

Interview with **Ken and Ina Eisenberg**, July 19, 2007 by *Lia Lewis*

*K: So, do you want to tell me how you came to Greensboro? Did you grow up here?*

**I grew up in Reidsville, 20 miles from here. We went to Temple Emanuel, and we came here for religious school every Sunday. My family was members from the '40s until now except for one year when Beth David was first formed. They dropped out and belonged to Beth David for one year, and that was it. And I was confirmed here, I was not bar mitzvah here, but I was bar mitzvah in Durham in the same place as my father.**

*About what time was that, that you were bar mitzvah?*

**1953.**

*And most of the kids were bar mitzvah at that time?*

**The guys were bar mitzvah when I was coming up, yeah. I would say most of them, not everybody. Most of us were. My closest buddies growing up at Temple Emanuel were Mel Kriegsman and Ken Miller, who is now a member of Beth David. Obviously we were all confirmed together. Our picture's hanging in the hall there. I don't know, I guess we had a normal youth at Temple Emanuel... I don't know what to tell you.**

*Well, about how many kids were in your class?*

**I would say 10, maybe 12...I don't remember exactly. You know in the picture, I remember every one of them real well, you know in my mind's eye. In fact, about 10 years ago, I ran into one of the fellows who I was confirmed with on the train. Just by chance, he was coming home. He lives in Chapel Hill, and I hadn't seen him in probably about 25 or 30 years before that.**

*Who was your rabbi?*

**Fred Rypins was the rabbi when I was growing up here. And, of course, Joe Asher followed him. When we were confirmed, Fred Rypins was still the rabbi.**

*What do you remember about him?*

**What do I remember about Rabbi Rypins? He was just a real nice old man. He was an older man when I was young. But, of course, when I was 13 or 14 or 15, he was probably in his 60's, so he was a real old man to me. You know.**

*I: Tell them about the man who taught you Hebrew that you liked.*

**Well, he was a traveling salesman who sold bras and girdles named Sidney Schreiber. And he taught us Hebrew every Sunday. He was just a nice, likeable fellow.**

*Did y'all drive him crazy?*

**Yeah, we drove him crazy, but it was all in good fun, you know. He enjoyed it, and we did too.**

*But he didn't live in Greensboro?*

**He lived in Greensboro, and it ended up when he got off the road, he opened up a dress shop in Burlington. In my confirmation class, there were two girls from Burlington. One who's married and lives now, I think, in Columbus. The other, I'm not sure that she ever married, but she lived, at one time, in New York. Another good buddy I had here was Donna Hinchee, and she's still a member of the Temple.**

One of the girls in your class died, right?

**Janie Lavietes. Bob Lavietes, who's still a member, his younger sister, and she was younger by about 8 or 10 years, maybe. She passed away not too long after we left and came back. Weren't we back in Greensboro?**

I think so.

**It was in the '60s, I think, that she died; so she died as a young person. I don't think she lived to 30. I don't think she did.**

Tell them about the High Holiday services.

**Well, during the High Holiday services, back when I was growing up, the World Series was on during the High Holidays. So, all the men, when Rabbi Rypins would get up to speak, all the men would go out to their cars, turn on their radios, and listen to the World Series. And some of us would go downstairs under the sanctuary, where they called it an assembly room, I don't know if you've ever been in the Greene Street building or not, but the room downstairs under the sanctuary was just wide open, and they had a ping pong table and a pool table, and we'd go down there and shoot pool until somebody came downstairs and told us to quit because they could hear us all the way upstairs.**

What did the Rabbi think about that?

**God bless him, Rabbi Rypins was a very smart man, but his sermons were from hunger. I mean, that's just the way it was. He went from Abraham to the atom bomb and back to something else almost every holiday. He was a very smart man, and he was very active in the general community. He was the face of Judaism in Greensboro. He and the Cone family, people knew of, and most people knew that they had been Jewish. And he was the man out front. And over the years, I guess the rabbi at Temple Emanuel has been the one, "out front" representing the community, thinking that they were the leader whether they were or not. You know, Beth David has a very viable community of its own, including a lot of good members that used to belong to the Temple.**

Did you have a youth group?

