RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

NEW BRUNSWICK

AN INTERVIEW WITH PEARL DRELICH

FOR THE

RUTGERS ORAL HISTORY ARCHIVES

WORLD WAR II * KOREAN WAR * VIETNAM WAR * COLD WAR

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TRANSCRIPT BY

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Shaun Illingworth: This begins an interview with Pearl Drelich on January 30th, 2012 in Voorhees, New Jersey with Shaun Illingworth. Thank you very much for having me here today.

Pearl Drelich: You're welcome.

SI: To begin, could you tell me where and when you were born?

PD: I was born in Mansfield, Massachusetts, December 4th, 1924. … At that time it was a very small community, about five thousand people, but now I understand it's gotten much larger.

SI: For people who are reading this who are not familiar with the area, how close is it in relation to Boston or other major cities?

PD: It's commuting distance, about twenty-five to thirty minutes by train and it's almost the same distance to Providence. It's situated in between Boston and Providence.

SI: For the record, could you tell me what your parents' names were?

PD: My father was Ezra Syat and my mother was Goldie Syat and they were immigrants from Lithuania. I'm first generation and I'm the youngest of five children.

SI: Beginning with your father's side of the family, do you know anything about the family background, how the family came to this country, or what prompted them?

PD: Well, my father came over running away from the Russian Army. He was forcefully inducted into the Army, but he escaped and came to the United States. He was very fortunate because he was able to bring over two brothers. The rest of his family remained in Europe and they died in the Holocaust. And my mother came over after my father earned enough money working as a tailor in the Lower Eastside to bring her over. She came over with her mother about two or three years later and they settled in Mansfield, Massachusetts. He opened up an old tailor shop there and that's where they lived for many years, and that's where I grew up.

SI: Do you have any idea where your parents grew up in Lithuania?

PD: They grew up in a suburb of Vilne [Vilnuis] which is a very large city in Lithuania. … The suburb was a tiny village but the people there were all killed during the war.

SI: Had your parents known each other before coming to the United States?

PD: Yes, they were married.

SI: Did either of them ever share any details about what everyday life was like in Lithuania before they came to the United States?

PD: Yes, life was very difficult because as a tailor you don't make much money. My mother's father was a blacksmith for the Russian army and he died, so she and my grandmother had to survive by any means that they could. … When my parents married, my father came over, worked in the Lower Eastside in the sweatshops, the typical story of the immigrants at that time. … He earned enough money to bring her over with my mother's mother and they settled in Mansfield because my father had friends who had settled there. His friends had lived in Boston and they decided to move to this little town thinking they could make a better living there. The town needed a tailor so they told my father to come and settle there. … That's how it all came about.

SI: Did they have all their children here or had some of your older siblings come over with them?

PD: There was a child who was born in Europe, but had died before my mother immigrated. She then had five of us who were born in Mansfield.

SI: Were there any details about the voyage itself, what was it like traveling that distance at that time?

PD: [laughter] My father, of course, came over in steerage, which is the worst possible way. He said it was stormy weather and he was terribly seasick. He said he came over with some food, and one of the foods that he had was a herring which he ate, and all he had left was the bone by the time they got to New York, but he just would suck on that bone for the salt content to keep him going. When he got to the United States he found relatives that he was supposed to go to, and they established a little spot for him to sleep and he found a job in the Lower Eastside. It was a hard beginning. My mother came over in steerage. But it was not as bad as my father because he had paid a little more for her to come over.

SI: You were the youngest of five children. Can you tell me a little bit about your older siblings?

PD: … George was thirteen years older than myself and he grew up first generation and sort of made a pathway for me through the American way of life because my mother was an old-fashioned Jewish woman and she did not want me to do certain things that other girls my age would do because she was not familiar with the customs here. My brother sort of eased my way through my teenage years; he was my protective guardian. My sister is twelve years older than I am, she's ninety-nine now. I had a brother who died at the age of twenty-five of Hodgkin's disease, and I have another brother who just turned ninety. So, the three of us are left of five children. … My brother is up in Needham and my sister is in Connecticut.

SI: Tell me about some of your earliest memories of growing up in Mansfield.

PD: It was a very--how can I say it--easy way to grow up. We didn't have the problems you have today; you could go out at ten o'clock at night and leave your door unlocked. It was just a very comfortable way of growing up. There was no sense of danger. You played games on the

street, everyone knew everyone, and it was a just a very friendly town. As a child, you didn't dare get into trouble because other people would tell your parents you did such and such a thing--everyone knew everyone. So you more or less were on your best behavior the whole time. … I stayed there until I graduated from high school, and then I went down to Connecticut to work and I stayed with my sister. She was married at the time, so I lived with her for a while. I worked for Travelers Insurance. Then, the war broke out, and that's when my journey started into the service.

SI: I want to ask a few more questions before we get into the service. First, would you describe the neighborhood that you grew up in as a melting pot or was it more of a Jewish enclave?

PD: No, there were only seven Jewish families in Mansfield. I did not grow up in a Jewish atmosphere at all. It was very New England, if you know what I mean by New England, and it was not the typical upbringing for a Jewish person. I did not have the Hebrew schooling. I didn't learn too much except from my mother but we still kept our Jewish faith the whole time, there's no question about that. … School was very easy, and the classes were small. But the town itself was divided in many ways. It was a center for the railroad at that time, and there were a lot of Italian immigrants, and Irish immigrants, and then were the typical Americans. The tracks sort of divided the town north and south. The Italians lived in the northern section and the others lived in the southern section. So it was divided in that way. At school we mingled, but after school we parted ways. There was very little socializing once we were out of school. I don't know if that's typical of all little towns or not. …

SI: The neighborhood that you grew up in, was it predominantly Italian or Irish?

PD: No, I was in a mixed neighborhood. I had Irish neighbors and Protestant neighbors. We were not in what you would call the wealthy section, we were just on the border of the Italian section and the Protestant section but it was just, I think very different from most lives that other Jewish people have lived.

SI: You mentioned that your mother really tried to carry on the faith and traditions.

PD: She did.

SI: What kind of traditions would you say were carried on in your household?

