest casinos in -- was it Las Vegas or Reno, guys?

Barbara: Las Vegas.

Marty: Las Vegas.

Joan: Las Vegas. Yeah. And that was the major corner of the strip. So, you know, we could have been brought up in Las Vegas had he known then. He liked Albuquerque and First and Gold was his first store, and then the Alvarado was a huge hotel that just was bustling with rail traffic and whatever.

Barbara: And the Harvey girls.

Joan: Yeah, and then it was Marty knows that best, better than Barbara and I. Well, Barbara and I, we had to work in the store. I did stock. Barbara helped at the cash register. But when Marty went to work, he got to go for a shvitz and lunch at the Alvarado. Right, Marty?

Marty: My favorite part of memories of Dad were the lunches that we would go on and Dad had a line that I heard him say dozens of times. He would walk up to somebody that was in the store that he didn't really know. And he goes, "Hello, I'm Simon and I own this store. Would you like to come to lunch with

my son and I?" I went to lunch with -- that's what I loved about the store was a wide variety of people all the way from the Navajos up to the state senators. We'd go to lunch with just these neat people I never would have had a chance to talk to before. And everybody just gravitated to Dad. He was so genuine, and warm that we never had anybody say, "No, I can't go to lunch with you."

Barbara: And you know, working at the cash register, I realized that my father probably gave away more things to needy people who came in his store, than we took in at the cash register. If he saw they needed something, and they didn't have any money, he would absolutely give them what they needed, whether it was a pair of boots or, I mean, not just little insignificant things. He was incredibly generous as a businessman, incredibly so.

Marty: Can I add onto that a little? Just a story that illustrates that point. You remember John O'Connor? He was a coach at the Albuquerque Academy and they'd get letter jackets for all the high schools and so John had never met my dad. It was the first time that they have ever talked, and they talked about letter jackets. And Dad was talking to him and John told me that he could see that Dad was a little distracted. He kept looking outside, as it was a very cold day and there was the paperboy. He was in the alcove, or the entryway, trying to get out of the wind, just shivering there.

And my dad said to John, "Excuse me just a second." He went over to the rack and pulled a coat that would fit the boy and went outside and gave the



little guy a coat and was talking to him and told him that he also was a news paperboy. He remembers cold days and now he owns this store and just keep working. John said it was one of the most amazing -- he knew that he had met with somebody who had an outlook on life that was unusual.

Barbara: Marty, tell the story about Charles Ivey(?).

Marty: Oh, my best friend in high school was a great athlete and he got a scholarship to play at University of New Mexico, but Charlie had bad eyes and he was worried. He was wearing these glasses all the time under his football helmet.

I was away at college. I didn't learn about this until 50 years later when Charlie told me about this story. He said that he went into the store and Dad came up to him and said, "Charlie, how you doing? How's football?"

And Charlie says, "Well, I'm having a hard time because I can't keep my glasses in place under the helmets they have at the university. So Dad said, "Well, why don't you get contacts?" And Charlie says, "Well, I can't afford it."

And so Dad just paid for his contacts. He was my best friend, you know? I didn't hear anything about it until 50 years later. It's just one of daily occurrences that Dad was kind to people and didn't do it for any other reason other than just to be kind. It was really a change to hear Charlie -- how it affected Charlie's' life, that act of kindness.

Joan: After Dad died, there were so many phone calls that came in from people that I had never ever, ever, ever heard of, telling us that they read about his death and

how sorry they were, and what he did for them when they were unable to pay  
There was one story of a woman -- she came in with both her kids.

Her older son needed boots, and the younger son said, "I really need some too. Look, mine have holes on them -- it's really, I need boots too." And Dad said, "Well, you just came in on the right day today. Today's a 2-for-1 sale day! Here you go." He fitted them both out with boots.

He was also the largest uniformer in the southwest. He uniformed all the Navajo police. He uniformed all the police --

Barbara: Sheriff's departments.

Joan: He designed, actually designed a uniform for the Game and Fish Department. And Barbara, you and I used to go with him occasionally up to Santa Fe, to help them sell to the State Department, to help him sell his uniforms. Remember the shows that we used to put on?

Barbara: Oh my God, Joanie, we were good. The Goldman Girls.

Joan: We were good.

Marty: I don't know if I told you guys this but I was visiting Mike and Cici, in Fiji and we went to the ambassador's house and her husband is also in the State Department, and then it turned out that the art in the ambassador's residence was all from New Mexico and I recognized Chimayó in one of the paintings. So I told him, "I'm from New Mexico, too." He goes, "Well, where did you grow up?" and I said, "in Albuquerque," and then it came out in conversation that I said, "Did you know Simon?" and he goes, "Oh my gosh, I was in the

police department before I was in the State Department and I loved going in that store!" He goes, "I knew your dad. I admired him so much!" And this is just a chance occurrence on the other side of the globe that this guy had a memory of Simon's and Dad. It was really quite amazing.

