



THE RUTH ANN OVERBECK
CAPITOL HILL HISTORY PROJECT

Interview with June Hoffmann and family

Interview Date: November 4, 2005

Interviewer: Bernadette McMahon

Transcribers: Cynthia Skelton, Kristin Moe

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[Notes: The following family members participated in this interview: siblings June Hoffmann, Loretta Hoffmann Mona, Eva Hoffmann Dawson, and John Hoffmann, Eva's husband Bill Dawson, and Loretta's son Cap Mona. The transcript was reviewed and edited by niece Barbara Cranston.]

TAPE 1/SIDE 1

McMAHON: Today is November 4, 2005. This is Bernadette McMahon interviewing the members of the Hoffmann family for the Ruth Ann Overbeck Capitol Hill History Project. We have several members of the family here today, and they will be speaking at different times, but the main interviewee is June Hoffmann, who grew up in this house where we are interviewing: 616 North Carolina Avenue SE in Washington DC. And June is going to start by giving us the names and birthdates of her whole family. There were twelve children born to the family and when we get to the names of the people in the order of their birth, the ones who are here will speak up at that point so that we will have a recording of their voices. June, why don't you start with your parents' names and wedding date and then go through the siblings.

June HOFFMANN: Mother and Dad were married in St. Peter's Church on April 30, 1911. Dad's name was Fritz Dietz Hoffmann. Mother's maiden name was Elizabeth Eva Sweeney. Mother lived around 12th and E Street SE, at the time that she was married, and Dad was living around 16th and Lamont Street NW. After they were married they lived in NW for a while, and then they moved to SE, they lived at 607 North Carolina Avenue SE. Then they lived in 609, and later they moved from 609 to Alabama Avenue SE and they were there for about seven years before they moved back out to this house at 616 North Carolina.

McMAHON: Let me just ask—were they renting? Or did they own those various houses?

June HOFFMANN: They were renting, I think, at some time or other, but then they owned—they owned—I know they owned...

Eva DAWSON: Congress...

June HOFFMANN: ...the one out in Congress Heights, which was on Alabama Avenue, and of course they owned this one. Daddy was born in 1890; Mother was born in 1894. She was 16 and he was 21 when they were married, and she had her first child at the age of 17, and that was Carl. Carl was the oldest; he was born on Daddy's birthday, on February 5, 1912. The second child was a girl, and that was Eva, and she died—she was born, rather, on November 23, 1913, and she died six months later with pneumonia. The next child was Vincent Hoffmann. He was born on January 23, 1915. The next was a daughter, Dorothy Elizabeth Hoffmann. She was born on August 16, 1916. I was the fifth child. I was born on February 2, 1919. The next child was Loretta Concepta Hoffmann, who is now Loretta Mona, and she was born on May 15, 1921.

McMAHON: And Loretta is here with us today, and why don't you give your name just so we have you on recording. I know you have a cold.

Loretta MONA: Yeah, I do, I have a bad cold, but I'm Loretta Hoffmann Mona, and as you say I was born on May 15, 1921.

McMAHON: Thank you.

June HOFFMANN: After Loretta, my brother Fritz, who was the junior, Fritz Junior, he was born on November 12, 1922. Following Fritz was Mary, another daughter, who was born on December 19, 1923. Then Mother took a little time off (laughing). She had—Eva was the next daughter. She was born on June 1, 1926.

McMAHON: And Eva is also here today.

Eva DAWSON: Yes, I'm here today.

McMAHON: And your name is now...?

Eva DAWSON: Eva Louise Hoffmann Dawson.

McMAHON: And Eva's husband, Bill, is also here.

Bill DAWSON: Right.

McMAHON: And you are Bill Dawson.

Bill DAWSON: Bill Dawson. I was born April 18, 1925.

McMAHON: Thank you.

June HOFFMANN: Okay, after Eva, there was another boy that was born, who died four hours after he was born, and that was Francis, and he was born on February 24, 1928. Following Francis there was John Hoffmann, who was born on November 21, 1929.

McMAHON: And John is here, and will speak into the microphone for us.

John HOFFMANN: I'm John Richard Hoffmann, and I was born on 11/21/29.

McMAHON: Thank you.

June HOFFMANN: And then following John was my brother Francis...

Eva DAWSON: The second Francis...

June HOFFMANN: The second Francis. He was born on October 17, 1931, and he was born the year that we moved into this house.

McMAHON: So had you already moved in?

June HOFFMANN: Yes, we moved here on January 2, 1931, and Francis was born in October of that year at Providence Hospital. The old Providence.

McMAHON: Which was right nearby at the time.

June HOFFMANN: Yes.

McMAHON: Very good. And so, were all of you born in hospitals, or were you born at home?

June HOFFMANN: Some were born at home, some were born at hospitals.

McMAHON: So your childhood memories are here on North Carolina Avenue?

June HOFFMANN: Well, both here and at the other side of the street, too, where we...

Eva DAWSON: And up on Alabama Avenue...

McMAHON: Right, but do you remember Congress Heights at all?

June HOFFMANN: Oh yes.

Eva DAWSON: Yes, yes.

June HOFFMANN: Definitely, because we had a big home there, too. As a matter of fact, we had—it was really an estate that Daddy bought. And there were three houses on it, and they were heated by a central heating system—in one house.

McMAHON: One system for all three houses?

June HOFFMANN: Three houses.

McMAHON: Oh, wow.

Eva DAWSON: Relatives lived there.

June HOFFMANN: Hmm?

Eva DAWSON: Relatives lived there.

June HOFFMANN: Yes. It seemed like every place that we had—relatives every place we got. Two of my uncles lived in the small houses and our family lived in the big house. Uncle Will Sweeney, Mother's brother, lived in one of the frame houses and my Uncle Tom Sweeney lived in the brick house, which had the heating plant underneath it that heated all the houses.

McMAHON: What kind of heating? Was it coal?

June HOFFMANN: It was... Yeah.

Eva DAWSON: Yeah.

McMAHON: That's a lot of coal to supply three houses with heat.

June HOFFMANN: Yeah, but they did!

McMAHON: Oh, how interesting.

June HOFFMANN: Yeah. But when we moved into this house it was coal, and then Daddy had it changed to oil later.

McMAHON: So tell me about your remembrances of living here. Obviously you had a lot of family right nearby.

June HOFFMANN: We had a lot of family around, and as I say, different ones lived in different houses on the block, but we also had all of the neighborhood children. Everybody gathered here when we lived here, as children there. All the children in the neighborhood congregated here, and Mother and Dad always welcomed everybody. And Daddy used to buy everything wholesale, having such a big family. He'd go down to the wholesale market, and he'd get, like, boxes of hotdogs and everything, and get bushels of tomatoes and potatoes, everything that you could get, you know, he got wholesale. And I'll tell you a funny story later. One of the times that he had gone down to the meat market and he had gotten all this meat and brought home, and he had gotten—he had this 10 pound box of hotdogs that he had in the refrigerator, and that evening he came home, and he says, "I think I'd like to have a hotdog." And he went to the refrigerator to get a hotdog, and it wasn't in the refrigerator—there wasn't one in the house! Kids in the neighborhood, they came in and they'd always go to the refrigerator. All the kids—didn't make any difference who they were—they'd all help themselves to it. We had...

McMAHON: Now I've heard stories about iceboxes and all—with all this wholesale food, did you—what kind of refrigeration did you have?