PD: She kept a strictly Orthodox Jewish home. She observed the Sabbath, she observed the dietary laws, and all the holidays. I did not go to school on Jewish holidays. So that was a problem sometimes because I would miss out on tests and I couldn't make them up because they said people did not believe that that was a legal holiday. So there was a little tension there at times, but my mother took care of that. She said this is my holiday and I have every right to have my children observe the holiday. So the teachers knew and they stopped trying to make it difficult. … Looking back I liked the way I grew up because you got to know your people. You learned certain values. I had a one on one relationship with everyone in town. You weren't out for yourself or trying to put something over on the next person because you knew you couldn't

do that. Whereas in a large city, it's very easy to get lost and feel, okay, I don't have to worry about the next person, I'm taking care of myself, but there in Mansfield everyone took care of each other. It was a poor time. It was during the Depression and my father's business was not a money-making business, but … we had our own home. And every time my mother heard of someone who didn't have any food or money, she would go out and collect from different people and made sure that they had something. That was what I learned from her. You always give to someone who doesn't have. Even if she didn't have much, she made sure someone else would have something. She'd bake bread on a Friday and she'd send bread over to them, my father had a garden in the summertime and she'd take big bags of fruits or fresh vegetables and bring them over, and that was part of our tradition: to give to someone who has less. She taught that to me, and I carry that through. The whole town was taking care of each other in that way.

SI: One thing I have heard from others who lived through the Great Depression--particularly in towns associated with the railroad--was transients and hobos would come through. Do you remember that at all?

PD: No, I don't remember seeing hobos. But if there was a traveling businessman who was Jewish, and he stopped at my father's store, my father would send him to my mother for a meal. She didn't care who was who in town. If they needed something, she provided as much as she could. She saw that they got something. So, it was a different way of being brought up, and I'm happy I had that background.

SI: Could you see ways that the Great Depression affected your family?

PD: It was hand to mouth, you know. I had what I needed for school. If my shoes got worn out, they were re-soled. I got one pair of shoes a year but, whatever I needed I had. It may not have been new all the time but I never felt that I lacked for anything. There was always food on the table. We had a warm house, we had our own home, so in a way the Depression did not affect me personally. At least, I didn't feel that I was missing out on anything. There were a lot of other people in the same situation, but at least I knew I had food on the table every day. On Thursdays, the city would have a handout at city hall, and people would go there for bags of food, and I remember the shame on their faces when they were going down town with that bag because everyone knew that they were getting a free handout. It was very, very hard on them. You just felt sorry for everyone who didn't have the means to earn money. … It was a good town to grow up in.

SI: Did your older siblings have to go out and get jobs to contribute to the household during this time?

PD: I don't remember them going out getting jobs as teenagers in high school, no. If they did earn money on a paper route it was for themselves so they would have something. … There was never a need for them to work and not go to school. School was very important to my mother, education was very important so that we all went. I baby sat for change like most teenagers did; it was the usual. I didn't feel that real pinch that a lot of people did. I knew that I didn't have fancy clothes but that didn't matter, I had what I needed when I needed it and it was provided for.

SI: Since there only seven Jewish families in the town, was there a synagogue in the town or you had to go somewhere else?

PD: No, there was no synagogue in town. For the holidays we'd go into Boston, my father's brother was there, so we'd go there. … Twice a year we went there for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur and the other holidays. I didn't have a chance to go in but my mother observed the holidays in the home, so I knew that they were special days and we had the usual foods that we have on holidays. She always made sure we had the right dinners. In Boston, my aunt did the cooking, so it was a good time. I can't say I had a bad childhood, I didn't.

SI: Did your parents speak any other language besides English in the home?

PD: They spoke Yiddish, naturally, that was their mother tongue. They also spoke Russian and they spoke Polish, but basically my mother would speak to me in Yiddish because she wanted me to learn the language. Then she would say, "You speak English to me," so she could learn English. My father, of course, only spoke English in business, but when he was home would they converse in Yiddish because it was quicker for them to speak that language. But basically English and Yiddish were spoken at home.

SI: You grew up knowing Yiddish?

PD: Yes, I understand it but I don't speak it well.

SI: Was your family involved in any kind of community activities?

PD: Not in town. My father did not get involved in anything. He joined the Knights of Pythias but I don't understand that organization, I don't know what they did, but he was a member. … My mother was active in Jewish organizations, but they were held in Sharon which is a nearby town. She kept busy that way.

SI: Tell me a little bit about your education in Mansfield.

PD: Well, I went through high school. My father could not afford college, plus he had the old European idea that all women had to do was get married and have a family. So, my education was not that important to him, but it was important to my mother. My oldest brother, George, was extremely bright and there was a high school teacher that insisted that he go to college. He did go to Brown University. He's the only one who had a college education. My brother who died at a young age worked for the railroad as a baggage handler. My other brother who is living in Boston went into the Army instead of college because we were at that age when the war broke out. And as I said, I did not go to college; I went to work, and that's where it leads up to my joining the Navy.

SI: In your elementary school years and high school years, would you say that you had good schools and good teachers? What were your favorite subjects, that sort of thing?

PD: It's hard to say whether they were good teachers, you know, I didn't have anything to compare them to. I was just completely familiar and comfortable in what I was doing. I wasn't looking to go to college so I knew I didn't have to look at anything very special. But there are some teachers that I liked very much and some that I didn't. I … graduated without any problem. … I knew that there was no college in the future for me, so I took what they called commercial courses, being prepared to work in an office of some kind. But as far as the quality of the schools, I really couldn't judge. I think they were average for the schools in those days. They didn't have anything really special, they didn't have special courses, you know, it was the just the typical school at that time. Being a small town they didn't expect much, I think, from the students. The parents and the teachers didn't push the students. They were just happy to get them through the class. That's about all I can say about the high school.

SI: Growing up, as you got into your teenage years, what did you do for fun and entertainment? Were you involved in any extracurricular activities in school?

PD: No, I was not allowed. My mother did not want me socializing because she did not want me to become integrated into that society. So, I was more or less solitary in many ways. I did a lot of reading. I had a few friends but I could not join any school activities, so it was more or less a quiet life that I lived. But I don't regret it, I liked it.

SI: You mentioned earlier that there was some kind of relief for people who were suffering during the Great Depression in your town. Did you see other examples of government aid, like any New Deal programs being put into place in the area?

PD: Like the WPA or something? No, at that time I didn't see it. It was a very small town, so there was nothing there for the WPA to do. There was no need for roadwork or anything like that. I think what happened was some of the children of the immigrants would join, go and find work where there was WPA work, but they didn't bring anything into the town that I remember.

SI: Did your family ever discuss politics? Do you know how they felt about Franklin D. Roosevelt?

PD: Oh, my mother was an avid fan of his. We had his picture on the kitchen wall. Not that we discussed it, but she felt that he was the best President.