Joan: Barbara, you could tell your story of the rape crisis center.

Barbara: Oh yeah. Well, there's no end to my father's good will manifesting itself throughout the United States of America. I was the director of the Santa Fe Rape Crisis Center for almost 18 years, and the biggest, biggest most important thing that happened there is we built a \$1,000,000+ building. It was almost a \$2,000,000 building to house victims -- and not to house them, but to have a safe place for them to go. The reason that we did this was because my father was beloved among the minions including Senator Pete Domenici, who used to come and play tennis at our house on a regular basis with his eight children. And so, I sent my emissary there to talk to him, and the emissary said that he said that "Pete Domenici used to be a pitcher." He -- wasn't he a pitcher, Martin?

Marty: Yeah, yeah.

Barbara: He was a pitcher on a baseball team, Simon's Department Store Baseball Team for years. And so when the guy I sent, said, "You used to play baseball for Simon's," and Pete went on and on and on about our father. And then my guy that I sent, who actually worked for me, and he said that his daughter is now the director of the center. We're trying to build a building and we would just

appreciate anything you could do." A million dollars he gave us for that building. He paid for 50 percent of that building, and you have no idea what a lasting tribute that is to the influence my father had. Just in the world, I think. Anybody who ever met him-

Harvey: This was not known by anyone that I've ever spoken to.

Barbara: It 's unbelievable. But I want to say something too, that -- my father had a personality that was so encompassing and so magnanimous, so huge, it was almost like an aura. But I want to say that my mother actually was in large part responsible for him to be able to do these extraordinary things. I've never met a more supportive woman in my life. I never once -- you guys ever heard my parents have an argument?

Joan: Never.

Barbara: Never.

Joan: They never had an argument. They never argued.

Barbara: And for me, that sounds very boring but gosh, I guess it was. But I can say that one of the things that my father did that could not have happened without my mother and that is there was this homeless guy that was always around Simon's Department Store. Not the Stockman's Store, but Simon's. And every Thursday night my mother would make a crockpot full of wonderful stews, and you know, not skimping on anything and every Friday morning my father would take that crockpot to work to give to that homeless guy out in front of the store. And the next day, he'd bring it back, washed out, the homeless guy

would. I mean, just, I, you know, found out these things from a store clerk.

You know?

Joan: Our mother was on the board of the -- oh my God, what was it called, Barbara?

Harvey: Hadassah?

Barbara: And you're talking about Hadassah? Is that what you're talking about?

Joan: No, no, no.

Barbara: The children's-

Marty: All Faiths.

Joan: All Faiths, that's right.

Barbara: Yeah.

Joan: She was on the board of the All Faiths home.

Amazing, she was totally amazing, and she was part of Hadassah, and they used to have a Chanukkah party every year called the Latke Party. And they -  
- Jack Kleinfeld -- do you remember Jack Kleinfeld, Harvey?

Harvey: Yes. Before he, yeah, he passed away. He was -- he died in an accident, in a plane crash.

Barbara: That was his son.

Harvey: Oh Jack -- oh Jack, yeah, no, I didn't know Jack, no.

Joan: But Jack could have been a professional comedian. He was the most amazing, amazing joke teller and -

Barbara: Stand-up comedian.

Joan: Stand-up comedian, totally. And -- why was I going to tell this, Barbara?

Barbara: You were talking about my mom. Our mom.

Joan: Oh, right. Right, so when they used to have the Latke Party, and my mother was one of the major writers of all the songs and the choreographing and was always in it. They never let my dad be in it because he had this marvelous laugh, that they wanted him in the audience.

Barbara: That's right. That's right.

Joan: Our mother was really talented. She was very talented that way. Our family tended to put on plays and little skits for any occasion, like every bar mitzvah, every wedding, every whatever. And my mother was really a champion writer. She just was terrific. She was a very, very well-read woman. She really was an intellectual of great, great sorts. She also had such a great heart and was one of the best cooks I know. Best organized.

Barbara: And she put up with so much -- she put up with so much in terms of Friday night. Without even saying anything, Daddy would always bring somebody off the street or someone that he met, to dinner. You know? Just didn't even tell her -- came in with them. And my mother always rolled with the punches. She was super that way.

Joan: Yeah. Two of the funniest things that ever happened with regard to that was that Daddy brought home a guy who was from Israel. And it was a Friday night and he said, "You've got to come, it's Friday night. During the course of the conversation, it turns out that he was Palestinian. He was from Israel, but he was Palestinian. He was, which didn't matter. I mean, it didn't matter but it

made the conversation a little bit forced. My mother -- we used to call her the Queen of Hadassah because she was -- you could not say a bad word about Israel. Always very, very, loving and beautiful terms about Israel. I think she fostered a sort of Zionism certainly in me.