June HOFFMANN: Well, we used to—well, when we lived here we always had electricity.

McMAHON: Right, okay.

Eva DAWSON: We had ice one time...

June HOFFMANN: Yeah, at the Heights we had the old, the icebox that you...

Eva DAWSON: The box of ice...

June HOFFMANN: ...put ice in, yeah.

McMAHON: So by the time you came here the refrigeration—it was '31 and refrigerators were...

June HOFFMANN: Yeah.

McMAHON: ...available.

June HOFFMANN: Yeah.

McMAHON: Okay.

June HOFFMANN: Yes, but when we lived in the Heights, though, we had that old refrigerator that they had to put the ice into to keep things.

McMAHON: I'm going to pause here. We're back, after checking the tape, and we're going to continue with the story. You were 12 [years old] when you moved here.

June HOFFMANN: I was 12.

McMAHON: Do you remember about the move? Do you remember what it was like to come into this house?

June HOFFMANN: Well, it was sort of traumatic after being in the big house that we were in, and when we first moved into this place it was sort of dingy looking. It was gray. The outside was gray, and it, you know, it just didn't really appeal to us at first. But afterwards, after Mom and Dad got in and they had things done to make it more presentable.

McMAHON: Now, I've heard this house referred to as a farm house, and was it in fact, do you know?

June HOFFMANN: Well, they did research on it years ago when the house was on tour, on one of the Capitol Hill tours, and at that time they told us they count records back to 1840. But I don't, you know, I don't have any verification of it.

McMAHON: But by the time you came here there was no farmland around here, was there?

June HOFFMANN: Oh, no, no, no. All this...

McMAHON: This was a fully developed block?

June HOFFMANN: Oh yes, yes. It's quite a change from what it was back then. As a matter of fact, there was a parkway dividing between the two sides of the street.

McMAHON: Oh, I never knew that.

June HOFFMANN: Oh yes. There used to be a—it went along all the way down the middle of the block...

McMAHON: So, a boulevard?

June HOFFMANN: It was a...

McMAHON: A greenway? With grass?

June HOFFMANN: It had bushes in it.

McMAHON: Oh. And how long—when did they take that away?

June HOFFMANN: That was in the 30s and I don't remember what year they finally did away with it, because the—well, it was not there when you were over there, was it?

Loretta MONA: No.

McMAHON: Now, there were never streetcars on North Carolina, were there?

E. DAWSON and June HOFFMANN: No.

June HOFFMANN: The streetcars were on Eighth Street and on Pennsylvania Avenue. That was—they were the only means of trans—that and bus, back then.

McMAHON: Mm hmm.

Eva DAWSON: And walk.

June HOFFMANN: Oh yeah. We used to walk all over the place.

McMAHON: Course you did. Now, did you go to school at St. Peter's?

June HOFFMANN: Yes, I did in the eighth grade. I was there last half of seventh grade...

McMAHON: Oh, of course. You were already 11.

June HOFFMANN: I was—I went to St. Cecilia's in grade school. And then I, last year, I was at St. Peter's.

McMAHON: Okay, I see.

June HOFFMANN: And then after that I went to St. Patrick's.

McMAHON: To high school.

June HOFFMANN: High school.

McMAHON: And did most of you...

Eva DAWSON: Went to St. Peter's. I went to St. Peter's.

McMAHON: You went to St. Peter's to elementary school.

Eva DAWSON: Yes.

McMAHON: And then where did you...

Eva DAWSON: And then to St. Patrick's.

McMAHON: This is Eva speaking. You went to St. Patrick's High School also.

Eva DAWSON: Yes.

McMAHON: Did all of the girls?

[speaker uncertain]: No, I didn't.

McMAHON: Loretta did. And where did the boys go to high school?

John HOFFMANN: I went to St. Peter's and then I went to Gonzaga. I didn't complete the first year, though, because the Latin was too hard.

McMAHON: Did most of your—did the brothers go to...

June HOFFMANN: Yes, Vince and Carl went to St. John's.

McMAHON: Alright. Okay. So those schools have been around and well established. Good.

John HOFFMANN: What about Skip?

June HOFFMANN: Uh, right. He went to Eastern, I think. Skip went to Eastern, yeah.

McMAHON: And Skip is Francis?

June HOFFMANN: Yeah, the last one.

McMAHON: There, right now on North Carolina Avenue, almost across the street from this house, there is a natatorium, swimming pool, but I understand that used to be a firehouse when you were children.

June HOFFMANN: That was a firehouse, yes.

Loretta MONA: It was a training center...

June HOFFMANN: ...and...

Eva DAWSON: It was a training center.

McMAHON: It was a training center?

June HOFFMANN: And it was also the training school was over there, and the repair shop. They did everything over there.

McMAHON: But it was also a regular firehouse?

June HOFFMANN: Oh yes, it was a regular firehouse, and they also had the training school. They had the big tower over there that the men used to have to—Bill can tell you about it.

Bill DAWSON: Best one in the city! [laughter]

McMAHON: Now, Bill, you grew up near here, too?

Bill DAWSON: In southeast. 18th and B, SE.

McMAHON: Alright, but you remember this? Or do you remember it from when you were...

Bill DAWSON: Oh, I spent 25 years across the street. [laughter]

McMAHON: Oh, is that how you and Eva met?

Eva DAWSON: Yes.

Bill DAWSON: In a way. [laughter]

Eva DAWSON: I picked him up.

McMAHON: At the firehouse? So...was it very busy? Was it—Did you have sirens...

June HOFFMANN: Yes.

McMAHON: ...waking you up in the middle of the night?

Eva DAWSON: You got used to it.

June HOFFMANN: You got used to it.

Bill DAWSON: One of the busiest firehouses in the city because when other companies were out on additional alarms we transferred an awful lot—filled in for other companies and everything.

McMAHON: So you might have to go to some other part of the city?

Bill DAWSON: Right.

McMAHON: Oh. Now did they ever have—did they still have horses at that point?

Bill DAWSON: Not at—when I was in, no.

McMAHON: What about when you were children?

June HOFFMANN: No.

McMAHON: No.

June HOFFMANN: Not when...that was past, then, at that time.

John HOFFMANN: But they did have the...

June HOFFMANN: They still had...

John HOFFMANN: ...the rails where the horses...

Eva DAWSON: Yeah.

John HOFFMANN: Yeah.

McMAHON: John, you're saying they had—did they have stables?

John HOFFMANN: Well, nuh...they had stables but all I can recall is they had these iron...

June HOFFMANN: Oh, you're talking about where they used to hitch the horses.

Eva DAWSON: Yeah.

John HOFFMANN: On the floor.

Eva DAWSON: Mm hmmm.

John HOFFMANN: And eventually, they were taken up. I think...

McMAHON: Were those, like, rings?

June HOFFMANN: Yeah. As a matter of fact, there used to be—I don't know if whether they're still out here—they used to have these horse troughs, where the horses could go to drink water, and they had little rings in the pavement where they could tie the horse up to.

McMAHON: Mm hmm. Okay.

June HOFFMANN: There used to be one right down here in front of...

Loretta MONA: Hix's.

June HOFFMANN: Yeah, the Hix's house, which is—oh, isn't that a—Lee! I'm trying to think of Lee's—I can't think of Lee's last name now, but I'm sure that...