SI: Growing up, were you aware at all of the Zionist movement? Was that ever discussed at home?

PD: No, at that time Israel wasn't even in existence, we weren't talking about it. No, there was not anything in that sense of the word.

SI: None of the blue boxes were around?

PD: That had nothing to do with Israel. That was just a charity box and my mother every Friday after lighting the candles or before lighting the candles, she puts the money in. That was strictly charity, had nothing to do with Israel.

SI: As the 1930s progressed and the war broke out in Europe in 1939, were you aware of what was happening around the world?

PD: Yes, I was aware of it but I never felt that was going to touch us in anyway. I thought it was a terrible thing the way it happened, but as a teenager, I wasn't thinking it would impact me. I said it's an awful thing it's not going to happen to us, we're over here, nothing is going to happen because we have the ocean between us, that was the general feeling I think for a lot of people. They knew things were happening in Europe, but they didn't know to what extent it was happening.

SI: In New Jersey, I know the German American Bund was very prominent.

PD: I was aware of that, we read about that, yes.

SI: Were there any chapters in Mansfield where you lived?

PD: In Mansfield, no. [laughter] No, there weren't any Germans where I lived. … There was one German farmer and my parents were very friendly with him. There was nothing like that at that time in Mansfield. The anti-Semitism was there, but it was very low key. It wasn't Hitler's anti-Semitism, it was a church driven anti-Semitism, but it didn't really affect the town. You know there were comments, but you would just brush them off. I have to tell you a very interesting story about the church. When my father came over, he couldn't speak English that well, in fact practically nil, but Mansfield was an English speaking town. … The church father sent two of his parishioners, young boys, over to teach him how to speak English. They thought they were being very smart and they taught him swear words. While the boys were there, a woman came in to the shop and she told my father what she wanted, so the boys told him how to respond, but instead of saying thank you he responded with a swear word. … She went back to the priest and well, those two boys were on their knees for a long time. They never did that again. But that was the kind of, you know, thing that went on. … We had a very good rapport with the Catholic priest and when … my brother was dying, they had a mass for him. They asked permission to do it, and my mother said, "Yes, any prayer is good." So it was not a vicious anti-Semitism, it was just the young people were just sort of getting it out of their system, but otherwise as I said I enjoyed growing up in town.

SI: When did you graduate high school?

PD: 1942.

SI: The war had already gone on for a few months.

PD: About a year.

SI: Can you tell me where you were when Pearl Harbor was attacked?

PD: When I first heard it? I was sitting at my dining room table doing my homework with the radio on and that announcement came over. The next day we went to school and President Roosevelt came on at the assembly and gave his famous speech and that was the beginning of the end for a lot of my fellow students because as soon as they graduated, they enlisted, and some of them didn't come home.

SI: Had you known anybody who had gone into the service before then, who had been drafted or enlisted?

PD: No, these students were not drafted, they volunteered. I don't know anyone who was drafted because at that time it seemed everyone was running to volunteer. I think the draft came in a little bit later. I know as soon as the war broke out and we were involved, everyone just joined. It was very different atmosphere than what we have now with all these different wars. Patriotism was running very high, and there's a story … that I want to tell you. … During the war, my brother was dying. My oldest brother enlisted in the Army and he wanted to fly but couldn't, he was color blind. So he went in as an aide to a general, he was a lieutenant. My third brother, the youngest one was waiting to be drafted. His name came up, and there was a family in town, an Irish family who went down to the draft board and said, "You're not taking Lou, my son is taking his place." Because they knew my parents already had one son in the service and another who was dying. So, they filled Lou's spot. And fortunately that son came back from the war and my brother came back from the war. But that's why I say, it was a very good town: to have someone volunteer to take another person's place because that family is having a tragedy occurring, that was an example of living in a close-knit town. If that was a city, it would not have happened.

SI: When the announcement was made about Pearl Harbor, was there any initial fear or panic in your family or community?

PD: It was shock. We just couldn't believe it. I don't think we even comprehended what happened. We couldn't understand what happened and how it would be handled. So it was just a matter of letting events take its place.

SI: How quickly did you start to see changes on the Home Front, rationing, that sort of thing?

PD: I think about a year later. It started with the stamps and rationing. I don't know how my mother managed, but she did. We always had food, we had enough meat, we had enough sugar for things that we needed, but it was done very carefully. She was very careful, she was a good manager. … It didn't really affect our table in any way.

SI: It sounds like you were already growing a garden, whereas most people did not before the war.

PD: Yes, my father had a very large garden. He grew everything, potatoes to corn to every vegetable--even raspberries. … There was always food and then you could can it for the winter so there was always something. Meat was a little hard to get, but you learn to do without it, you know. In fact, I wish they didn't have as much meat here sometimes. [laughter]

SI: Were there any civil defense activities in the area?

PD: Yes, we had the blackouts and I went to the Red Cross and learned how to roll bandages, the usual little things that had to be done. I don't remember anyone patrolling the streets telling you to pull the blinds down, but we did pull the blinds down.

SI: Did you just go by yourself to the Red Cross or did you go with friends or schoolmates?

PD: There were a few schoolmates that went but it was the thing I felt I could do. … That was about the extent of working for the war effort in Mansfield at that time.

SI: You said once you graduated in 1942, you went to Connecticut to live with your sister.

PD: About a year later. I worked in between and then I went to work for Travelers Insurance in Hartford and I stayed there until--when did I enlist? …

SI: I think you said 1945.

PD: Something like that, yes. I had to wait until I was twenty, they wouldn't take me until I was twenty years old. … I had to have permission from my parents and they did not want to give it to me. There again my brother George intervened for me. He said it would be good for me if I joined the Navy. So they signed reluctantly and that's how I got in. It was a very good thing, it was a time in my life I felt I was doing something and it was a feeling that I had accomplished something.

SI: When did you first start to learn about programs to bring women into the military?

PD: I don't remember when but I read about them and I thought that's interesting, but I didn't exactly know what it was all about. There was not that much information. But then as the war progressed, you saw more and more women in uniform and you saw what they were doing. And the Navy became a little more prominent, so, I said, "That's one branch I would like to join." I worked at it for a year, I started at nineteen going down to the recruiting office. They said, "You can't come until you're twenty." So the day I turned twenty, I was down there, and then a few months later, I was accepted into the Navy.

SI: Between the time you graduated and the time you went to Hartford to work for Travelers Insurance, where did you work in between?