The other funny thing was that Lionel Hampton's bus broke down outside of Albuquerque. He was on a tour. They couldn't fix the bus. They were there for several days so Lionel Hampton and his wife and several of the people of the orchestra, Daddy brought home for dinner as well. Because they had found themselves in the best department store in Albuquerque, which of course was Simon's Department Store. I don't know if you knew it but Lionel Hampton had actually performed in Israel and they gave him a Magen Daved and the Hamptons were very, very, very, very fond of Israel.

When my folks took me to college in Wisconsin, we were in Chicago for a few days before. We saw that Lionel was playing at one of the clubs. We went, and the minute Zeda walked in the door, Lionel Hampton broke into Hava Nagila.

Marty: I'd like to tell another kind of story about mom and dad's coincidental life together. My dad was quite a good boxer, and when he was growing up in Denver, and one of his friends wanted him to enter the Golden Glove because they thought he could win it. And so, Dad went home and told his mom he's going to enter a boxing tournament, and Bobe said, "You absolutely will not.

You know, I'm not going to have a son who's a fighter." And so, Dad entered the tournament anyway under an assumed name. What was the name he used?

Barbara: Jimmy Allen.

Marty: Yeah, Jimmy Allen.

Barbara: Jimmy Allen.

Marty: And so anyway, my mom never got to go to the college As Barbara said, she was a very talented writer. All through high school, she would write, noveles and short stories. This was before she had ever met Dad and the hero of all of her stories that she would write would all read "Jimmy Allen."

Barbara: You're giving me -- it can send shivers up your spine. By the way, we never mentioned the fact that when our grandfathers came over -- New York was filled and HIAS tld him -- here, you're a young man, you get out of New York, we'll pay you to get out of New York. And so, Papa Zeda and his cousin actually walked all the way to Alabama, and then back up and ended up -- the cousin ended up in Louisville, Kentucky and across the bridge was Evansville, Indiana. And that's where Papa Zeda opened up a fruit and vegetable store and then brought over his family, so Bubbe and her sisters and brothers went to school. They came over. Our Uncle Meyer wasn't with them. But Uncle David and Aunt Yetta were valedictorias even though that they had just come over as immigrants. They were valedictorian of their high school. They learned to speak English really quickly.

Barbara: They learned to speak English very quickly.



Joan: Very quickly. Anyway, they grew up in Evansville, Indiana. Our father's father though, he had relative who was in Denver, Colorado, and our grandfather traveled to Denver out of New York, and that's where our father grew up, was in Denver.

Barbara: And his father, our grandfather, had a pushcart. What did he sell in the back, like, rags or something?

Joan: Rags.

Marty: Rags.

Joan: A rag peddler. But he was a rabbi. And he actually had a synagogue, an Orthodox synagogue. My husband, Sam, when he came into the family, he could never understand why Zeda, every morning would take a schnapps. When our father took a shot, it meant that he had a bottle of Glenlivet, and he took it right out of the bottle. Well, that's how we used to drink our Glenlivet, by the way. Anyway, and my Sam could never understand why. Once he asked Zeda, "Zeda, why do you do that? Why do you drink so early?" And he -- Zeda told him the story that as a young boy, he used to help his father on the horse and the cart. And that they would first go to the synagogue and say the morning prayers, and then everybody would have a schnapps afterward. A kiddish. And that's where he learned to take the drink of whiskey in the morning to warm him before they went out in the cold of Denver.

Our parents, the way they met was really quite extraordinary. My mother's sister, Yetta, our Aunt Yetta and Uncle Lou lived in Trinidad, Colorado. And my father actually used to, on his salesman route, used to stop at their store. One summer my mother went out to help Aunt Yetta and Uncle Lou in the store. My father walked in, took one look at her, and said, "I'll come back next year. I'm taking that beautiful girl out for a coke." And they wrote for, I don't know, three years, guys? Before they saw each other again and then they got married and it was a long and loving relationship for sure.

Barbara: Yeah, and they had a date for New Year's Eve in Evansville, Indiana.

Joan: No, New York, wasn't it?

Barbara: No. I think it's Evansville, Indiana.

Joan: Right. And Zeda drove up but then Bubbe decided to go to New York for a while to work. He and his friend drove up in a pick-up truck to New York City to pick her up, and he got through the Lincoln Tunnel and they were checked into a midtown hotel. So, they stopped a policeman to ask directions, and the policeman took one look at these two yahoos from Colorado with their western hats on and driving a pick-up truck, and said "Oh, follow me, I'll show you." They got a guided entrance/escort into Manhattan.

Barbara: So, guys, I'm looking here at Harvey and he's got like 15 questions, and we're still on number one.

Harvey: It's okay, it's okay.

Barbara: So move it along!

Harvey: I'm going to ask a question. Or I'll give you a kind of scenario. One of the things that I've heard -- I didn't grow up in Albuquerque. I came to New Mexico when I was 23 years old. But when I did come, there were so many Jewish-owned stores along Central Avenue and people have said that they could actually go from one store to the other, to across the street and down the block, and it would still be owned by a Jewish family. What kind of interaction was there between Simon and Becky and the other store owners along Central?