McMAHON: On this block?

June HOFFMANN: Yes, yes.

McMAHON: Okay.

June HOFFMANN: The white house down the street. The white pebbledash house. There used to be one of those right out in front of that.

McMAHON: We should go look!

June HOFFMANN: I don't know whether it's still there or not!

Cap MONA: Bishop's family?

June HOFFMANN: Yeah.

John HOFFMANN: Eric Bishop's family?

June HOFFMANN: Yeah.

Eva DAWSON: Yeah. My sister Dorothy married Eric who lived down there.

McMAHON: So you dated within the neighborhood?

June HOFFMANN: Oh yeah, certainly.

McMAHON: Is that the way it worked?

June HOFFMANN: And Paul Ridgely, you know, who lived around the street—around—you don't remember Paul Ridgely?

[Unclear]: Nuh.

June HOFFMANN: Paul used to live around here on Sixth Street, at 212, and he used to come round here and ride his little bicycle through the house. [tittering]

McMAHON: [giggling] Through your house? [more laughter] Now, the property now goes all the way through to Independence.

June HOFFMANN: Yes.

McMAHON: Did you always...

June HOFFMANN: Yes.

McMAHON: ...have that...

June HOFFMANN: Yes, yes.

McMAHON: ...arrangement? So...

June HOFFMANN: As a matter of fact, this apartment next door is on part of our property. They had to—the Donohoes, who built—

Eva DAWSON: Real Estate.

June HOFFMANN: They got permission from Dad to use so many inches of our property in order to put that up.

McMAHON: We have several interviews with Donohoe grandchildren, and that's been an interesting story too.

Eva DAWSON: Oh, I'm sure.

McMAHON: So, they didn't live here, though, right?

June HOFFMANN: No, no.

McMAHON: This was...

June HOFFMANN: They—

McMAHON: ...rental property?

June HOFFMANN: They built it and—I'm trying to think of the first fellow that had it, oh, I can't think of his—it was a French name.

McMAHON: So that's 618?

June HOFFMANN: It's...yeah.

McMAHON: Okay.

June HOFFMANN: Actually, it should be 620.

McMAHON: Because of the...

June HOFFMANN: Because this was really 616 and six...and two...

McMAHON: This is a very wide property.

June HOFFMANN: Yeah. It should have been 620 when they made it, and then later on, well, as a matter of fact, the apartment—the one that's next to it—that's a double house.

Eva DAWSON: Mm hmm.

June HOFFMANN: They...they've got two different addresses for that.

McMAHON: Oh, I see.

June HOFFMANN: Yeah.

McMAHON: So do you remember when this was built next door?

June HOFFMANN: Oh, yeah, I remember when it's built. I don't remember the year right now but it was—I think it was about in the 50s.

McMAHON: Okay.

June HOFFMANN: 50s or 60s, somewhere.

McMAHON: I want to be able to have some time in this interview to talk about your work you did in your adult life as you continued to live in this house, but before we do that do you have any particular

reminiscences of being here in the 30s and the 40s that you would like to share, any of you? Any historic events? Do you remember the end of WWII and what went on then?

June HOFFMANN: Well, I would say that—I mean we have a lot of memories as far as being here is concerned—but, uh, going over to the firehouse when the circus came to town. They always housed the elephants in the...

Eva DAWSON: Paint shop.

June HOFFMANN: ...what used to be the—it used to be the stable. That was...

Bill DAWSON: The paint shop.

June HOFFMANN: Yeah, well, maybe it turned out later...

Bill DAWSON: Turned into a paint shop.

June HOFFMANN: ...but it was a stable, and every time that the circus came to town they'd bring them up and march them along, you know, and bring them and they'd bring them over.

McMAHON: Now, did they come into Union Station back then?

June HOFFMANN: I don't remember how they—but they probably—I mean, they had their own wagons and everything, but they used to have the elephants over there, and we've got pictures.

Eva DAWSON: Well, there's a picture up there. [on the living room mantle]

June HOFFMANN: Is there one...

Eva DAWSON: The elephants.

McMAHON: Oh, the elephants right on North Carolina! Oh, wonderful.

Eva DAWSON: Look, you can see the house in the background.

McMAHON: We—we do have—we do sometimes copy people's pictures if they're willing to let us, and this would be wonderful.

Eva DAWSON: Mm hmm.

McMAHON: Oh, that's terrific.

Eva DAWSON: Yeah, see, the house is in the background

McMAHON: Very good, so thi—huh, that'd be an—we could—I have a form to get permission from you to copy a picture but that would be delightful. And these are firemen in the front.

ALL: Mm hmm.

McMAHON: Great.

Cap MONA: Probably Bill, but he was probably a teenager then. [laughter]

June HOFFMANN: Let me see that!

[laughter]

Bill DAWSON: [softly in the background] Yeah, I never seen the...

Eva DAWSON: Well, one of the things I remember mostly about the house is one bathroom and most of us, you know, at least eight of us at one time were in there.

[multiple voices and comments]

June HOFFMANN: It surely got [indistinguishable]

McMAHON: Please don't all talk at once. (laughs) Yes, that's—that was a frequent challenge for people until the modern day.

Eva DAWSON: You just doubled up.

Cap MONA: Talking about the house and the repairs, the house was much smaller back then, and this was a repair job back in the 30s, and... [?? shows a bill]

McMAHON: \$268 total to do a lot of work.

Cap MONA: A lot of work.

June HOFFMANN: Yeah.

McMAHON: Yeah, 1941 this is dated.

Cap MONA: So the original house, Aunt June, do you recall someone told me about the house having the kitchen in the back, because you had no kitchen. This house originally had no kitchen. Now, did it have a kitchen when you moved in?

June HOFFMANN: Oh no, it had the kitchen.

Cap MONA: Had a kitchen. But previous to that it didn't have a kitchen...

June HOFFMANN: As a matter of fact, I think that the back part, the dining room and all, must have been added on. That's probably why I don't know, but you can tell too from upstairs where the rooms upstairs...when you went from the middle room to the back room. I'm pretty sure that that part had all been—and what was the bathroom. Because before they ever had a bathroom I'm sure that they had an...

Eva DAWSON: An outhouse.

June HOFFMANN: ...outhouse.

Cap MONA: Yeah, they had an outhouse. According to our records that we looked at they had an outhouse and an outbuilding for the kitchen.

McMAHON: That was pretty common, I think.

Eva DAWSON: Yeah.

Cap MONA: Yeah.

McMAHON: Down here and where it's hot, they had a summer kitchen outside.

June HOFFMANN: As a matter of fact, I think they still have—down where Lee is—I think they still have the outhouse in the back of that house. I mean, they did use it but whether they did away with it or not I don't know. What I mean, I know that they did have it at one time.

McMAHON: Before we finish this side of the tape, tell me again about your parent's anniversary party because that got lost in the previous tape that didn't work.

June HOFFMANN: Oh, you're talking about their 50th anniversary. We had a reception...

McMAHON: They were married at St. Peter's?

June HOFFMANN: They were married at St. Peter's and they celebrated their 50th anniversary at the 12:30 Mass, and it was on a Sunday, their 50th anniversary fell on a Sunday, and Monsignor King was the one who said the Mass that day.

McMAHON: And the date?