PD: Well for a short time I worked in Attleboro at a well-known jewelry factory that did class rings and things like that. I did clerical work. Then, I worked for New England Transportation

in Boston. That was a big company. I worked there for a short time, and then I went to Hartford and I got a job at Travelers. I went to live with my sister because there was more of a social life available for me in Hartford, so I went there.

SI: It must have been different being on your own with your sister after living in a traditional household.

PD: I wasn't really on my own. I was living with my sister who ran a traditional home and I was still with family. I was not independent, I was still with family, still living under the usual traditional regulations and rules. So, the big change was from small town to a larger city. I made friends in the Jewish community so it made it easier to have a social life.

SI: Did these friends also work at Travelers?

PD: Yes, I met them at Travelers and, you know, it became a different lifestyle for me which was a good move.

SI: What sort of things would you do for fun?

PD: Well, we weren't dating anyone at that time so we'd go to a movie, or we'd go to the park for a picnic, you know, just the general things that you would do as single girls. For one thing, there weren't that many males around, they were off to the war, so there was hardly anything that you do socially with boys.

SI: Did you ever go to a USO?

PD: No, there wasn't one in Hartford that I knew of. We didn't do that.

SI: What was your work at Travelers like?

PD: Boring. [laughter] I was a typist and did a lot of typing and filing, the usual clerical work, because that's all I knew. I hadn't been trained for anything else, and that was all that was available at the time. People were going off to war and things were sort of, I don't know, not flowing the way things would normally flow in peace time. You took what you got.

SI: You mentioned that the Navy stood out more from the other services in terms of recruiting women. Was there a specific reason for that?

PD: I don't know. My brother insisted that the Navy was the best branch of the service. He felt that was the more respectable branch. I leaned towards the Navy to begin with because I would have loved to have gone overseas. But they didn't take people overseas at that time. I was stationed here on the West Coast.

SI: Were you corresponding with your brothers in the service often or did you get a chance to visit them?

PD: I visited my oldest brother. He was living in Chattanooga, but he was stationed at Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia, which was commuting distance. I visited him when he was expecting a second child and he needed someone to help with his first child. I got leave and went from my base in Seattle to Tennessee. My other brother was sent over to Burma, so there was no way I could visit him at all. When I got off the train to see my brother, I knew I was supposed to salute an officer. I said, "He's my brother, do I give him a hug or do I salute him?" I gave him a hug, that was it. It was a very interesting time in my life. It was a good time in a way. It was a very rewarding time.

SI: In Hartford, was there a more pronounced civil defense system or were there more war activities in Hartford?

PD: I wasn't aware of any. I sort of lived in my own little world, working at Travelers and socializing. From what I could see, they were carrying on as normal as possible. By the time I was going into the service, the war was beginning to gel a little bit, it wasn't quite as bad. … They had the D-Day invasion [June 6, 1944], they had all these different surges over there. We were fighting battles with Japan, but we seemed to be holding our own. So we didn't seem to have that feeling of tremendous urgency or fear that things were going to happen here in the States.

SI: Tell me a little bit about the process of getting accepted. Did you have to go for a physical?

PD: Yes. We had to go down to New York. Once I was sworn in, I went to New York for a physical. Then, after the physical, I went back to Hartford until I was called to active duty. It wasn't very long after the physical that I was called. … Then I was sent down to Hunter College, I took my basic training there, and they tested everyone as to what they wanted to do, if they could get into that particular section of service. I wanted the medical corps and I passed the test, so I went down to Bethesda, Maryland, and took my medical corps training there for about two months. When I finished that, I was sent out to Oregon. There was a little base there in Astoria. The base was really more of a temporary one, it wasn't one of these big huge bases. They were taking returning veterans from Iwo Jima and Tarawa coming back to the United States. From there, they would go to hospitals near their homes. … So, it was sort of a holding pattern for some of these returning veterans, plus they took care of regular medical needs for the different bases. … I was on the orthopedic ward. Most of the veterans were in casts, some were in full body casts, some were in partial body casts, and they were young. They were young Marines, about twenty, nineteen years old, but what amazed me was their spirit. They were in good spirits and they loved to joke around. They weren't saying "poor me," it was not that attitude. They were happy to be alive and going home, and they still had that Marine attitude. They loved taking advantage of females if they could but it was a good time. They felt very welcomed back, and everyone was taking very good care of them, and they didn't act as if they were badly wounded. If there were two of them on gurneys, they'd have races down the corridor. They were just trying to be as active as possible. So, I stayed there for a few months, and then I was transferred up to Bremerton, Washington, and I was in the dispensary there. I did clerical work

and lab work and that's where I was stationed until I was discharged. I came out pharmacist mate third class. I went up the rank a little bit.

SI: Had you been interested in going into the medical corps or medicine in general before you entered the WAVES?

PD: Yes. I had always wanted to be a nurse, but my father said, "No, it was not a dignified profession for a girl because you had to handle men." You know, he was a typical European. "Women should be segregated." So, I got my wish in the end, I went into medical corps and I was very happy there, and I felt I did what I wanted to in the end.

SI: Tell me a little bit about the training at Hunter College. What was that like?

PD: It was typical boot camp training, I guess. You marched in formation, you went to classes, you did KP duty, you did everything that you would do in a normal camp but we were at a college campus. They took over some buildings that had apartments and we were based in those rather than barracks. And then they took over the college campus for classes. It was a different lifestyle for me being introduced to foods I was not familiar with, and doing scrub work which I was not used to doing, and just in general working under orders doing things that I would not normally do.

SI: Some people get in the military and find that they do not like taking orders. Did you adjust well or did you have a problem with it?

PD: I had no problem with it because the orders came from an authority figure and my mother always said, "An authority figure, you obey, you don't question because if there's a policeman, he tells you to do something, you do it because he's in charge." So, I was so ready for accepting that. Sometimes I didn't like it, but I accepted it. Everyone had a place in the rotation of doing scut work, so I wasn't being picked on. I wasn't used to it, but I did it.

SI: What kind of classes did they have?

PD: You had to take different tests, to see how well you did in reading, comprehension, if you had manipulative capability, if you were good with your hands or with math. Then they could decide where you would be placed. I happened to do well in reading, taking in what I read quickly and applying it, and I wanted the medical course. They said, "Alright, you can go there," and that's what happened.

SI: How long was the training at Hunter College?

PD: It was eight-week training. There was one course I did want, but I failed. I thought I'd like trying airplane mechanics. They put me in one of these tester pilot things to see if you could fly it. I failed it completely. I was flying upside down thinking I was flying straight, you know, so I was not good at that. But I got my medical corps, which I wanted.