**We didn't have a real organized youth group at the Temple. but we belonged to everything. We belonged to BBYO, NC Organization of Jewish Kids. I mean, I remember going, as a kid thirteen years old, and getting in a car with Sherry Morgenstern and a couple of guys and going to Fayetteville to play football. We spent the night at the Fleishman home down there, so we spent the night at different homes, and I spent the night at Joel Fleishman's home. We did that;**

**we went all over the state. The whole state was, I don't guess it was probably any closer than it is today, but I really don't know what goes on with the youth today, because I'm so far removed from it. I remember when the Berkelhammer girls were very active with BBYO. There were a lot of things going on all over the state, and that wasn't that long ago, so I feel sure that it's still going on, to what extent I don't know. We went all over the state. We went to Chapel Hill once a year to the Hillel house. We stayed upstairs, and played cards and went to the basketball game. I don't know. That wasn't a function of Temple Emanuel, it was just what the Jewish kids did. I visited a lot of weekends either at the Kriegsman home or the Miller home, and they would come to Reidsville and stay with me.**

*So it was always a pretty tight community?*

**It was, because it was a smaller community. I think we were...well, in a way, the Jewish community is as visible today as it was back then because we had so many Jewish merchants in downtown Greensboro. Two of the best ladies' stores in town were owned by Jewish people. There was the Guyes, they were members of the Temple, and there was Brownhill's, and she was member of the Temple. Whether people knew, whether the general population knew that they were Jewish or not, they were very visible.**

*Do you remember any other Jewish-owned businesses?*

**Yes, we had College Pastry Shop, that bakery was owned by Marvin Isreal's father. Marvin Isreal you probably know about. He does a lot of photography for the Temple. I remember Marvin growing up, of course, he's a good bit older than I. And you know, when you're young a couple of years makes a big difference. I didn't really know the LeBauer boys growing up; they were confirmed at Temple Emanuel. In their age group, I guess, I knew Shelly and Gary Macell, they were probably the two guys that I knew the best. And Jerry, I knew Jerry Farber. They were probably the ones of that age group that I knew best, which was only a year or two older than I. But in junior high, you know, that's a big difference.**

And then your brother Barry is how many years younger? Three?

**He's three years younger, and he lives in Winston. He, of course, came to Temple Emanuel, just like I did. We were born and raised in the little town of Reidsville, you know, Greensboro was the big city. Comparatively, it was a larger city then than it is today.**

Were your folks active at the Temple?

**Not really. They were members. We came to Temple for the High Holidays, and that was it. But my folks were in the retail business, and Monday through Saturday they were busy.**

Well, the roads weren't as good back then to get over here, were they?

**If it takes 20-25 minutes today, it probably took 40 minutes back then. You know, it was a two lane road in 1945, 1955. I don't remember when 29 was four lanes, but it wasn't in my youth.**

*What are some of the major changes that you remember?*

**Most of them are positive as far as the Temple's concerned, in my mind. I've seen quite a return**

to what I call traditional Judaism. They were as Reform as I ever could conceive when I was growing up. I didn't learn my Hebrew at Temple Emanuel. There was a gentleman who taught me Hebrew in Reidsville, he owned a bed frame factory. His granddaughter is Debbie Miller, who belongs to the synagogue. She lived in Washington, but her grandfather had a bed frame manufacturing business in Reidsville. They actually belonged to a congregation in Danville. But he taught me Hebrew two days a week. I got on my bicycle and road fifteen blocks to his house. I learned Hebrew from the ground up. It wasn't just learning the prayers to mouth them for your bar mitzvah. I don't denigrate what my wife is doing at all to learn Hebrew. She can read it today, probably better than I can. But I don't know, it's...I just think that the things that are going on at the Temple are great. I think the move out here to Jefferson Road was a big savior for the Temple. I think had we stayed on Greene Street Temple Emanuel would not be near as viable as it is today. I know, we, the two of us, had become very inactive. I served on the Ritual Committee at its first resurgence. We were still down on Greene Street then, but that was the only thing at the Temple I've done in many, many years. Of course, I traveled up until about three or four years ago. Ina was active in the Sisterhood for many, many years, but then we became inactive. I hate to say disinterested, but that would be a lot of the truth. Then we went through some difficult times as a congregation, and that did nothing to build up the congregation at all. We've had quite a positive resurgence out there at the Temple; I hope I'm not kidding myself. But I think I see more and more young couples belonging and joining. I keep saying to some of my buddies about the Temple, the Temple is not for me and it's not for you, it's for your grandchildren. We're a whole lot closer to being six feet under. Facts are facts. But our children and our grandchildren are what the Temple's for, and that's the way it ought to be.

Tell them how you served all those years at Hillel.

**Yeah, but that was in Chapel Hill.**

Yeah, but that was a great contribution you made.