Barbara: Well, first of all --

Marty: [inaudible cross talk]

Barbara: -there was a delicatessen called Magidson's

Harvey: We'll go into that, yeah.

Barbara: They all went to Magidson's and they all went to the Schivz that used to be -- where was that -- in what building was it downtown where they had a sweat bath that they all went to? The Alvarado?

Joan: No.

Barbara: Where was it? Anyway, it was one of those close places that they all went there and communed there for sure.

Marty: Yeah.

Joan: And the synagogue.

Harvey: Well, wait until -- I'm going to come back to the synagogue, so but just kind of the business transactions or just kind of the friendships that they made. What

are the stories that you remember and what kind of relationships did Simon have -?

Marty: Well, I remember that going to lunch with Dad, talking about that again, that all of the lunches at Magidson's downtown where all of these Jewish businessmen would gather around a table and a half hour lunch would be extended into several hours of stories and laughing and it was -- it was always quite an experience to have lunch at the Magidson's table with all of the businessmen and Dad.

Joan: I don't know of any relationship that I would share with -- would you guys?

Barbara: No, Zeda was friends with every single merchant there. And with one or two exceptions, but what is the name? Maisel's He was, you know, that's still there, right?

Harvey: Yeah.

Barbara: Yeah. I don't know if they saw each other socially. But downtown, they were all buddies, they hung out, and it really was -- it was like a Jewish ghetto for a long time there.

Joan: Going on to the next question.

Harvey: Yeah, okay. Let's go on to the synagogue. Your parents were -- your dad was president of the synagogue. And he was president -- he was president for two years. Tell me what memories you might have of him.

Joan: I don't know whether we should mention it.

Barbara: Yes, let's tell the truth.

Marty: I'd like to. Dad had a special "president of the synagogue" voice he would put on that we used to make fun of it later on in his life. He'd say, "Good Shabbat, friends." And he never talked like that.

Harvey: Yes.

Joan: Well, he had some very problematic members on his board. They were, oh, mostly women that he thought did not agree with some of the stuff that the gentlemen of the board wanted and he -- I remember him telling them, "They should bar women from all synagogue boards!"

Barbara: And having two daughters who were feminists -- we were thrilled with that as you can imagine even then.

Harvey: Yeah.

Joan: Yeah. And also Bubbe. She was not too happy with that either.

Barbara: I mean, they put their time and their money and their mouths where their heads were at this. And I mean, there wasn't -- there was the Latke parties, there were so many events for the synagogue that they participated in. They had rummage sales like you would not believe. And every time somebody got sick, there was always this cadre of women including my mother who would minister to those people. I think they had pretty good ideas, pretty much avant garde to get people to join and of course, they built then, Temple Albert when the synagogue was still downtown, on First. Where was it guys? On Coal. It was on Coal.

Harvey: Lead and Cedar.

Barbara: Lead and Cedar. That's where it was. When they built Temple Albert. It was for the Reform people and so, we always said, well, on Yom Kippur we could go over there and eat some ham sandwiches.

Joan: Well, but then our -- B'nai Israel moved uptown and was designed by ... George Wynn?

Harvey: George Wynn.

Joan: Yeah. Anyway, we had moved up to Washington St. We lived on Loma Vista Drive when we first moved back to Albuquerque. Before then my father got another route and it was in the '40s and we moved to San Diego and then Barbara was born in Hollywood.

Barbara: 'Atta girl, Joanie.

Joan: We lived in Westwood Village for a while and then when my dad was drafted, my mother was pregnant with Marty, the third child. And apparently they didn't really call my dad up but he moved us to Denver to be close to his family. As soon as the war ended, he came back to Albuquerque and he didn't want to be a traveling salesman anymore with three kids. Well, two kids and one on the way. He actually opened up the store on First and Gold and we moved back to Albuquerque and they stayed in Albuquerque from then on.

Joan: Long time residents.

Barbara: And I remember one of the noblesse oblige things that we had to do because our parents were so actively involved in the direction of the synagogue. I mean, every time for Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, every holiday, we would

have to go. And Marty and I are pretty active in sports and even if we had something that had to be done, some game to play, some place to cheer for, whatever, he would always say, "Sandy Koufax did not pitch on Rosh Hashonah, on Yom Kippur, so you're going to go to synagogue." So that was one of the -- in our way -- in my way of thinking, anyway, was a pain in the ass to be daughter and children of somebody so actively involved in the synagogue.

Joan: And they were very, very Zionistic.

Harvey: Oh, okay, stop here for a second because this is something that I really want to delve into is their Zionism and not only their feelings about it, but also what they did, actually did, in terms of Zionism.

Joan: Well, my father was not only president of the synagogue. He also ran the Federation campaign for a number of years, and he was always a very active solicitor of funds for Israel through Federation. And they were -- my mother -- as I told you before, you could not say a bad word. We used to call her Henrietta. You know? In honor of Henrietta Szold, founder of Hadassah. During the War of Independence in 1948, my father, at his store, and his friends packed guns to send to Israel and --

Barbara: They went to Washington.