SI: Who were your drill instructors?

PD: They were all women, there were no males, and I don't remember names because that's so long ago.

SI: In general, what were your impressions on them?

PD: Some I thought were good, some I didn't care for. Some sort of took their badges as if they were very special, but they were just like everyone else. Some were very nice, some were trying to be just too superior at times, but on the whole I got along with them.

SI: What kind of things would they have you do? Would they yell at you and get in your face like in the movies?

PD: Not like that, no.

SI: How strict would they be?

PD: No, they were not like that. It was just drilling is formation, and then Saturday was the formal parade formation, and in a way it was fun. But we would get up. We'd take our morning classes, then the afternoon was spent drilling, and then we had free time. It was not bad. You had to take care of your apartment, and they'd come in and inspect the apartment. Everything had to be lined just so, and then white glove inspection, you know, the usual military things that they did. It was a challenge sometimes to get everything done in time, to make sure that you had a shower, got the bathroom dry before they came in, so that everything was in place. There were six of us in a two-bedroom apartment with one bathroom and it was hard to get in and out, on time for the morning drill, but we did it, we managed.

SI: Were the women in your training unit from the Northeast or from other places?

PD: They were from all over. … I met people from the Midwest, I met people from the South, they were just, you know, from all over.

SI: What was that like meeting these people from all over and getting to know their different backgrounds and points of view?

PD: It took a while to get used to them because their upbringing was so different from mine that sometimes it seemed sort of foreign. They were so loose with their thoughts, which was not my style, and their language was not my language sometimes. Some were farm girls so they lived a different lifestyle than I did. … You got to know them. I made friends with a few of them, and we remain friends. There was this one girl that I was with from boot camp all the way through to Bremerton. The others were sort of fluid, in and out, depending on where I was stationed. I met other people and they became friends, but then when you move on and you sort of lost track because they weren't close. But this one girl and I were very close. We were together the whole time.

SI: You said on your sheet that your enlistment date was May 31, 1945.

PD: It was right after VE Day [May 8, 1945] had been declared, and VJ Day was declared in August when I was in the medical corps in Bethesda, Maryland. … The war was basically over when I was doing my active duty, but the veterans were coming back and they still needed people to staff the hospitals. But the war was over so there wasn't that intensity that they had before.

SI: I wanted to ask if you had any memories of those days, VE Day before you went into the service and then VJ Day when you were down in Bethesda.

PD: VE Day was declared before I was sworn in. So I was very happy about that. On VJ Day, very early in the morning, we heard car horns and yelling. Civilians were coming on to the base saying, "The war is over, the war is over," and we just couldn't understand right away. It was jubilation, that's all I can say. But then we felt, you know, sad that all this had happened. You would see these wounded veterans at Bethesda, the burn veterans, the other amputees, and you realize how horrible the war was to those who were in it, but we weren't touched by the actual going into the war zone. We saw the after effects.

SI: You went right from Hunter to Bethesda for your training.

PD: Yes.

SI: Did you get any leave time in between?

PD: Well, they gave us, yes, the usual leave, a week or two. And then when I was being transferred from Bethesda to Astoria, I had another leave, which was the last leave I had where I could visit my parents. Once I was on the West Coast, it was too hard to come back to Mansfield. Otherwise, I didn't have any contact.

SI: How did your family react to your coming back in uniform?

PD: Well, my mother was very happy needless to say. My brother was discharged at the same time and my oldest brother had been discharged, so I was the last one to come home. My mother said, "Come home, you can get out." I wanted to stay in, but she said, "No, you don't have to stay in, your two brothers are home, I want you home," and so I asked for my discharge and I came home. Actually, I wouldn't have minded being a service person, having a career in the Navy, it was good, but my mother said come home, so I did.

SI: What did your medical training at Bethesda consist of? What was the focus of it? Was it general, like the type of thing a corpsman would get?

PD: Licensed practical nursing, giving injections, treating wounds. You couldn't give them narcotics, but bed care, anything that had to be done in the hospital ward, you did. It's what an LPN would do today.

SI: How long were you at Bethesda doing this training for?

PD: Two months and then I was in Astoria maybe three months, I don't remember, but then I was transferred up to Bremerton, I stayed there the rest of the time.

SI: When you were at Bethesda, did they have you training directly on wards or was it in the classroom?

PD: Classroom. We did not handle any patients. We practiced on each other if we had to give an injection. … You didn't really give the injection to your classmate--for that we'd use an orange or a grapefruit--but we'd use each other to learn how to pinch, and how to draw blood. So that we were taught that, and it was worthwhile doing, it was interesting. It was a little difficult for me at times because I had never had chemistry in high school, so that was a struggle, but I got through it, and the other classes were a breeze.

SI: You said you saw some of these returning veterans at Bethesda. Would they take you around to show you things?

PD: Well, you'd go through a ward or … just walking through the hospital sometimes you would see them, and they didn't take us in deliberately but, you know, it was just in the course of where we had to go, we would see the veterans, and it was heart-wrenching sometimes but that was a result of the war.

SI: Had you anything prior preparing you for that type of experience?

PD: Well, only on the newsreel but you didn't see the actual veterans that were badly wounded up close. If you saw them in the newsreel they were being carried off in a stretcher but you did see the actual physical nature of the wound--whereas this way you actually saw the wounds. …

SI: That did not affect your willingness to be in the medical corps?

PD: No.

SI: Did it have any effect on you?

PD: Not at all. You just knew that you're in the right place to help.

SI: When you went to Astoria, you said you were only there for a short time.

PD: About two months.

SI: Was that for training?

PD: No, that's when I was on the ward working with the returning veterans. I was on the orthopedic ward. That basically was just bathing them, changing the bed, and seeing that they got their food, and taking them out. If they were in a wheelchair you'd take them out, you know, for a few hours, or just get them outside. It was just working as a normal nursing person would do, just keeping them comfortable.

SI: How many patients would you have under your care at any given time?

PD: I think, there may have been eight beds on the ward, four and four on each side, and there were usually two corpsmen to take care of the ward because some of the veterans had to have two corpsmen to lift them with the cast and if they needed a bedpan, they would not let me handle them because I was not big enough so they'd get the corpsman from across the hall, if a male corpsman was on duty they would take care of it, but they were very careful not to strain us if we couldn't do it, but we did what we could.

SI: How many hours would you typically work in a given shift?