June HOFFMANN: And that was April 30, 1961. And afterwards, we went to the Officer's Club at Bolling Field, where someone that we knew had arranged for us to have a reception there for Mom and Dad, and there were about 300 that came. There were family, friends, priests [laughter].

McMAHON: I'm sure they had many, many friends besides the big families that they had.

Loretta MONA: Yes, yes.

June HOFFMANN: As a matter of fact...

Cap MONA: Here's the original marriage certificate right there.

June HOFFMANN: As a matter of fact—my Aunt Till, who stood up for Mother and Dad when they were married—she was there.

McMAHON: Was she your mother's sister?

June HOFFMANN: Yes. She was Mother's sister.

McMAHON: So her name was Sweeney?

Eva DAWSON: Edith.

June HOFFMANN: At the time, yes. It was Sweeney but she was Edith Carroll at the time.

Cap MONA: There's the original right there, Aunt June.

June HOFFMANN: Yes.

Cap MONA: So who were the witnesses? There was Edith Carroll, which was Aunt Till.

June HOFFMANN: That was Aunt Till, and the man—I'm trying to, I can't think of his name—

McMAHON: It's probably...

Cap MONA: It's right there. It's right there.

June HOFFMANN: I think, oh yeah, Garner. I can't think of how...Gorham. Gorham Walker. I heard Daddy speak of him but I never—never knew him. I never knew him. And as a matter of fact, they tried locating—I guess, I don't know whether he was dead or not. But on the 50th anniversary, he wasn't there, but Aunt Till and I think Jim Clohessy took his place at the—for the anniversary.

Cap MONA: How about Granny playing the piano. Do you want to show her that?

Eva DAWSON: Oh yes.

Cap MONA: And then how Granny met Grandpap, how about that one?

[Laughter]

June HOFFMANN: Oh, Mother—Mother was playing in the theaters when she was 14 years old. She played the piano and accompanied the pictures, you know, the silent pictures.

McMAHON: Okay.

June HOFFMANN: So whatever picture came on she had to play the appropriate music for that particular scene, and Daddy worked in a bank that was across the street from the theater that she played in.

McMAHON: What theater was that? Do you remember?

June HOFFMANN: It was down on Eighth Street, I think, too.

McMAHON: Southeast?

June HOFFMANN: Yeah, I think it was on Eighth. I'm sure it is long gone...

Eva DAWSON: Yeah, that's the one that's...

Loretta MONA: Dan Bartlett's...

June HOFFMANN: As a matter of fact, Cap, we've got the tape with—Mother's got all that information that's on it. I mean, she could tell you I'm sure that there's a tape that has much of that information.

McMAHON: So this was in the 19 oughts...

June HOFFMANN: They were at 1911 when they were married...

McMAHON: So this was before that.

June HOFFMANN: ...and this was before that. And Mother, as I say, she played in the theater, and Dad worked in a bank that was directly across the street. It was this—bank's still there, I think, at Eighth.

McMAHON: Eighth and G, maybe?

June HOFFMANN: Yeah. Eighth and G.

Cap MONA: That's Southeast.

June HOFFMANN: Yeah.

McMAHON: I think it's now...

June HOFFMANN: It was a Citibank, years and years.

McMAHON: I believe, if it's the building I'm thinking of...

Eva DAWSON: It's not a bank anymore.

McMAHON: ...it's now used as a design—is that where Dudley Brown has his offices? [ed: the former bank building at 800 G Street SE now houses the landscape architectural firm, Oehme, van Sweden & Associates.]

June HOFFMANN: I have no idea. But anyway, Dad went over to the theater, and he heard Mother playing the piano and he got the manager to introduce them. [Laughing]

McMAHON: Wonderful. And she, but she was very young.

June HOFFMANN: Yeah.

McMAHON: You say she was 16 when they got married.

June HOFFMANN: She was 16 when they got married. She was 14 when she first started playing in the theaters. Now how long—you know, he knew her before they were married I don't know. But that's how they met. He just—it was love at first sight, I guess. [Laughter] He just decided that he would...

McMAHON: Well, it lasted a good long time. When did your parents pass away?

June HOFFMANN: Daddy died in 1963, and Mother died in 1989.

McMAHON: Oh, so she lived a good long time.

June HOFFMANN: Mother was 94.

McMAHON: Oh my.

June HOFFMANN: And at the time when she died, she had had 12 children, 39—was it 39?—yeah, 39 grandchildren, and there were 90 some great-grandchildren, and there were several great-great...

Eva DAWSON: Yeah, three or four.

June HOFFMANN: As a matter of fact, there was an article written up in the paper about it at the time, and I.J. Hudson, from Channel 4, saw the article and he called the funeral parlor and told the man at the funeral parlor that he'd like to get in touch with the family, but the funeral director wouldn't give him—he said, "Well, I'll call the family, and if it's all right then I'll have them call you..."

McMAHON: That's appropriate.

June HOFFMANN: So...

McMAHON: And he did? He interviewed you at the time?

June HOFFMANN: He came here, came here to the house, and interviewed us and it was on Channel 4. It was on the news. Jim Vance.

McMAHON: I may have seen it, who knows?

June HOFFMANN: You probably did!

Eva DAWSON: It was on not for too long, I mean, you know, but it was nice.

June HOFFMANN: It was a nice...

McMAHON: How nice.

Eva DAWSON: You were talking about the family...

McMAHON: Before? I think it's a good time to...

END OF TAPE 1/SIDE 1

TAPE 1/SIDE 2

McMAHON: I understand your family was very welcoming of guests and had many visitors, and that you even kept a guest book.

June HOFFMANN: Yes, we did. We had a guest book that usually anybody that came would sign. And we had visitors from all over different parts of the world, even some with their writing in Greek—all different kinds. There used to be a lot of baseball players that came. We knew a lot of the ones in the Washington Senators, back then. And also the Boston Red Sox.

McMAHON: And how did you get to know them?

June HOFFMANN: Well, we used to go to a lot of the ball games, for one thing.

McMAHON: Was this at Griffith Stadium?

June HOFFMANN: Old Griffith Stadium, yes. And the Red Sox players we got to know through a priest friend of ours. He knew the lawyer that worked for the team, and when they came to town, the lawyer used to come over. His name was Joe Kumsky [sp?], and he used to come here to visit us. And one time he said, well, next time he came over he'd bring some of the fellows with him from the ball team. And he

did, he brought Bobby Doerr and he brought several of the others, but Bobby was the one that we really remember because Bobby came back many a time.

McMAHON: And did he sign your book?

June HOFFMANN: Oh yes. They all signed it.

McMAHON: And you have that book to this day?

June HOFFMANN: Yes.

McMAHON: What about Father Schultz? “The Flying Priest.”

June HOFFMANN: Oh, and Father Schultz, “The Flying Priest.”

McMAHON: I never heard about him. Was he local?

June HOFFMANN: He was an Oblate. He used to fly up in the Alaskan territories and around there.

McMAHON: But he knew your family and would come to visit.

June HOFFMANN: There were a lot of different ones that we had that were well known.

McMAHON: Did your father continue as a banker?

June HOFFMANN: No, no. Well, Daddy was a CPA. No, he ended up working for the Stanley Fenton Company that owned most of the big theaters in town—this was many years ago. Then, after the stock market crashed, Mr. Crandall, whom he had worked for, committed suicide. He lost everything. Just lost everything and committed suicide. And then Dad worked for Lipman Theaters; they owned all the black theaters around town, and down through the south.