Harvey: Yeah, what else do you remember about that? That's a really important part of the story.

The packing of guns -- who did they do it with?

Joan: -- my sister was six. My brother was barely three. You know? What do we remember? We only remember -- at least I only remember by hearsay.

Harvey: Yeah, go ahead with the story that you remember --

Joan: I don't remember that at all.

Harvey: -- from hearsay.

Joan: It was an apocryphal story in the tale of our family, because there was -- these were people who had come from Europe and who were immigrants and who had lived the immigrant life and had made something of themselves. And had lived through the Holocaust, and knew what had happened. We had relatives who were murdered in Europe and some relatives who were survivors and had come -- actually, my mother's cousin, Yael Kowinsky, he worked in my father's store. They brought him over and he worked in my father's store for quite some time until he said, "I can't find a Jewish wife here," and so he moved back to New Jersey.

But I mean, we knew, from the Holocaust, it was not something that was necessarily hidden from us. We didn't know of it, we were too young to know of it during it happening, but certainly by 1948, the State of Israel became central in most of these people's and particularly in our family's, mind. I mean, this was something that was going to happen. You know?

Barbara: I remember that was the only time that Zeda ever was away from the house. You know? He, and now we were without him for a couple of days when he went to Washington. And I'm not sure --



Joan: Well that was -- that was the '73 War, Barbara.

Barbara: Right.

Joan: He went with ...

Sutin. Right. Jonathon Sutin.

Harvey: Good.

Joan: Good, Marty! Yay for the younger!

Harvey: Go on with the story about '73.

Joan: Well, there was a rally in Washington where the Jewish community went to Washington to get Nixon to send arms and airplanes and whatever to Israel.

There was a huge -- they didn't have the president's council then but it was a very, very major push to influence the government. AIPAC wasn't around then. There weren't the kinds of organizations that do that for you now. So just important community leaders from all over the country went to

Washington.

And it was, I think, a major effect on the government to help Israel, because Israel was taken by surprise at that point, and was very nearly defeated. I mean, there's stories about how Sadat had his armies marching and they could have marched all the way to Tel Aviv. But they decided to stop. And that stop, and the subsequent rearming of Israel, helped win the war.

Harvey: Right.

Barbara: And I will say, my parents accrued a variety of awards, but they never, ever did anything for notoriety, for publicity, for any kind of gain whatsoever. It was a

quiet, behind the scenes incredible showing of leadership and compassion. Our parents, I can say led by example. But they just were the most humble people you would ever want to meet.

Joan: Absolutely. I will tell you that the Goldman family and the Ginsburg family set up the award that is now given every year to a deserving teenager to go on a paid trip to Israel. My mother was alive when we set that up. And as a matter of fact, she wanted it set up just for Zeda's name, but she was the one that said "No, I want this to be through B'nai Israel and I want it to benefit Israel." And so, I mean, to the very end, they were concerned about Israel and about projecting the image and the righteousness of the Jewish state. And quite frankly, in my family, we are very, very much supporters. We've all worked on Jewish committees.

Harvey: Okay, let me get back to the business of Simon's. I heard that when he -- it was written, actually, that when Simon was not -- you know, couldn't go on really much longer with the store, that his employees actually bought it. Can you tell us something about that?

Barbara: Sure, that's true.

Joan: I mean, he didn't -- they didn't buy it. He allowed them to buy it by -- and this was true in a lot of Jewish families -- this is how it -- the store and whatever wealth came out of it was passed on to the next generations. He allowed his employees, Johnny -

Barbara: -- Montoya.

Joan: Montoya. Right. Excuse me, Johnny Montoya, and I think another person from the store. They bought the store, but they didn't pay anything for it. What it was, was an arrangement that my father would be paid out of the profits from the store.

Harvey: How did that work out?

Joan: Not great. Without our dad there, I think that the business was not the same. there was a lot of competition then in the uniform business because the uniform companies realized that they could sell directly to the police and the firemen and all of the rest of them. They didn't have to go through a store. When my dad was there, the reason that these uniformed people liked to trade in my dad's store was not only because of his largesse, but he also offered credit and the large companies at that time, did not have an ability to give credit to local Albuquerque people when they were a national firm. But then they developed a way that they could give credit and that cut into all the business.

Barbara: And ultimately didn't Hathaway or Berkshire, what was it that bought Stockman's store?

Marty: Oh no, no, they didn't. But it was -- that store was, I mean, we're talking about uniforms and because the original store was so unique, they had -- sold everything from tuxedos. He had a tuxedo rental, uniforms, cowboy boots. He had his own leather shop.

Joan: Saddle shop, yes.

Marty: Custom, yeah custom saddles.

Joan: Yeah, he invented the name belt, by the way.

Barbara: The name on the back of the belt? That was Zeda's idea.