I was the State Chairman for Hillel for 2 ½ terms, and was on the board there for, I guess, 10 or 15 years. I was a board member for a year before I took on the chairmanship. That was a three-year term, and the fellow who was to follow me backed out. I guess that's how to put it, I won't say chickened out, but backed out. And so, they asked me to stay on another two years, which I did. And for some reason, I remember staying on one more year, I don't remember why. We've had two fine and active ladies, Ellen Fisher, who's a member of the Temple, and Joyce Shuman, who's a member of the synagogue. Both have been State Dhairmen of Hillel, and both did a great job out there. I was more of a caretaker when I was there, but they really, they and some younger board members, really added some vitality to it.

Tell Lia how excited you were when Andy applied for the job here.

Oh, I knew Andy from Hillel. So when he applied, I said if they're going to take on somebody else, that's the one, as far as I'm concerned. I think he's been one heck of a positive – I won't say influence, but it's as good as any word – to the whole congregation. He's grown himself, and I think he's a dynamite man, I really do. I think he's capable of doing it on his own. I think that much of him. I'd hate to see him leave, but I think he could do it on his own.

What about the TEPS program, having the grandchildren in that?

**I think the TEPS program is very good.**

*When was that started?*

About 19 years ago---19 to 20 years ago. Maybe this'll be the 20th year.

**It wasn't that long. My grandson came and went to the TEPS program. The children didn't. I think it's very good. Anytime you take young people and introduce them to the religion, I think it's good. They see so much out there of their friends' religion, that when they can be in their own, I hate to say their own environment, I hate to say it, but I mean it. Having grown up in Reidsville, being the first kid to go through that public school system in 25 or 30 years that was Jewish, in small town, redneck North Carolina, I never want my children or grandchildren to have to do it.**

*Yeah, you're talking to a Martinsville, VA girl, so I know exactly what you mean.*

**OK, I understand. I knew the Berlins right well. Ted and -**

*Hilda.*

**Yeah. They were nice people.**

*They were.*

**They moved to FL and she passed away first, I think. I didn't know too many people. Yeah, I did too, I knew -**

Where was Kenny Greene from?

**Kenny Greene was from there, but I didn't know Kenny. I knew some of the Greenses from business.**

*Yeah, and some of them are still up there.*

Were the O'Manskys from there?

**No, they were from Eden. We were friendly as families with the O'Manskys from Leeksville.**

Can you imagine Jews named O'Mansky?

**They had twin sons who were probably somewhere around 10 years older than I. Both are in Baltimore now. And I think they're retired doctors now. The people from Reidsville, and Leeksville, and Burlington formed a closeknit little group. During the holidays we'd always get together and go to lunch, and that kind of thing. Of course, that was pretty much, other than religious school, the only time we saw each other as families. You know, the fathers would drive in on Sunday and bring the kids to religious school, and they all went down to Mushvine's and drank coffee and schmoozed. That was a deli in town, back then, many years ago. But there was**

**nothing going on like there is at the Temple now, for the young people to go to and participate in and learn. The people that came in from the hinterlands were on their own. They were... I don't know. I grew up, what do I know?**

Don't you remember anything?

**About what?**

When you were going to religious school. Nothing really...

**The principal of the religious school was a fellow named Salzman, I think. But he was a leader in name only, because the real leaders of the religious school were Rabbi Rypins and his wife. They're the ones the building downtown was named for.**

*Were the teachers paid back then, or were they volunteers?*

**I'm guessing they were volunteers. I don't remember. I think they were volunteers, I really do. There was no such thing as curriculum back then, like there is today, with homework and study. Nothing like that. We had a copy of When the Jewish People Was Young, and I think it took us two or three years to go through that book. In my mind it did, and you know, the only time you saw it was on Sundays when you were in religious school.**

*What kind of things did you study?*

**You studied the holidays until you were blue in the face. We didn't study much history, except the history around the stories of the holidays. But it would take, I hate to say it, a month of Sundays just to talk about the Macabees. But that's just the way it was, you know. I don't remember it being real structured. It was almost a gathering, more so, than an educational process. And there might be some other people that were in the same class I was in and not had that feeling.**

Did you all dress up to go to religious school?

**Dressed up a whole lot more than they do today. I won't say your "Sunday best", but we dressed up. You know, but of course, that's just the way it was.**

Did you enjoy going to Temple or did you prefer just to be with your buddies?

**Well, religious school was a vehicle for me to be with my buddies. That's all it was as far as I was concerned. My education didn't come from Temple Emanuel. How long can you spend studying Jewish holidays? We didn't celebrate all the holidays back then that we do now. They were still holidays, but they just weren't part of Temple Emanuel.**

Did they talk much about the Holocaust when you were in religious school?

**No.**

No?

**I don't remember much talk about that at all.**

Just not for young ears, I guess.