Cap MONA: [?] Howard, Lanky, Republic, Booker T., Senator, Broadway, Republic, Atlas, Howard, Tibley...

June HOFFMANN: All those...

Cap MONA: ...Lincoln.

June HOFFMANN: And Daddy was in charge of the accounting department.

McMAHON: For the whole chain.

June HOFFMANN: And many of us worked with Dad at sometime or another. At least, I worked with him for 18 years. I was his right-hand man, that's what he called me [laughs].

McMAHON: And I know in his house there's an office of his that has been preserved in the basement. Did he work from home?

June HOFFMANN: Dad was always working. He did at least a couple jobs. He was working for the theaters, and doing outside work—taxes and stuff.

McMAHON: Besides, it must have been a nice retreat from the ten children [all laughs].

Cap MONA: What kind of education did Grandpap have? I've heard different stories.

June HOFFMANN: He got his CPA degree.

Cap MONA: Oh, so he actually went to grade school, high school? OK. See, I thought he was self-educated.

June HOFFMANN: Oh no, no, no.

McMAHON: Was there a business school that he went to for that?

Eva DAWSON: Same one Mike went to, I can't think.

June HOFFMANN: Oh.. isn't that awful, it's slipped my mind. It starts with a W.

Loretta MONA: Not Strayer.

June HOFFMANN: No, no. It starts with a W.

Cap MONA: Local?

June HOFFMANN: I can't remember.

Cap MONA: It'll come to you.

McMAHON: Well, I was impressed that you knew every birthday of all 12 children!

[laughter, unintelligible banter]

Cap MONA: She's as smart as they come.

Eva DAWSON: Tell them about when one of the houses, with the snow on top, and it collapsed—what was that one?

June HOFFMANN: Oh, that was the Knickerbocker, you're talking about where Daddy worked. That was one of Crandall's theaters, the Knickerbocker, back in 1922. And the night that

Eva DAWSON: That's the old Avenue Grand.

McMAHON: OK, we're looking at some pictures of the old theaters that ...

June HOFFMANN: These are some of the old theaters. And this was Harry Crandall. And I can't...

McMAHON: So this was in the '20's.

June HOFFMANN: ...and this is Daddy. And that looks like George Crouch. And this is Nelson Bell. I can't make them out, I don't have my glasses on.

McMAHON: Well, even with glasses, this is a little hard to read. This man's name is Payette...

Cap MONA: But nonetheless, the Knickerbocker, in the snowstorm, the roof caved in...

June HOFFMANN: Anyway, Mother and Dad were supposed to have gone there that night.

Cap MONA: All of us wouldn't be here if.... How's the situation? What happened?

June HOFFMANN: Anyway, Mother wasn't feeling well, and Daddy, you know, said that they wouldn't go, and that was the night that the Knickerbocker...

McMAHON: And many people died there.

June HOFFMANN: Yes.

Cap MONA: So the ceiling, the roof collapsed, from the weight of the snow. How many people died, does anyone know?

June HOFFMANN: That was 18th and Columbia Road; in 1922, I think.

McMAHON: Yes, I think so. It's still the worst snowstorm that ever occurred here, I think. Now, you mentioned Christmas parties that you had here.

June HOFFMANN: We always had Open House on Christmas Eve. We didn't invite anybody—everybody just came! [laughter] And we'd sometime have at least a hundred or more. It was just wall-to-wall.

McMAHON: Did you go from there to Midnight Mass?

June HOFFMANN: Usually.

McMAHON: I assume you walked over to St. Peter's?

June HOFFMANN: Yeah, we used to walk. Sometimes we rode, depending on who was going or who wasn't going, and...

Eva DAWSON: ... and how late we were... [laughter] At that time they had Mass upstairs and downstairs.

McMAHON: Oh, I didn't realize.

June HOFFMANN: [?] Yes, and upstairs they were dressed formally. Even the ushers! They used to be in their tuxes, and you had to have a pass to get into the upstairs.

McMAHON: When you say upstairs, you mean in the main church. So in the basement they would have a different Mass going?

June HOFFMANN: They'd have the Low Mass downstairs. They had the High Mass upstairs.

McMAHON: But this was just for Christmas Eve. But you would have a pass to get upstairs. And you were expected to dress up for that. How interesting. It was a social event, not just a Mass. Now, there was a mention earlier about the time when you got quarantined with an illness. What was that?

June HOFFMANN: Oh that was one of my sisters, Loretta [much laughter].

McMAHON: What did you have?

Loretta MONA & HOFFMANN: Scarlet fever.

Eva DAWSON: Put a sign on the outside of the house.

June HOFFMANN: And she was in a room, she had to be in a room, and no one was allowed to go in with her. But Sister Mary, who is the clown...

Loretta MONA: She felt sorry for me.

Cap MONA: I heard you invited her in! To scratch your bumps, that's what I heard!

Loretta MONA: She even washed my legs.

McMAHON: Did she or anyone else come down with it?

June HOFFMANN: Mary did! And she was the only one who—she had it worse than Loretta had it.

[laughter]

June HOFFMANN: Oh, I can remember that big sign on the outside: “Quarantine.”

McMAHON: Do you remember when that was?

June HOFFMANN: That was back.. let’s see... that was in the ’30’s.

McMAHON: So you were already ten years old... so the early ’30’s. And I suppose there was no treatment for that. Just waited it out.

June HOFFMANN: We weren’t allowed to go in, or anything, but Mary...

McMAHON: Could you to go to school? Could you leave?

June HOFFMANN: No. Everybody had to stay in until they gave us permission to...

McMAHON: Was that common?

Eva DAWSON: Back then, yes.

June HOFFMANN: Well, I don’t remember any others that were, you know, that were quarantined for. But I know that they quarantined you if you had scarlet fever [laughs].

McMAHON: It must have been very catching.

John HOFFMANN: And at a different time we had measles.

June HOFFMANN: But they didn’t quarantine you for that.

McMAHON: Now, of the ten siblings that survived childhood, how many are alive today?

June HOFFMANN: Eight.

McMAHON: Eight of the ten.

June HOFFMANN: Four of the girls and four of the boys.

McMAHON: And is everyone still in the DC area, generally?

June HOFFMANN: Well, mostly down in LaPlata and Waldorf now.

McMAHON: How long ago did people start moving into what we used to call southern Maryland, but now kind of the extended suburbs?

Eva DAWSON: Well, we've been there for over 30 years. We went in '76.

Loretta MONA: Mary's been there three months.

John HOFFMANN: Marilyn and I moved down in 1975.

Eva DAWSON: We've been there a little ways, you know, a while.

McMAHON: How did you happen to go there? Was it a place you had vacationed?

Eva DAWSON: Well, we were looking for a place, and I had a nephew that, you know, said, "Why don't you come down here and look around?" So we eventually did, and we bought, and ... because Harold was still alive then, and Harold didn't live where Mary lives now. And I think it was about three or four years later Mary moved down there...

McMAHON: So this is Charles County?

Eva DAWSON: Yes.

McMAHON: But June, you stayed here, in this house?

June HOFFMANN: Yes, I stayed here. I lived in this house from 1931 until 2004.

McMAHON: And you worked—what kinds of jobs did you have? You said you worked for your father for a long time.