PD: It's a typical eight hour shift, the way you would in a normal hospital shift, and sometimes you're on the day shift or sometimes they shift you to the night shift, you never knew when you woke up and you looked at the roster board to see what you were going to be doing. It was a typical hospital, the same as any hospital.

SI: Did you have much interaction with officers?

PD: No, you cannot interact with officers, there was no socializing, none at all.

SI: In your everyday day activities, would they be telling you what to do or did you just know what you had to go and carry out your tasks?

PD: Well, on the ward, you knew what you had to do, that was what you learned at Bethesda, that a typical day on the ward is you take your temperature, you bathe them a certain time, every day. … It was done according to rule. You knew automatically what you were going to do every day. It was a set pattern. If anyone needed an injection of narcotics or something you couldn't do, you got the head nurse to do that, but very few of them needed narcotics. So, it was just a matter of handing them an aspirin or if they have a headache or something, that was about it. It was just day care, and as I said they were very good in spirits, they loved to tease a lot. So, it was fun. It wasn't a sad thing.

SI: It was not a situation where you would lose people.

PD: No, no, these were all stable, they were all going home. We were not in that situation and that's why I say it was not a sad place to be. It was sad to see them, but they did not feel bad for

themselves. They were going home, they survived, they probably felt very lucky compared to some of the other things that they had seen.

SI: You are dealing with mostly physical wounds but did you see any evidence of mental wounds or post-traumatic stress?

PD: No, not where I was. No, as I said, they were all in good spirits, so that I never saw anyone complaining, "Poor me," or, "Why me," never.

SI: How well did you get to know these men? Would you learn about their backgrounds and where they were from?

PD: I knew where they were from, and these were kids out of high school. They were not ones who had college education, they were not the upper-middle class kind of people, they were the, what we would call "grunts," you know, the lower, children of immigrant families, they were not what you'd call college educated. … They were very happy to be home. Whether they went on to college afterwards, I don't know. … I did happen to see one in Chicago, he was on the other side of the street and I couldn't get to him but I recognized him, I was in Chicago … for some reason visiting and I recognized him and he was walking beautifully as if he had never had a cast on him. So he had recovered completely and I wish I had been able to speak to him but I couldn't get across the street. So, that was the only one I saw after getting out of the service.

SI: When you were not on duty, what would you and your fellow WAVES do for fun?

PD: Well, we'd sit around and talk because otherwise if we had leave we'd go in to Astoria or we'd go in to another beach area just to, you know, tourist around, see what it was like but you couldn't leave base unless you had leave. So you just, whatever entertainment they had there, a movie, whatever you go to a movie, or you just sit in the barracks and have a coffee … or whatever, you know, just socialize, and it was like a family. It became a family.

SI: At any point, did you ever have any interaction with African-American WAVES?

PD: There was one WAVE in Bethesda, Maryland, and I didn't have too much interaction with her. I think she sort of stayed more or less to herself. I didn't see her socializing too much.

SI: Was she in the same training program?

PD: No, I saw her when I got to Bethesda, she wasn't at Hunter College but she was in Bethesda and I spoke a few words to her and that's about it, she just was not social.

SI: Was she training for the medical corps?

PD: … She was in the medical corps. … We met in the laundry room, that was the only time I had seen her. That was the only one I saw. There were African-American males, but they weren't in the medical corps as far as I know, they were segregated. … I know that when we

went to the movies, they were not allowed to sit with us. They had to sit upstairs in another section because at that time they were still segregating African-Americans.

SI: That was in Bethesda?

PD: That was in, no in Bethesda, I didn't see them, this was up in Bremerton, Washington. It was a large base so they had a lot of African-Americans but what they were doing there, I don't know but in Bethesda they, what I saw there were the chefs, they were the chefs in the kitchen. They were African-Americans but enlisted men were segregated, I did not see them. I guess they stayed to themselves on the base but I know when they went to the movies they were upstairs and that I found very distasteful. … I guess after a while they started integrating them but not while I was there.

SI: Tell me a little bit about your duty station in Bremerton. You said you were in the dispensary.

PD: In the dispensary, I did clerical work and then I also drew blood because I had been trained to do that. Basically that's what I did, either blood work or clerical work or whatever was needed at the time. The dispensary was an overall in-gathering for information for the base, and when sailors would come in off leave, they would have to have their blood tests taken, it was automatic to see if they came back with anything, and if they came back from overseas, they had to have their blood tests taken and I have to tell you a story that I tell everyone. There was a Marine who was returning from the South Pacific and he had all his blood tests taken and I was on duty, I came with my needle, my syringe, he took one look at that, and collapsed on the floor, just fainted dead away. We got him on the chair and I got his blood but he just, the needle after being in a war zone, that needle made him faint. It was the strangest thing, I just couldn't get over that but I guess men are afraid of needles no matter what. They're not afraid of gunshots but needles they're afraid of. But we got his blood anyway and then as I said I studied, I took an exam, I got my pharmacist mate third class patch. At that point I was ready, my mother wanted me to come home.

SI: How long were you at Bremerton?

PD: I turned twenty-one. I had my twenty-first birthday at Bremerton.

SI: You actually went through a number of different training and stations in a short period of time.

PD: In a short period, right.

SI: Was it difficult to always be moving around like that?

PD: No, I enjoyed it. I liked moving to different places and that was something I always loved, I always wanted to travel so that gave me a little bit of traveling, staying in another part of the

United States, and seeing how other people lived, the countryside, and I would have been happy to have got off someplace else if they sent me. That was not a problem.

SI: What were your impressions of the different areas you went to? It sounds like your life had been centered around Mansfield and Boston prior to joining the service.

PD: Right. I found Washington very interesting, because Bethesda is just a suburb of Washington. It was exciting to be there, see the capital, see the White House and just being in a huge area where life is really going on all the time. Then being sent out to Astoria, Oregon, was a complete change because I was in a small community again but the scenery, the background is different, it was just more placid, very placid. And then Bremerton, I was at a base so there again, it was a different kind of atmosphere, but we were just across the bay from Seattle so on leave we would go into Seattle. There again, that was another type of city, very different from Washington, very different from Boston, the scenery was very different, very West Coast, very hilly, mountainous, green and damp. In Seattle, in Bremerton in the winter it's damp, it's always a drizzle, and it was sort of miserable weather as far as that went but it was still, you're still able to get around, it wasn't freezing like here, you didn't have the snow like here but it was just sort of damp all the time. A different atmosphere, different socializing, people on the West Coast were different from people on the East Coast.

SI: Did you have a lot of opportunity to meet locals?