Joan: Yeah. Our dad's store burnt down.

Barbara: Twice. Once at Simon's Department store and once, the Stockman store.

Joan: He kept all of his employees on salary and paid during the entire time that they were out of business and I mean, there are such stories of how kind he was.

There was a guy that worked in the store. His name was Albert. Albert never did anything. He took care of the hat department and what he would do is. He would go into the little closet where they used to steam the hats, and he would sleep all day. That's what Albert did. My dad knew that, but he kept Albert on forever and ever, and ever. If any of the people that were worked for him were ever polled, I think they that they would have nothing, nothing but just the best things to say about the store.

Wouldn't you agree, guys?

Barbara: Yes, and people often say, you know, he treated people like family. He really did treat them like family.

Joan: Yeah.

Barbara: He was everybody's grandfather, father, brother, best uncle, I mean he really was an extraordinary employer.

Joan: Yeah.

Harvey: Okay. Other than the name on the back of the belt, can you remember any other innovations or changes?

Joan: Oh, yes! Los Alamos had dogs that used to patrol the atomic research facility up there, and it was very cold, and the dogs' paws would freeze and Zeda devised a boot for the dogs. It was an inside-out-leather --

Barbara: That he did. Four of them it was.

Joan: And all of the dogs had to have their paws measured and they fit them exactly, you know, all four paws. So yes, that was another one!

Barbara: He'd hire Cuban refugee women who worked upstairs in the uniform department sewing names and patches on things. You know? He was really very innovative and here's an idea that he often said, and I never knew -- you guys tell me if you did. I never knew if he was kidding or not. He always talked about, he would like to open just a kids' department in a store and he wanted to hire little people to work there.

Joan: Well, that was in a letter. Barbara, you could even show Harvey the book that Karen and I made up, of the letters that Bubbe -- because that was an idea that he had --

Barbara: That's' right.

Joan: -- when they were courting and writing to each other and our mother and her inimitable rational self said, "Honey, I don't think you should hire midgets or little people for that. It wouldn't go over so good."

Barbara: He had ideas. You asked about his ideas and his innovations.

Harvey: Yeah.

Barbara: The fact that he had this leather department. There were all kind of accoutrements for cowboys that he sold there that was made in his leather department.

Joan: Yeah, I loved it-- during the rodeo days, that was fun when all the cowboys would come in to be fitted with their jeans and their boots and the hats and their belts and --

Barbara: Yeah, but wasn't it ironic when we all went to Camp Alonim, that we were the only kids that had nothing to wear on Western Day?

Joan: I never went to Alonim, so I never had that problem, but yeah, that's funny. That is funny. And because we never thought that that stuff was so unusual. I wish I had a lot of the stuff that was in that store now.

Barbara: Oh my God, yes.

Harvey: Could you give me the names of the stores that he owned, that he owned in Albuquerque?

Joan: Simon's Department Store.

Harvey: Yeah. Simon's.

Joan: And Stockman's Men's.

Barbara: The Stockman Store.

Harvey: The Stockman Store.

Joan: Yeah, on Central.

Harvey: Right. And that was all in the same building?

Barbara: No.

Joan: No.

Barbara: One was on Central and the other was on First and Gold.

Joan: First and Gold.

Harvey: Okay. I didn't --

Joan: Then, when he left the business and he sold, eventually Johnny Montoya and the others moved the Simon's Department Store -- I think they called it Simon's Uniform Department Store, up to Highland, the Highland Shopping Center, where the Highland Theater used to be?

Barbara: Right.

Harvey: Okay. Give me, can you give me some dates on that, when all that happened?

Barbara: Boy, I couldn't.

Then I was in junior high.

Joan: Yeah.

Harvey: Okay.

What kind of relationships did Simon and Becky establish with just the general community other than the Jewish community?

Joan: Well, they were beloved.

Marty: My dad was a great athlete. He was really one -- I think there was really not just a savvy little boy thinking, he was really a good athlete. And he sponsored -- he loved athletics, and he sponsored teams, -- anybody who asked us, we sponsored a team. He said, he always said yes. There were Simons' teams

from youth baseball all the way through basketball, adult basketball leagues -- and he always outfitted them in the best stuff and gave them travel bags and he was just a -- anybody who asked would -- Dad never would say no.

Joan: Yeah, we never mentioned the fact that our father played semi-pro baseball. He was a catcher.

Barbara: One time --

Joan: -in Denver and his name was Simon Goldmoni, that's what they called him because it was an Italian team, and he did it because they got an Italian meal after every game.

Barbara: You know one time I saw my father -- one time I saw my father at Jefferson Junior High School. He was on a Jewish softball team and they all met out on that baseball diamond at Jefferson Junior High School, and this is softball. I saw him and I -- I learned to appreciate it when I played baseball myself. I saw him hit a softball from the plate, home plate, all the way to the fence. Well, that's got to be 100 yards. That's like a major league baseball he could hit. And we watched him play tennis, and he was --

Joan: Oh, he was a good tennis player. Amazing thing about him.