June HOFFMANN: I worked in the accounting office with my dad for 18 years, that was in private industry, and after that I went out to St. Mary's in Indiana, and I was in the convent for a while.

McMAHON: Oh were you [amused]?

June HOFFMANN: At 36.

McMAHON: Oh my.

June HOFFMANN: I went out to the convent and I was homesick the whole time I was there, because I missed all the family and everything. And I said probably if I had gone in when I first got out of school, I probably would have stayed. But anyway, I came home, and it's a good thing that I came home, because I was able to be with Mom and Dad for five years before he died.

McMAHON: So you lived here with them in this house until they passed away.

John HOFFMANN: And I also lived here until I got married on April 8, 1972.

June HOFFMANN: But I lived here longer than any of them.

McMAHON: And the nuns at St. Mary's were the ones who had taught you at St. Cecilia's?

June HOFFMANN: And St. Peter's, yeah.

McMAHON: Now, there's a typewriter here in this room that I heard you refer to as your old typewriter. Where did you use that?

June HOFFMANN: Well, as a matter of fact, the desk that's downstairs in the office is one of these that opens up and the typewriter was in there. They've just got it up here.

McMAHON: It was on its own shelf?

June HOFFMANN: Yeah, it pulls out and it fits in and then you... then you could close it.

McMAHON: And I also see a picture of the Supreme Court justices. You worked there?

June HOFFMANN: Yeah, that's where I—and the certificate there—I worked there for 26 years. I started there when I was 40 years old—

McMAHON: —a new career—

June HOFFMANN: —and I worked there until 1984, when I retired. And I only retired then because Mother was so sick, and she wanted me to be home with her. So I would've stayed longer at the Court, if it hadn't been for that. But I just, I didn't want her to...as a matter of fact, I was spending more time at the hospital and at home than I was at the court! I used all my sick leave, and everything, so that I could spend it with Mom.

McMAHON: Did you work for a particular Justice?

June HOFFMANN: I worked at the clerk's office. I started out as a secretary and I ended up as the administrative assistant.

McMAHON: And the clerks are all the young—

June HOFFMANN: No, no, no, the Clerk of the Court is what they sometimes call "the Ninth Justice."

McMAHON: So this is not the young clerks who work for the individuals.

June HOFFMANN: No, no, no.

McMAHON: How does that work?

June HOFFMANN: The man that's the Clerk of the Court—in other words, everything that comes into the court comes through the Clerk's office before the judges, anyone, can see anything.

McMAHON: So the real manager of the Supreme Court is the Clerk. And you were his administrative assistant. What was the Clerk's name, or did you work for a whole series?

June HOFFMANN: I worked for five Clerks. The first one I worked for was Jim Browning, and he later was the chief judge out at the Ninth Circuit. And then I worked for him, and Bob Seever was another Clerk, Mike Rodak was another one, John Davis was another one, Alec Stevens was the last one that I worked under, and he was the one that made me his administrative assistant. And at the time that I was thinking of retiring, I wrote him a letter of resignation, and he didn't want me to retire. He said, "Oh, can't you just stay on?" I said, "No," I said, "Mom's too sick, and I want to be home. Her health is more important to me." So, on the letter of resignation, he printed, "Regretfully accepted." [laughter]

McMAHON: So you took care of your mother then, and then after she passed away—

June HOFFMANN: Well, I didn't care to move. I still had my aunt living here.

McMAHON: Oh, that's right. You still had all these relatives right here.

Eva DAWSON: And then she stayed by herself at home for how long? One or two years, or....

June HOFFMANN: Well, from '89 up until I came down to your place. Five years.

Bill DAWSON: Now she's taking care of me.

McMAHON: She is. Looks to me like you all take good care of each other.

Eva DAWSON: Yep.

Cap MONA: How about the Zeigfeld Follies, and...

June HOFFMANN: Oh, some of the dishes we had we got from a neighbor who said that they belonged to one of the girls that was in the Zeigfeld Follies.

Cap MONA: And you said Kate Smith visited the house?

June HOFFMANN: Kate Smith, she was a friend of Aunt Anne's. As a matter of fact, Dick too—they used to play... there was an old Arlington Beach. I don't know if any of you all remember that—

Eva DAWSON: It was at a bridge, the 14th Street Bridge.

June HOFFMANN: The 14th Street Bridge, and right off the 14th Street Bridge was a beach that they called Arlington Beach. And Kate Smith used to sing over there.

Bill DAWSON: I remember that.

June HOFFMANN: Yes. Kate Smith used to sing over there. And Aunt Anne and Uncle Dick sometimes played there.

McMAHON: Played what?

June HOFFMANN: Aunt Anne played violin, and Uncle Dick played the saxophone at that time. But Uncle Dick played several instruments. He played the Hawaiian steel guitar—he taught himself—the Hawaiian steel guitar, he played the saxophone, the...

McMAHON: And were these... did they do this for a living? Or was this just for fun?

June HOFFMANN: Aunt Anne played professionally. She played out at Napoleon's on Connecticut Avenue for 16 years.

McMAHON: And is Aunt Anne Uncle Dick's wife?

June HOFFMANN: No, no. They're brother and sister.

McMAHON: So these are both Sweeneys.

June HOFFMANN: They're Sweeneys. As a matter of fact there were nine; Grandma had nine children. And every one of them played a musical instrument of some kind, except, I think Uncle Will. I never remember Uncle Will playing anything.

Cap MONA: He was a good baseball player, wasn't he?

June HOFFMANN: Oh, no, it's Uncle Tom. Uncle Tom was the baseball player. He used to play a lot of sandlot baseball.

Eva DAWSON: Didn't he get an offer from someone?

June HOFFMANN: Oh, Uncle Tom, yeah. As a matter of fact, the Boston Red Sox sent him a telegram for him to report to them. And he didn't want to leave home, so he sent himself a telegram telling himself not to report! [laughter]

McMAHON: Did he think people would encourage him to go?

June HOFFMANN: He didn't want to go! He didn't want to leave home! [laughter]

McMAHON: Now that's a close family!

Eva DAWSON: Mother had an organ that used to sit over there, too, and June would play the organ sometimes, and Mama would play piano, or vice versa.

McMAHON: And there's a—the piano's still there.

June HOFFMANN: There's still a piano, here—

McMAHON: Was that your mother's?

June HOFFMANN: Yes, that was the piano I learned on, out in the Heights.

Cap MONA: Family members wrote us some songs, didn't they?

June HOFFMANN: Yeah, Mother had some songs, and Aunt Anne did too, had songs that were copyrighted. And as a matter of fact, one number that Mother wrote, the Marine Band, a fellow from the Marine Band, he wrote up all the different scores for all the different instruments, and the Marine Band played it.

McMAHON: Did she publish those under her own name?

June HOFFMANN: She never published them, really.

McMAHON: But the copyright is in the name Hoffman?

June HOFFMANN: Yeah. But anyway she—both wrote several numbers. Aunt Anne wrote a lot of numbers. She did have one that was published, I mean, that they played. But the arrangement they made of it was terrible.

Cap MONA: They wrote a newspaper article that talked about Granny having a solo presentation at some event—I'm not sure if you recall that, or...

June HOFFMANN: Oh, she used to play at a lot of different things. And as a matter of fact, Fred Waring's band, a tune that Aunt Anne wrote, Dorothy, she wrote one called Dorothy, and they played it at the Metropolitan Theater.

Cap MONA: In New York?