PD: Unfortunately no, just on base civilian workers and that was about it because it was hard to get off base and really meet people. If you are on weekend leave you're busy "touristing," you want to see what's going on, so you're traveling to different spots in the city and taking advantage of what's to be seen. So you didn't interact with the locals that much and I'm not a bar person where you'd meet people, so I did not go to bars.

SI: Would WAVES go to USOs and that sort of thing?

PD: !@#$% No, they had entertainers coming on base but … we didn't feel a need to go to a USO, at least I never did. I had my little group of friends and we would take off and do our own thing. …

SI: This time you spent with your brother's family in Tennessee, was that after you were discharged?

PD: No, I was still in the service and he needed my help and I had time coming, I had leave coming so I went to see him and I stayed there for about two weeks and I met, you know, some of his fellow officers and, of course, I had my nephew, and a brand new nephew that I was helping to take care of, and I had family visit at that time which was great, and then I went back to Bremerton and I continued on my service duties there.

SI: How did men in the service in general react to women in uniform? Were they positive?

PD: … I wouldn't say they're positive. Some tried to take advantage of you and some were very indifferent and some were friendly. There were all kinds and you just had to know how to talk to them. If you gave them an indication that you were willing to go off with them, they'd be very happy to take advantage of you, but if you said, "No," then they left you alone. You know, they weren't pushing you.

SI: You mean that in a more of a sexual harassment type of way?

PD: Not overtly.

SI: Did you encounter any patronizing attitude on the part of the men?

PD: I didn't feel that way. … I know the officers were very nice, they were very understanding, and I never felt that they looked down on us, they were very glad, very happy to have our help.

SI: You crisscrossed the country a couple of times. What was travel like in that day and age?

PD: We didn't fly. We went by train. When I was being transferred from Bethesda to Astoria, they put us up in with sleepers, we could sleep in the Pullman class, but we were always aware that there was a patrol going through and they would require our papers and they did that on a regular basis. But the people, the passengers, they accepted us, they didn't make any comments or anything. Since I was traveling with my friend, we sat together so we didn't have to worry about sitting with, you know, someone who might make a remark, but everyone was very gracious to us, I would say. I guess at that time, they were very happy to have service people, you know, helping.

SI: Traveling on the train, were you able to get sleeping accommodations or did you have to sit up?

PD: No, when they paid for it, we had sleeping accommodations and the funny thing is I got to Chicago, I got into my upper berth and I was ready to go to sleep and someone was trying to open up the curtain, I said, "It's occupied," and he said, "This is my bunk, my berth." I said, "No this is mine," it was a male voice and I looked out and he said, "I'm supposed to be there." I said, "No, this is mine," and he let it go at that and my friend was down at the other end on an upper berth. The next morning we found out that they were two soldiers, one was supposed to have upper, one was supposed to have the lower berth. They slept together in that lower berth and they just couldn't manage it so they said, "Would you mind switching." So my friend and I slept in the lower berth together because we were both small at the time and they took the two upper berths. The next morning after that, the patrol came up and said, "Where were you last night," to us, I said, "We were sleeping here," they said, "But you're supposed to be up there." I said, "Yes, but we switched." So they were very much aware of where we were supposed to be in traveling. When you're traveling on orders they know you have to be in a certain place but when I was discharged, I did not take the … sleeping berth back, I sat up, and that was a very hard trip sitting up for three days with a pillow, but people were very nice and, you know, they were very accommodating.

SI: Once you were discharged, what were your plans for the future?

PD: Well, I thought I would like to take advantage of the GI Bill and I went to school at night, but working and going to school at night--I just couldn't handle it. So I just stopped and went back to being a clerk at Travelers again and I got my old job back. … I was trying to get back into a social world again, but it took a while. I just kept working and, you know, the men weren't around at that point, they were still, a lot of them were not home or a lot were gone. And since I was confined to living the Jewish style of life, I had to make my world within that little circle. So, I tried to meet gentlemen friends through other friends and we did, we had a social life, we … started going back to normal life. And then I met my husband and got married. But I stayed in the Reserves. Before I got married, I would go to duty once a month, but then when I married, I moved out of Hartford and went up to Springfield. So, I no longer went back for active duty. I was married about a year or so and then I got a call from a gentleman in the Navy, he said, "You're AWOL." I said, "What do you mean I'm AWOL? I'm no longer in the Navy, I had asked for discharge." He said, "Well, the Korean War was on, and you're being recalled." I said, "I can't go, I'm married and I'm expecting my first child." So, he said, "All right, get a doctor's note and we'll discharge you," and that's what happened. But I had been in the Reserves all that time, and if I hadn't been expecting a child I would have been recalled into the Navy.

SI: When you came back to the East Coast, you resettled in Hartford?

PD: In Hartford, yes. I wasn't going to go back to Mansfield. So, I went back to Hartford and at that time I got my own place and I met another girl and we decided we'd share the apartment so that's what we did.

SI: Was it difficult to find housing then?

PD: Yes, we shared an apartment in a family home so it had like an attic apartment, bedroom and living room and we shared the kitchen but we had our own bathroom upstairs and we shared that.

SI: When you went to night school, what school did you go to?

PD: I don't remember the name, it was a small school. It was in Hartford, it was a little night school, I don't remember the name of it.

SI: What were you studying?

PD: I wanted to become a lab tech, and that required chemistry and physics, you know, the usual things and I said, "I just can't concentrate on those studies and working." So, I said, "That's it, I'm not going to try it," but I really wanted to stay in the medical field.

SI: Had the job at Travelers changed at all?

PD: Not really. It was a different routine than I had before but it was still typing and filing and taking dictation, but it was clerical work, and as I said I met my husband, got married, had five children, and changed my life entirely.

SI: You met your husband through these friends that you mentioned?

PD: No, no, I went to a social dance at a synagogue and I met him there.

SI: Could you tell me a little bit about your husband?

PD: My husband is from New Jersey and he was working up in Massachusetts. I was living at Hartford, he came to Hartford to the dance which was in Hartford, and he was a chemist for Johnson & Johnson. He was a textile chemist, did research, and he was a scientific photographer and he worked for J&J. He retired after fifty years with them, and then he consulted for five more years, and he had seventy-five patents to his name. He was very prolific and these are two of his examples of pictures.

SI: They look like shells.

PD: They are. … I'll show you the shells.

[TAPE PAUSED]

SI: We were just looking at the original shells. They are quite small, a few millimeters in diameter, but really amazing images that your husband took under a microscope.