Barbara: He was excellent.

Harvey: Let me get into that a little bit. I've heard stories -- I've heard stories about what happened at the tennis courts where deals were made and support for the synagogue was actually you know -

Barbara: -- foisted upon everybody.



Harvey: Foisted upon everybody. Yeah. Can you tell us something about the famous tennis court conversations that went on?

Joan: Well, first you have to understand that it was a Sunday and every Sunday, all the crew would come over and they would sit around a tennis court, and my mother provided --

-- cookies that she baked for them and my father would put out the schnapps bottles. They played, quite literally, drunk sometimes. It was fun.

Marty: They -- well, there was twelve guys that would play on one court. It was more a social thing than anything and so while the other guys were on the sidelines heckling, they would all just drink, it was fun. The amazing part about Dad being an athlete is he thought that he would like to have a tennis court and he had never played tennis before. He built a tennis court. And he was quickly the, like in the top one or two players that ever came over to that court. You know? He just -- he just was a natural athlete, it was unbelievable.

Joan: Even when he couldn't move, later on, he could place his shots and our court was so weird. Firstly, it was poured concrete, so you had, you had expansion joints . You had these large joints in the court and then he planted prickly bushes around the side. He could hit the ball anywhere he wanted to, even when he couldn't move himself, you know?

Barbara: He said he would provide us with any teaching pro in the city of Albuquerque. He wanted all of us -- all four of us to play tennis, and not one of us took it up. We were too busy playing team sports.

Harvey: Who were some of the guys that came to the tennis courts on Sunday?

Barbara: Marty Morrison. Kurt Kubie. Even Jack Kleinfeld came sometimes and he couldn't play at all.

Marty: Pete Trask. John O'Connor.

Joan: Right.

Barbara: Pete Domenici.

Joan: There were people from the University of New Mexico that used to come.

Barbara: How about Lew Harris and his good-looking sons?

Joan: Oh, Lou Harris and his boys?

Marty: Yep.

Joan: Who else used to come Sunday, do you remember?

Marty: It was a real mixed group. It wasn't just Jewish guys that Dad knew, just the camaraderie of the group was just outstanding.

Joan: Right and then they developed this -- the shul vs. the temple tournament.

Barbara: Yeah, they had a tournament, yeah.

Barbara: That was funny.

Joan: But the guys on the shul team were oftentimes people like Pete Trask who was actually Greek and Greek Orthodox and John O'Connor who was a Catholic and I mean, it was not -- we had some ringers in there.

Barbara: But I will tell you that I think Lew Harris was one of the better players who ever came. And my father, Lew Harris and my father were probably the

standard bearers of actually playing the game well. Marty's right, I mean, it was just -- it was really fun to watch them.

Marty: Yeah.

Barbara: And my mother yet again --

Barbara: And my mother was busy from the time they walked in, serving them things and a bunch of them would come in later, and then eat bagels and lox at our house. It was a Sunday event, it was just like, going to shul except it was at our house.

Harvey: Was there any involvement of your parents with politics at all?

Joan: I think that we would have to say that they probably were lifelong Democrats.

Barbara: Except for when they became Republicans when Pete Domenici was running. They switched their party.

Joan: Domenici, they voted for.

Barbara: Right, so that they could vote Republican, but just for him. And boy, did it come out later with \$1,000,000 to me.

Marty: Yes, right.

Barbara: Or to my agency.

Harvey: Okay. Is there anything else that you can remember about just their involvement with other organizations? What other kind of organizations can you think of?

Barbara: Boy, you name a children's club like the Boys and Girls Club or Future Farmers of America. My father was the easiest hit, in a person, Joanie can

speaking to this as well. Having to raise money. You look for a guy like Si Goldman who is colossally across the board willing to help anybody who asks him for anything.

Joan: You know, every year at the State Fair, he purchased one of those steers and then donated to one of the foundling homes.

Harvey: All Faiths.

Joan: My mother, as we told you, was on the All Faith's board for as long as I can remember. And they belonged to B'nai Brit and they were part of Federation

Marty: Dad belonged to everything.

Joan: Everything.

Marty: He belonged to Lion's Club.

Joan: That's right.

Joan: Remember? Remember how he would imitate the guys at the Lions, which is the club that you have to make the noise.

Marty: [*Inaudible*] was at the Lion's Club.

Barbara: The Lion's Club., But it wasn't just Jewish organizations, it was every --

Joan: I want to tell a story about Dad. I mean, because this is just -- I don't know whether or -- oh yeah, I should. Anyway, so our dad, we had a philosophy in our family. You spend when you can, you save when you can. But mostly Zeda was into --

Barbara: He said, there's a time to spend and a time to save. That's what he would say.

Joan: That's right. But because of the fires and because of his generosity in his store, he oftentimes was in debt to Oscar Love, of the First National Bank in Albuquerque. And as most retail operations you know you borrow to buy your next season of clothes and then you pay it off, as you go.