**I think that was a lot of it. We didn't have television and computers and all of the electronic media that we use today. We didn't have the distractions that we have today. We enjoyed religious school, I guess. But I enjoyed the social aspect much more than the educational aspect, because I didn't have that Monday through Saturday.**

*Right.*

**The kids that I went to Sunday school with, I'd rather call it Sunday school than religious school, the kids that I went to Sunday school with, except for me and a couple of kids from Burlington, they all went to Grimsley High School. They were together five days a week in school. So, you know, it was a whole different ball game.**

*Do you remember much about Civil Rights when you were younger?*

**Not from a religious standpoint. I didn't see much of anything but integration. When they started doing the sit-ins and what happened in Little Rock, I guess that was really the first confrontation. But I was very out front with that, because even as a kid in 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> grade, whatever it was, I said, let them go through now. That was my attitude.**

*What sort of things are you involved in today at the Temple?*

**Well, let's see, Social Action Committee, because of my involvement with Habitat. I've also been to some meetings that I've enjoyed...House and Grounds, and because I'm on House and Grounds, I'm a representative of that committee to the Recycling Committee. I'm still on the Ritual Committee, and have been for, I don't know, 10 or 15 years.**

And you've also helped with Mitzvah Day.

**Oh, yeah. Mitzvah Day. But I don't think that's considered a Temple project. This year I was involved with the Steering Committee for Mitzvah Day.**

That's five committees, just since the Temple opened up seconds away from us.

*Wow.*

**I walked to the first service I went to at Temple Emanuel on Jefferson Road.**

Because Melvin was supposed to pick him up, and was late, so he said, I'm leaving.

**I did, I walked.**

Oh, wait. You've also been an usher, for what, 30 years?

**20 or 30 years.**

For the High Holidays.

**I've enjoyed my activities at the Temple. I really have. At the same time, I try to encourage young people to become involved, because I think it's important. I'd be more than happy to drop any committee I'm on for a younger person. Because we don't need old thinking, we need young thinking. I see a lot of the committees just getting older...people just staying on the committees where their interests are. The most avid committee I see, is the Recycling Committee. Those people are into recycling. I mean they're going to make Temple Emanuel green. They're going to make the world green. And they really are, they're sincere. They're into that stuff, and I think it's great. I see the Ritual Committee getting older. I haven't been around the Social Action Committee long enough to get a feel for that. I think I see some nice young people getting involved in that. I'd like to see everybody in the Temple, who considers themselves a member on a committee. I think it'd be good for them, and I know it would be good for the Temple. Temple Emanuel is still predominantly two holidays a year, and that won't change but so much. I don't care who the rabbi is or where the Temple is. Personally, I won't go to Greene St. unless it's a very special occasion. And I was raised in that building, just like the Tannenbaums and the Marks and the Wainers and the LeBauers. But Temple Emanuel is now on Jefferson Road, and I support it on Jefferson Road. In my mind's eye, as I said earlier, it has breathed new life in Temple Emanuel. I like that. I think without Jefferson Road, we wouldn't be where we are today as a congregation. Because young people don't want to go downtown, to that old building, that we can't even get half of the congregation in at one time. High Holiday services were two sessions, and one of them was always busting out at the seams and the other was full. So, there just wasn't room to do the things that we do today. And I like 6:30 services on Friday night. I enjoy going at 6:30. I seldom will go to an 8:00 service. On Friday night, quite often we eat dinner at 8:00. I'll bust my chops to get ready to go to a 6:30 service, be through at 8:00, let's go eat. I think there's a nice crowd that shows up when they have 8:00 services. They're doing a new thing called synaplex. They're doing services for, I don't think they call it Empty Nesters, they want to give it a new name, but anyway, Tot Shabbats and young people services. And I think it's wonderful, because there's no one thing that meets everybody's needs. And at the same time, I don't care how many things they do, there are some people who just aren't going to participate, for whatever reason. But I think the Temple is really making an effort to meet as many people's needs as they can.**

*Do you remember much about when Mitzvah Day started?*

**I was active in the first Mitzvah Day. And I liked the concept better then than I do now, personally. What we were doing then was for the Temple. Now we're doing things that, personally, I don't see having much meaning. The dogwash, for me, that doesn't mean a darn thing. Going down and cleaning up the parks, that's nice for the community, and that gets you good press. But when we let Mitzvah Day get away from the Temple, and brought in the synagogue, and now the Federation, and this and that, in my mind, and as I said, I'm still active in it, it has lost a lot of meaning. I think it's more a vehicle for publicity than anything else. Look at all the good we're doing in the community. Things like the Mitzvah Garden, I think's great. That's been good as a congregation, and we give the food away to the hungry. But I don't understand dogwashes and tie-dyeing t-shirts. That's just my personal feeling.**



*What types of activities did we have in the beginning?*

**We cleaned out the Greene Street building. We cleaned out books and desks and stuff stuck back behind and around and under. We did some painting. We did a whole lot of stuff one Sunday. We really made a major effort down there. Of course, at the same time, I've got to say this, we were anticipating moving out here. Like any congregation, we held onto a lot of stuff. People kept giving things over the years that we felt like we had to hang onto. Whether it was books that we didn't use anymore but people gave to us, so they hesitate to buy them. We had Old Union Prayerbooks down there, boxes of them – all right! I didn't know about this!**

Homemade too.