June HOFFMANN: Here. The Metropolitan was down at 10th and F.

McMAHON: And this was live theater?

June HOFFMANN: Yes. They used to have theater movies, and they'd also have stage shows. Just like the Warner used to be a theater and a stage show, and the Capitol, and the Palace, all those.

McMAHON: Did you go to the movies a lot?

June HOFFMANN: Yes.

McMAHON: Since your father was pretty involved in the businesses.

June HOFFMANN: Yes, we went to movies. All we had to do was say our name, and we went in!

[laughs]

McMAHON: Oh, you didn't even need a pass.

Eva DAWSON: Tell them of the time Vince went.

June HOFFMANN: [laughs] Vince! No, Dick.

Eva DAWSON: Uncle Dick?

June HOFFMANN: Uncle Dick. Daddy ran the Avenue Grand [ed: this is not correct]. They—

McMAHON: And that's on Pennsylvania?

June HOFFMANN: Yes. That's a little shopping mall now. Anyway, whenever the kids would go, all you had to do was go up and mention Hoffmann, you know, and we'd get in free. So Uncle Dick used to go, and he'd have a whole group of kids with him, all these different kids. The man, who was the manager of the theater, Mr. Lohmeyer, he said, Mr. Hoffman, how many children do you have? [laughter]

McMAHON: And he wasn't even Hoffman. Well, he must have been very popular among the neighborhood children.

Cap MONA: What about some of the police badges that I saw downstairs with Pappy, everybody must have loved him.

June HOFFMANN: Oh Daddy—they even gave him a fireman’s helmet and everything else! The policemen and all of them loved Daddy. Because Daddy always would take things over. Whenever we had anything—Thanksgiving, Christmas, or anything—Daddy would fix up trays of stuff and see that we took them over to the firehouse.

McMAHON: No wonder they loved him. You mentioned earlier about him buying things wholesale, and you referred to him going to a market. Was that—

[several voices talking]

June HOFFMANN: Down in Southwest. Riggs, and Ault’s,

McMAHON: Is that along E Street, where they used to have warehouses?

John HOFFMANN: It was near Maine Avenue.

McMAHON: Oh, OK. Did you shop at Eastern Market?

June HOFFMANN: Oh yeah. We shopped, I mean, for wholesale, Daddy would go to the wholesale places and buy things.

McMAHON: So did you have a bigger than normal refrigerator, or did you just go through it pretty quick?

June HOFFMANN: Well, later on we had a—

Loretta MONA: The food didn’t last that long [chuckles].

June HOFFMANN: We had a—oh, what am I trying to think of, Dook? [ed: Dook is the family nickname for Eva Dawson]

McMAHON: Freezer? Deep freeze?

June HOFFMANN: Yeah, we had a deep freeze downstairs. And Daddy used to go get things of ice cream like this, you know [laughs], and all the kids in the neighborhood would come in, they’d have ice cream... One of my nephews, his name was Fritz, that was the first place he headed when he hit this house, was that freezer downstairs, because he said he’d always, he’d go down and eat up the things he liked! [laughs]

McMAHON: A never-ending supply. Did your mother have help in the household?

June HOFFMANN: We always had somebody...

McMAHON: ...who would come in days?

June HOFFMANN: Yeah. We had one woman, an elderly woman, that used to come, and she used to cook for us. And she said this was the only place she felt at home. She did work for other people but she said, they don't treat me like you do, she said, "I'm one of the family here." [laughs]

Eva DAWSON: Has to be Miss George.

June HOFFMANN: Yeah, Miss George. Bless her heart.

McMAHON: And how do you keep up with laundry for that many people?

June HOFFMANN: We used to, when we lived in the Heights, we had a woman that came in that just did our washing and ironing. Remember Louise?

Eva DAWSON: I remember Louise. Real tall. She ironed here for a while.

June HOFFMANN: She used to come in and do the washing and ironing for us, because there were so many. The old hand irons that you used to heat on the stove, before the electric iron came out.

Eva DAWSON: Tell them about the Santa Claus.

June HOFFMANN: We used to say—we always had a mob here Christmas Eve. And one of my nephews, who was on the Capitol Hill police, he had this friend of his who would dress up as Santa Claus, and he came over one night on Christmas Eve... Well, you didn't really see him until he sat down, and we were so afraid the kids were going to see him [laughs].

Oh, Daddy used to dress up as Santa Claus. I used to drive him along Pennsylvania Avenue, over the bridge to Dot's, and then up Pennsylvania Avenue to Dook's.

Eva DAWSON: And I remember him visiting me with the different children, you know, and—

John HOFFMANN: He used to go over to the firehouse.

McMAHON: As Santa?

June HOFFMANN: He looked like a real Santa Claus, he didn't need any stuffing. [laughs]

McMAHON: Oh really? He fit the costume. Was the block racially integrated back then?

June HOFFMANN: Not when we first moved in. B Street—it was B Street then—and C Street—were mostly colored. But no, and then later on, it got so you had whites moving back here. We had white back there and colored.

McMAHON: Well, there's quite a variety of houses back there on Independence. Very small ones, some very grand ones... So were there black children that you played with?

Eva DAWSON: We played with them once in a while, yeah. And if we ever had anything to do, if we ever got in an argument with them, then we'd always send for firemen to come over! [laughs] We used to play down at those apartments... Mary and I remember. Mary remembers. We remember down in that park where that is, we used to play baseball in that little park at the corner down there.

McMAHON: The little triangle.

Eva DAWSON: Yeah. We used to play baseball down there.

June HOFFMANN: We used to play baseball in our backyard too.

McMAHON: Did you get broken windows?

June HOFFMANN: One evening, Mother had the tables all set for dinner. Everything was on the table, getting ready to sit down, and one of the boys made a home run. [chatter]... glass all over... [laughs] the place.

Eva DAWSON: I remember when they used to have the, like you said, in between the sides of the street, when they took that up, they blacktopped it. And we used to love to skate on that. Because we used to skate a lot, like we were in a skating rink, you know, and we'd skate on that. Oh, it was so much fun, because it was just new.

McMAHON: Nice and smooth. Where was the skating rink that you had gone to?

Eva DAWSON: Capitol Casino. Canal Street.

McMAHON: In Southwest?

Eva DAWSON: Mm-hmm. We used to walk there.

McMAHON: Oh, I never heard about that.

Eva DAWSON: Capitol Casino. And then they had one uptown at Foggy Bottom—Riverside. That was a nice rink at first, and then we went to the other. Talking about, you know, the fireplace there, they used to

have this coil and when it would snow we'd all go out and of course, you don't go out for very long before everything's wet. And I can just see that all these things sitting in there—the shoes...

END OF TAPE 1/SIDE 2

TAPE 2/SIDE 1

McMAHON: We're continuing after a nice lunch. We're continuing our interview with June Hoffmann and her siblings and brother-in-law. And we're going to talk a little bit about the stores that they remember being on Seventh Street right across from Eastern Market when they were growing up here because some of them have not been discussed previously. Why don't you start at the north end, at the building that for many years was an antique shop, but you remember it being something else.

June HOFFMANN: We remember it as a drugstore. It was a family drugstore. And Dr. Williams was the owner of it at the time. And they had a soda fountain in there and they also sold all different kind of things. But they even had the old, little, individual tables with those little seats...

McMAHON: Little ice cream chairs!