Anyway, he was in debt to Oscar Love. And Oscar Love called him and said, "Hey, Si, we're having a fundraiser for I don't know what it was, some sort of Albuquerque civic operation, and we absolutely want you to come and be at this fundraiser." Well, it kept my dad up all night long. He says, "Oscar knows I owe him money. How can he expect me to come to this?" He was thinking, Jewish. He was thinking that he'd have to give, you know, at that time, thousands of dollars, which of course he did not have at the time, and he says, "What am I going to do? How can I be there and embarrass myself and embarrass Oscar, whatever, and okay, I'm going to do it. I'll do it all.

Somehow, I'll give it."

And so, he got to this organizational meeting and Oscar Love was the first one to stand up and he says, "I donate \$50," and my father said he nearly had a heart attack. I mean, it was not a Jewish organization. They didn't donate the same amounts of money that in the Jewish world if you go to a Federation, what they do.

Barbara: I think I can honestly say I personally never knew of one single time in my life in that family where when my father was asked to donate something, that he

said no. I remember he used to uniform all the Catholic schools when they had uniforms.

Joan: Oh yeah, yeah.

Barbara: I swear to God, he gave more away than he sold. Again because -- they didn't have the money to buy uniforms.

Joan: They used to have so many pews named for Dad.

Barbara: In the Catholic church and in the schools.

Joan: In the Catholic churches, yeah.

Barbara: And just as I said, the thing to be underlined and bolded here is that without any sense of wanting recognition for anything, he was the least -- my mother and father were the least political people in the world, but I truly believe no kidding, because I, in what I've done, I've been involved in politics. Zeda could have been the governor of the state of New Mexico, easily. He was renowned across the state. You couldn't go anywhere where people didn't recognize him.

Joan: Yeah, but he wouldn't have made a good governor, Barbara.

Barbara: Well, I didn't say if he'd be a good one. I'm saying he could have been elected.

Joan: Yeah.

Harvey: Okay, we're going to be about to wrap it up now, because I actually have so much here. Is there anything else that you would like to add that we haven't talked about?

Joan: Can you tell me something, Harvey? What happens with this? What are you planning to do with this?

Harvey: Well, this is going to be transcribed first of all. There'll be tapes made available. And then the hope is that we'll be able to put it into a pamphlet -- book form, you know? And it will be edited and then made into the story. You know, well, just the story that you're telling me plus other things that we can find out about.

Barbara: Well, if you're going to make a movie, you can use my brother because he looks very much like our father. Right, Marty?

Harvey: Yeah, and also, we're also investigating Albuquerque's involvement in Zionism and that's something that will become part of a conference later on. So, we're trying to get as much information as we can, which reminds me, does the name, George Cosden(?) mean anything to you?

Barbara: Not to me.

Joan: Not to me.

Barbara: Marty? How about to you?

Marty: No.

Harvey: Okay, the reason --

Joan: Who else are you interviewing, Harvey, can I ask?

Harvey: Yeah, sure. Deborah Wechter Friedman, whose family started the Music Mart in Las Vegas -- in Las Cruces, New Mexico. Howard Friedman from Value House, the Friedman family. Phillip's Mercantile. And what's his name?

Joan: Marilyn Reinman would be a very good one for you to --

Harvey: Yeah, well she -- we already have her and Bell. The Bell family, John and Lance Bell.

Joan: Yeah.

Harvey: Those are the four that we are -- and you. These are the four families that we're trying to investigate and to do some research on. We're trying to focus more now on the 20th century, because the late 19th century, the early 20th century have pretty much been covered by -- all the 19th century by the German Jewish pioneer families and then the early East European Jewish families that came to New Mexico, like the Ravels and the Brombergs and that -- those folks.

Joan: Mm-hm.

Harvey: And we've also done a lot on farming families and ranching families, amazing how much there is in the ranching area.

Barbara: But that's actually -

Harvey: There's actually Jews in you know in small towns and things like that but right now, what the focus of this grant is, is to investigate the Jewish families who were prominent in New Mexico and from the 1950s or so, through the 1960s, '70s and maybe the early '80s. That gives us a good perspective of --

Joan: I'll give you one more thing about the involvement of Jews. My father and several of the other men were instrumental in purchasing the property that the community center now stands on and where the Schechter school used to be.



Harvey: That will be in there too, that's very important. What else can you tell me, anything else before we close it down? We have so much information here.

Joan: I think that you ought to look at the Goldman Scholarship. Because it's very Zionist and the function of it was to send these post-bar mitzvah -- the confirmation age kids to Israel. And they come back, and they have to do something in the community. Right now, they make a speech on the second day of Rosh Hashanah, at the synagogue, but they are supposed to be thinking about Israel and promoting Israel and telling them about their experiences in Israel, to build Zionism in the community. That's the vision for that scholarship fund, that we fund.

Barbara: And it is in honor of our parents.

*[end of recording]*