**Somebody's home.**

I made it.

**I'm just into the Temple being the Temple. It's not that I want to segregate and not be part of the community or the Jewish community as a whole, but our communities within the congregation. We don't do any quote unquote activities within the Temple. All of our activities include the Federation and AHA and the synagogue, and you know, to me, I'd just like to see us have some things that are just the Temple. It's like Mitzvah Day, it was our franchise. And they want to have it somewhere else.**

*It's going to be here again this year.*

**I'm sorry?**

*It's going to be here again this year.*

**Right. I was at the meeting when it came up. The rabbi did a very good job of selling it being here, and it should be. Until the other facilities have the infrastructure to handle it. If they go to AHA, where are you going at AHA? But they have a requirement that their students participate in Mitzvah Day. That's the biggest joke in the world. It's a wonderful school, it's a wonderful place, but they require their students participate in Mitzvah Day, and they could care less. It's an imposition on their Sunday. So their participation is half-hearted at best, a lot of them. So, I only want to go so far with that.**

*So, is there anything else that stands out in your mind that you want to include?*

**I just enjoy being at Temple Emanuel. It's more for the social intercourse than anything else.**

Did you all get together with the Beth David kids?

**Not really.**

You didn't have any kind of \_\_\_\_\_

**Well, they had BBYO. You know, so that was about it. But we belonged to everything.**

But, like Howard Silverstein was raised in High Point, did you all ever see the High Point kids?

**Very seldom, very seldom. Didn't see the Winston kids and there was a bigger group in Winston. I don't remember when it was, I guess it was when I was in high school maybe, yeah, it must have been my junior or senior year in high school that we had a hayride with the kids from Winston. My friends from Mt. Airy and I went.**

*So, what about you, Ina? When did you come here?*

**Well, I came here for college in 1959, I was 17 years old. And I came to the Women's College at University of North Carolina, which is now UNCG. And while I was still in school, one of the girls from Greensboro came to a private school in Memphis, because her mother was dying. Her mother was married to Milton Zauber. And her name was Babs, and I don't know how I met Babs. We were kind of friendly, and I told her I was coming here to college, and she had another year in Memphis before she came back here. I did see her some when she would come home, her mother was still alive, but she was so ill. You know, she was just here to spend time with her. There was a couple here named Milton and Hilda Weinstein, and he was president of the Temple. My grandmother had married a lovely man, and somehow, he knew the Weinstains, they were cousins somehow. And they were wonderful to me. I remember when I came here, the first opportunity that they had was Min Klein, may she rest in peace, and several ladies from Greensboro came over to the college and had a social for all the Jewish girls. And she called it the Hillel chapter there, I think was what Min called it, and she encouraged us to come to Temple. And I remember going to Temple when I first came to school here, thinking it was just a lovely little place. And everyone made us feel so welcome and so wanted, and of course, the Weinstains were wonderful to me. And anything I needed or wanted, Hilda would come and get me, and take me anywhere I needed to go. The school wasn't far from downtown, and we could either walk it or take the bus, and we just had really good times here. When we decided to move back to Greensboro after we married, I thought this was great, because several of the girls lived here that I knew, and Ken had friends. So, we were just, we were coming home. But I remember when I went to college here, I thought I would really like to live in Greensboro, it's such a nice community. So, I met a few ladies in the community and a few families through the Weinstains and through the Zaubers, really. And that was about it. And then, I didn't come back here until we were married. And we'd just become parents, and we moved back here, so it was in 1963, and I was 24. Oh, I'm sorry, it was '66 and I was 24. The socialization for women here in the Jewish community was every Monday there was a meeting. There was either Council of Jewish Women, Haddassah, and the two sisterhoods. If you had help in your house, and you wanted to, the women encouraged us all to come to these meetings, and you'd get on a committee, and you'd get to meeting people, and that was a nice thing to do. I enjoyed that. I always loved the sisterhood, because when I was growing up, the women in the sisterhood were my mother's friends and mentors, and I always thought that was a nice place to be. And then the Federation of Temple Youth was formed, and so, I met a lot of ladies in a lot of sisterhoods, throughout Louisiana and Mississippi who were really dynamic women. And they were the ones who were leaders in the Youth Group, and they'd open up their homes, and I always thought, these ladies in the sisterhood are really top notch. I liked that. So I joined Council, Haddassah, and the sisterhood, but I put my time and talent in the sisterhood. I was every officer except the treasurer. Never wanted to handle the money, that was not my strength. I was president of the sisterhood through '78 and it was a wonderful experience. I sat on the board of directors at the Temple for 6 years, because the way they had it go was you were 2 years before somebody, and then 2 years as past president, it was just, it was something. So I spent 6 years on the board and that was an**