PD: Yes, and he did a lot of work under the microscope to help, because he was a textile chemist. Have you ever heard of non-woven fabric? He was known as "Mr. Non-woven" in the industry because he was very well known within the industry. His last invention that he had a patent on is mersorb, which is a fabric that looks like gauze but it's not gauze; it's not woven, but it looks like it's woven, and it is used in surgical procedures because it does not leave lint, it cleans up very well. He was very broad in how he looked at the world. He saw the world through the microscope. It wasn't just what you could see visually, it was what could see through the microscope. There's more to the world than what you see, and that's how he felt. He was just a very interesting person.

SI: You were married in 1949?

PD: '49--we were married for forty-six years and he died in 1996. It will be sixteen years the fifteenth of this month.

SI: Your husband worked for Johnson & Johnson. Did you move to New Jersey after you were married?

PD: Yes, he was transferred a few years after we were married. He worked in Chicopee, which is right near a river, and it would flood frequently. So they decided they had enough flooding, they moved down to New Jersey, and he worked out of New Jersey for the rest of his time. But as I said he was very prolific when he worked for them.

SI: Where did you live?

PD: … We lived in Springfield right after we were married, and then we moved down to Plainfield, New Jersey. We later moved to Rossmoor where he passed sixteen years ago, then when this place became available, I moved down here. We traveled a great deal and when he retired we took a ten-week trip and went around the world. After he died, I would join one of these travel groups and I would go to Europe. On one of my trips, I went from Paris to Normandy and it was just before the D-Day anniversary. They were re-enacting the invasion and there were a lot of military around. I was on Utah Beach with my daughter, I travel with her, and I spoke briefly to this gentleman's wife, we were sitting up where there's a gun turret. There were people talking about the war itself, giving the history of the battle, and I was sitting next to this gentleman. He explained that these were war historians who were learning how to explain to others how the war occurred and how it went about and during the conversation, I said, "You know, I'm very interested because I lived during this period of time and I am a veteran." He asked me questions about my service and things like that. Then I said, "I have to excuse myself," because I was waiting for the bus to take us to another spot and he said, "Hold on a minute, don't leave, just sit here." So I said, alright, and he got up and went over to a young man and he came back and he took me and stood me up and he interrupted the young man who was talking, "Excuse me, I want to introduce you to this young woman who's a veteran of World War II." Then he turned to me and said, "I want to give you my personal medallion."

SI: That is very nice.

PD: Turns out he was was a lieutenant general with the Army in Europe. And that's the result of being in the service.

SI: This is a challenge coin. It does not say who the general is.

PD: I have his card. … I don't remember his name but this was a complete shock to me. … I didn't know what this was at the time, now I know what it is, but he just handed it to me and I had no idea what I was getting. But that is a most prized possession now, and that's as a result of being in the Navy.

SI: Could you tell me a little bit about your family?

PD: Well, I have four boys and one girl. My oldest son, David is in Washington, DC. He works for the EPA in the clean water division and has one son. My second son, Daniel lives here, which is why I'm here because he suggested I move closer to him. He is an independent real estate appraiser and he has two children. My third son, Jeremy, is a doctor. He lives in Cumberland, Maryland, and has three children. His wife is a professor at a college in Maryland.

My daughter is out in California. She is married to an attorney, and she has two girls. My youngest son is in Connecticut but he is going to be working out of London. He lived in Switzerland for over twenty years. He worked for a Swiss company and now he's working for the same company, but in London. He has one son, and his wife and son will stay in Connecticut until my grandson graduates high school.

SI: Obviously raising such a large family required a lot of your time. Did you ever go back to work outside of the home?

PD: When they were in high school, I went back to a junior college called Union College. I took various courses and got an associate's degree. Then, when they were all gone, I went to work as a teacher's aide for a friend who teachers first grade. When my husband retired, he said, "I don't want you to work anymore, I want you to be free to travel," and that's what I did after that, but I did work for about a year and a half in the school system and loved it. I worked as an aide to the librarian, and also an aide to first grade teachers. It was very, very rewarding working with young children. That was my life.

SI: Did you ever get involved in any community activities?

PD: Well, I belong to the B'nai B'rith, which is a charitable organization, and I belonged to Hadassah for a while. I'm still a life member, but I'm not active. I find that I don't have the patience anymore to sit at some of these meetings, but I support them. When you're young and you can actually do things physically then it's a different story, but when you can't do anything, just sit and listen, it's not that rewarding. But I was active in those two organizations.

SI: It sounds like you continued on the tradition from your mother.

PD: Yes, and I would hope that some of my children continue on that way. If I feel if I can help, I'll help.

SI: Was there anything that you like to add to the record that we have not gone over, any part of your life that we skipped?

PD: I don't think so. My life was a pretty simple life.

SI: It was pretty fascinating to me.

PD: I've done the things that I wanted to do in this life and I'm very happy. I've been very lucky, God has been good to me.

SI: Did you continue, in terms of religion, to pass on your parents' traditions to your family?

PD: Well, I passed on what I could, but what they do in their own life now is their own life, I can't tell them what to do. They are still very much oriented to Judaism, but I can't predict what

my grandchildren will do. You know, each generation goes their own way, but they know what I feel and how I feel and it's been a very essential part of my life.

SI: I was just curious if you got your family involved in the local synagogue and that sort of thing.

PD: Well my friend here is very much involved, and my son in Washington, is married to a rabbi. My son in Connecticut is involved as much as he can be and, you know, they're all involved. My daughter and her husband are very much involved, they're all involved in the synagogue life.

SI: Going back to my earlier question about Zionism, you said your family really hadn't discussed it, but did that ever become an interest of yours, or did go you to Israel?

PD: I've been to Israel twice, but not because I am a Zionist. I just wanted to go to see as a tourist sees what it was like, it's because it's a homeland for my people. I support it as much as I can, but I'm not one of these hawks, you know. I just feel we have this country, it's our land, and we should be there, but I can't approve of everything they do. Every country has its faults, they have to learn to give and take like every country has to give and take, but I still feel it's my land.

SI: Again thank you very much, I appreciate all your time and if there's anything that later on you decide, you can add it, go right ahead. Thank you very much, I appreciate it.

PD: You're welcome. I don't think I had that much to say. …

SI: No, it was very interesting.

----------END OF INTERVIEW----------

Reviewed by Taylor McKay 2/1/13
Reviewed by Nicholas Molnar 3/1/13
Reviewed by Pearl Drelich 5/6/13