interesting experience. It was during the time that we built the Rypins Building. And I remember one time Bill Starr came to the meeting, and he didn't anything, no degrees, nothing to do with building, and he said, "I fear that there is not enough steel in the roof of this building, and I have a real awful feeling about this." And he said, "I've hired an architect to look at the plans." And he brought in Carl Miatt, and he said, "Bill is exactly right. There is not enough steel in the roof." And thanks to his sitting down and looking at those plans, and asking questions, and doing whatever it took, he really deserves credit for making sure that that building is steady and sturdy. That was some experience, I don't know why, but that really sticks in my mind. The presidents that I remember working with the most were David Zauber and Arthur Bleenthenthal, and Dick Foreman. Those were the 3 presidents that were in office when I was on the board, and they were really terrific. And each president of the congregation did a really magnanimous thing; each one of them did something for the Temple when they left office. David Zauber made sure that the library had more shelving and, I guess, painted it and fixed it up. Arthur Bleenthenthal took it upon himself to try to repair the water damage in the basement area, and to make it better and to improve the bathrooms. There was a mens' bathroom down there that was just in disrepair, and he had the thing retiled and it was just wonderful. I don't remember what Dick did, but when Dick was president was when we dedicated the Rypins Building. We were so excited about this building, because we thought the kids would be in a great place, and the architect that was selected, didn't listen to us or something, but anyway, he gave us a broom closet for a kitchen. And that was such a disappointment, and really hard to work in, but it was still newer than the one that we had across the street. It did have some nice equipment, it was just difficult to work in. It was a triangular shape, you just couldn't, it was awful. But anyway, we were disappointed in that. You did the best you could at the time. But, also, after it was around '80 or so, the ladies in the sisterhood did a lot of the bar and bat mitzvah lunches. They did it as a fundraiser, and they used that kitchen a lot or they cooked at home, I'm not sure. But they did a wonderful job with that, that was a great service to the Temple. Now, I will tell you, that I remember, even when I came here in '66, on Friday nights for Oneg Shabbat, they got out the sterling. And one lady poured the coffee. That was a big deal to get the lady to pour the coffee. Friday night was the sterling service, they had tea, a lot of people still wore the gloves, and they dressed up.

A man wouldn't come to Temple without a tie on.

Coat and tie?

Just didn't do it.

And the gift shop at the Temple was one tiny little case. You walked in the social hall, you've seen it down there, the social hall, if you looked to the right there was one tiny little case. And on Shabbat if you wanted to buy something, they'd open it up and sell it to you. It's the truth. And if you needed candles or something, you'd buy them there. And we had a wonderful janitor, and Eddie would take the food that was left over and give it to neighbors. And they called him "Rabbi". He in the last few years, it was in the paper, it said, Eddie, and I forget his last name, may he rest in peace, and they had Rabbi in parentheses. He was terrific. So, whatever we needed, it was down there, and they would get it for us and help us. Rabbi Rypins daughter, Fran, made dinner for the congregational meeting. And she made standing rib roast in that old kitchen. She put out the most wonderful dinner you've ever seen. Those were the days, really. The sisterhood was the strong arm of the Temple. Today, the brotherhood is. But in the '60s, '70s, and '80s it was the sisterhood. The brotherhood didn't do much really.

**Didn't do anything. The brotherhood was virtually non-existent.**

**I remember that in my term of office, we bought those black folding chairs that are still at the Temple today. And that was a big deal to purchase those new chairs for the Temple, for the congregation. And we used to put skirts on them. We had this wonderful stipend, if you had a bar or bat mitzvah, you and your friends would come to the Temple and pin the skirts, and then we would replace the skirts during my presidency. You didn't have to pin the skirts anymore, they had clips, and you could just clip them on. That was a timesaver. So, on Thursday you and your friends would go down and pin the skirts, on Friday you made the trays. Everybody made their most wonderful desserts, and then put them all out, wrap them with saran wrap, and you put them all out on the tables. Then on Friday night, you had your friends pour. That was, remember? And you had a beautiful Oneg Shabbat. And we did that with all of our friends. And then later on, we got so good, we'd hollow out the watermelon, make it look like a basket, and put all of the fruit in there. That was - Oh, we had the best time. And my aunt and uncle came from Memphis for our son's bar mitzvah, and they said, "This is the most terrific little town, you've got the most wonderful friends. Don't ever leave." And I said, "We don't plan to leave!" People would come from all over the country, and they all said, they'd never seen a community like this. Everyone was so helpful and pitched in. There weren't a lot of caterers back then, so we did it on our own, but it was really fun, and we had a great time.**

**I'm sure young families are still doing it, but it's all done with caterers.**

**Right. But this was all just a labor of love. We didn't know. We thought every community did this. And, let's see what else do I remember? Well, the children went to religious school here. And there were a lot of changes, because we hired a religious school director. And that was the first time we had done that. He raised the bar on education and helped the bar and bat mitzvahs.**

*Do you remember who it was?*

**Yeah, Mr. Cohen. He later went on into business, and his wife was in education. Cookie. She did a lot for B'nai Shalom School. But they were a big asset to us. And, let's see, I'm trying to think. What do I remember about the... Oh, they relaxed the dress code when my kids were in religious school. And that was a big deal. The kids loved it, that they didn't have to dress up anymore. And they liked the Rypins Building, they were really excited about going to religious school there. You just had to drop them off, there wasn't any parking, so nobody stayed. You just dropped them off.**

**Because the churches used the parking.**

There was no place to park around there.

**Prior to the building of the Rypins Building, the congregation was told that we could probably get Florence Street closed. This building is \_\_\_\_\_ (end of side 1)**

**[beginning of side 2] we had one meeting that had a groundswell of people that wanted to move, and we didn't get any, let's just say we didn't get any support from the people that had the big money. So, we backed out of that one. Then we had another group, and they were making another attempt to move when the war broke out in Israel. That's where the money went, to the**

**war effort in Israel. And the ball got dropped when the war was over, basically. And we went so far as, I think we had some plans drawn, that time. But it never happened, because we dropped the ball after the war.**

*When was that?*

**1968 or '72.**

**I do remember that Tommy Sloan stood up and said, on the night that they told us that we weren't moving, he said then, we need to move, we need to leave this property. And he was instrumental in making sure this land was purchased. And he gave the seed money, along with someone else, to be sure that this building was built. And he never lost his vision. He and Linda both. I think it's just wonderful. They are to be commended.**

**Yeah. They fought long and hard.**

I'm trying to remember were there any really other interesting things about – Arnold Task had some really wonderful speakers when we were down on Greene Street. And we've had – I loved to go to sisterhood meetings. I was on the district sisterhood for awhile. I'll tell you what I think the best thing was ever done at our Temple down there. First Presbyterian, Holy Trinity, and Temple Emanuel formed a tri-congregational social action called Fisher Park. The Fisher Park program was a jewel. We all worked for the good of children in need in the Fisher Park area. Because around the congregations there were pockets of really poor kids. There was a breakfast club, because at the time, the government didn't supply breakfast for kids. And a summer camp that I patterned after the one at our country club in Memphis that was fabulous. So, I was in charge of the camp for a number of years, and then I was president of the program. And I think that was a two-year job at the time, if I'm not mistaken, I don't remember now. But I remember one time, the Federation asked for people in the Jewish community to tell them if they had been involved in the community, you know, the general community activity, and there weren't that many of us that were on different boards at that time. That was many years ago. But today I think a lot of people work for the greater community, which is wonderful. The Fisher Park program was unbelievable. The only mistake that we made, was we did not follow with a social worker through the years to see the impact we made on these children. But I know their lives were improved.

*It's still going isn't it?*

No, I'm sorry to say, it fell into -

**Maybe the other two congregations kept it going.**

I don't believe they have.

*I've heard of Fisher Park, so I thought it was still going.*

I'm not sure about that. I would say, probably not. Because we would still be involved in it. The beginning of the end was, the black ministers felt that Fisher Park Tri-congregational Project could help promote their issues in Greensboro. And we met several time with lots of ministers out of the black community, that was Rabbi Task's idea. And I think that they were so disappointed in us, because as a tri-congregational group we did nothing to help them. Their needs were so great, and we were so into

just trying to help the children in our area, and then the whole thing just fell apart after that. We just felt like we were overwhelmed with requests and needs, and it was just enormous. No one could tackle it. I don't think it was long after that – someone told me that someone, I think it was a couple of presidents past me, this woman said, “I'm not going to go to those meetings. I don't have time to do that.” And that was the end of having a sisterhood representative on that board. But that was a magnificent program. One that I am extremely proud to have been involved in, because I think we really made a difference. And our kids participated. They would come to the camp as counselors. And we really, we put them to good use. They worked hard and they did a great job. Adrienne Kriegsman, she and her sister were both counselors at the camp. My kids worked down there several summers and it was wonderful for those kids. We would use First Presbyterian's huge room that was a roller skating rink, and it had a kitchen in it, and bathrooms, and the church gave it to us for the camp. So we would run the camp out of there every summer. And we took them all to Grimsley on a great, big school bus to go swimming 3 times a week. It was fabulous. What an experience! We brought in experts on all kinds of things for those children to learn all kinds of things. It was great. So I think that was really one of the highlights of being in Fisher Park. And as Ken said, unfortunately, as the years went on we had trouble with rabbinic leadership, and we just weren't interested anymore. We even thought about one time, thought maybe we would even join the synagogue. We realized that it was not possible, because our son was getting married, and the girl that he was marrying was non-Jewish, and we felt that she'd be more comfortable at the Temple. So we decided that that was not a good idea for us to join the synagogue. The only reason we even considered joining the synagogue was because we felt like there was nothing really positive happening at the Temple, and we felt like we were out in left field. We wanted to do something. But we stayed at the Temple. Then the years came along when they were talking about we have to move, we have to move, we have to move, and when the building was built, I don't know who asked me – oh, I said I would like to do something for the dedication of the Temple. And so, it ended up that I said, I'll work on the dedication book, and that got me excited again about the Temple. And then, we got onto various committees.

*So when your kids were young, what kinds of things did they do?*

They had a youth group, and they also had a BBG. So they had two different things they could do. They could go to the Temple or they could do statewide activities. Our daughter was president of BBG for a year. She enjoyed that. She went to the National Federation of Temple Youth camp in Warwick, NY. And that was a very exciting time for her, and that was because the Temple said, if anyone wants to go, there was like a scholarship that they gave them if wanted to go to the camp. And she said that she'd like to try it, so she had a wonderful summer there. Then she went to Israel with the National Federation of Temple Youth, and that was a wonderful experience for her. And the kids were involved with their friends bar and bat mitzvahs, that type of thing. We had through the sisterhood, you could take ballroom dancing from a woman here named Mabel Hiatt. And they did that in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade. They went out on Sunday night and learned ballroom dancing. That was something through the sisterhood. They had plays at the Temple, but I don't remember them participating in plays. I think they had things like that for them. I think that was really about it. I think my daughter at one time thought that she might like to go down and be a TEPS helper, and they didn't want to pay her very much, so instead she took a job here instead of going to TEPS. But I think Fisher Park program in the summer. She'd be home for awhile, and she'd go down there and help for a week or so. I can't remember how many weeks we ran it, but I think it was 4 weeks we ran the camp. It was a lot of work to get that together. But at least we didn't have to worry about getting a facility, because the church would give us a great big roller rink. So, I think that was over two weeks, they would go down there and help with the camp. I guess it's in the archives, all that stuff has got to be there, but I don't even know where to locate that. I think that was about it as far as being Jewish here in the summer. And the

kids at the synagogue here too, she had a lot of friends because of BBG. The kids at the synagogue went too, so that was kind of nice. A little different than when you all were -

**Mmm-hmm.**

I always wondered why we didn't have a JCC. I always wondered that, couldn't understand it. Why Winston and High Point couldn't get together and somewhere in the middle -

**Competition between the cities and the congregations, that's the bottom line. That's all it is.**

I don't know, it just doesn't make any sense, because in my mind, if you globally think about it, put it somewhere where everyone can get to it, and it could have been a wonderful place for everyone to come and it just never happened. You have to join a country club here if you want that kind of life with the pools and – because communities around here didn't have pools. My daughter lives in a place where the pool's around the corner and even in Indianapolis, the pool's five minutes away. We just don't have that here. There wasn't a lot of socialization in that way unless you belong to the country club. But still today we don't have a JCC. I don't know if we ever will. I know in Charlotte the Jewish community supports it and enjoys it.

**They have a complex, Shalom Park. All the congregations are on one campus. They don't have a JCC, but they have a country club. They don't have golf, but they have everything but that, I think. I don't ever remember a golf course. But they didn't call it a JCC, they chose to call it Sharon Amnity Country Club. Or Amity Club, it's on Sharon Amity.**

I had a lot of wonderful mentors, though. There were women in this town, they were brilliant. They were always ready to share their skills and knowledge with young people. They were just wonderful to us.