June HOFFMANN: Those ice cream chairs. But they also had a soda fountain that you could go up and sit on and order whatever you wanted.

McMAHON: Was it called Williams'?

June HOFFMANN: It was called Williams' Drugstore. And it was that for many years, and he had another doctor in there that helped him, too. Was that Dr...

Cap MONA: Well, he sold out to Al Banks.

June HOFFMANN: No, no, but I'm not—I'm talking about there was another doctor that helped him at the time that he had it.

McMAHON: Another pharmacist?

June HOFFMANN: There was another pharmacist that was there, you know, when he wasn't there. But later on it was sold and Dr. Banks had it, and he had it for many years. Oh, before Dr. Banks there was another one. His name started with an 'H', I can't recall it right now, but anyway there were three or four different doctors that did have that drugstore.

McMAHON: And it was that whole building there?

June HOFFMANN: It was the—yes. And they had—there was an apartment up over that, and there used to be another doctor that lived over that apartment, that...

McMAHON: That rented?

June HOFFMANN: ...was a family doctor, you know, that people used to go to.

McMAHON: He had offices upstairs.

June HOFFMANN: Yes. Another doctor had offices up over the building, and there used to be—there was a barber shop that was right next door to it, just a little building. I think it's now a little dress shop or something.

McMAHON: Oh, the clothing...the resale clothing.

June HOFFMANN: Yeah, that used to be a little barber shop.

McMAHON: What was that called?

Eva DAWSON: Angelo's.

June HOFFMANN: Angelo Paduda had that. And his brother George—Angelo and George Paduda, and Michael Paduda. The three brothers.

McMAHON: Did anyone live upstairs over them?

June HOFFMANN: Uh, I don't remember whether they did or not, but anyway the three brothers had the barber shop, and they used to charge 50 cents for a haircut.

McMAHON: And it was for men?

June HOFFMANN: It was for everybody.

Loretta MONA: Everybody.

June HOFFMANN: The children and all.

Eva DAWSON: Aunt Ann used to go there.

June HOFFMANN: And then next to that—across the alley from that there used to be an A&P and a...

Loretta MONA: Sanitary.

June HOFFMANN: Sanitary, they called it, instead of Safeway.

McMAHON: Was it A&P and Sanitary at the same time, or two grocery stores?

June HOFFMANN: Two. Two stores.

McMAHON: There were two grocery stores?

June HOFFMANN: Two, right next to each other.

McMAHON: Oh.

June HOFFMANN: And then further down the block they had...

Eva DAWSON: Spindler's.

June HOFFMANN: Spindler's. It was more or less a dive [Laughter] that they had. And...

McMAHON: Were you not allowed to go there?

June HOFFMANN: No, we weren't allowed...

Eva DAWSON: We wouldn't walk past it! [Laughter]

McMAHON: You didn't like to walk past it?

June HOFFMANN: Well, we didn't care about it, anyway. And then at one time they had the, what we call the Safeway now, they had it in the Market. It was Sanitary back then, and it was at the north end of the Market, and they used to have that. And they had Krahling's Bakery Stand—I don't know if you remember Mr. Krahling on 11th Street, but Krahling's had a bakery. You know where the meat counter—I mean, the luncheon counter was?

McMAHON: Yes.

June HOFFMANN: The bakery was just—their bakery stand was just about where that luncheon counter is now.

McMAHON: Okay, so it was not part of the Sanitary. It was a separate...

June HOFFMANN: No, it was separate.

McMAHON: It was within...

June HOFFMANN: It was Krahling's Bakery, and he had it. I mean, he also had a bakery down on 11th Street.

McMAHON: How far down on 11th?

June HOFFMANN: Um, below...

McMAHON: Below Pennsylvania?

June HOFFMANN: No, above.

McMAHON: Okay.

June HOFFMANN: This side of Pennsylvania. I'm trying to think what hundred block it was.

Eva DAWSON: The best pound cakes and the best ice cream.

McMAHON: Really?

June HOFFMANN: He did. Everything was homemade, and—I was trying to—they had, well of course there were a lot of different stands in the Market than there are now. And where the luncheon counter is now, I don't know if you happened to notice on the outside there's like a green board...boarded section that's right inside the bar.

McMAHON: Right.

June HOFFMANN: That used to open up and it was a fruit stand.

Loretta MONA: Dicola's.

McMAHON: Ticola's?

June HOFFMANN: Dicola. D-I-C-O-L-A.

McMAHON: And that was their fruit stand?

June HOFFMANN: That was a fruit stand, in other words, that—when it was closed they would put that down, and then when they were open that was lifted up and all the fruits and everything were there. They had a lot of different stands in the market than they do now.

McMAHON: Did they always have the farmer's line...

June HOFFMANN: Yes.

McMAHON: ...the way they do now?

June HOFFMANN: They—it was always—they had outside—they had fresh vegetables and, you know, fruits and everything outside.

McMAHON: Was that just Saturdays?

June HOFFMANN: Well, most of the time it was Saturdays that it was outside but it was always, you know, they always had the same things inside.

McMAHON: Okay.

June HOFFMANN: Just different things—different stands were inside. I can remember going over there when they had the—I'm trying to think. Mr. Zambrini, that was his name. He had the sauerkraut and the pickles... all these barrels and, you know, with all the different fresh stuff.

McMAHON: And was that outside or inside?

June HOFFMANN: Yeah, it was inside.

McMAHON: That was inside...

June HOFFMANN: That was...

McMAHON: ...so that was a full time...

June HOFFMANN: That was right as you go in using the first door to the—where they've got flowers now.

McMAHON: Right.

June HOFFMANN: That was where Mr. Zambrini was.

McMAHON: Okay.

June HOFFMANN: And he'd have the fresh...

John HOFFMANN: We also got our eggs all at Wilbur's.

June HOFFMANN: Oh, yeah. Well, that's another story, too. Then, further down the market, I mean, Wilbur was the one that we knew, that had the dairy stand, where you get eggs and stuff and so forth.

McMAHON: Okay. Now are we talking about the 30s, or...?

June HOFFMANN: This is in the 30s.

McMAHON: In the 30s.

June HOFFMANN: Even back before then because when Grandma—when we used to come over and visit Grandma before we were even here, and Grandma used to send me over to get ten cents worth of steak. [Laughter]

McMAHON: How big was that?

June HOFFMANN: It would feed the whole family! [Laughter] Well, back then you could get bacon for about ten cents a pound! [Laughter]

McMAHON: Right.

June HOFFMANN: I said when you think about the prices now of the things and you think back, and back then if you went over to the market and you ordered anything, you'd—all you'd—if you wanted a ham bone, though, or anything, you'd ask and they'd give it to you!

McMAHON: Sure, and they didn't charge you for it.

June HOFFMANN: No. Cause Grandma used to say, "Well, you go over there and ask them if they've got hambones so I can make some soup." [Laughing]

McMAHON: Sure.

Eva DAWSON: And the Christmas trees they used to have out at Christmas time.

June HOFFMANN: Oh yeah, well, they still...

Eva DAWSON: Outside the market.

June HOFFMANN: They still do that.

Eva DAWSON: Do they?

June HOFFMANN: Yeah, they still do that.

McMAHON: Yeah, that'll start pretty soon.

June HOFFMANN: Yeah.

Eva DAWSON: Mm hmm.

June HOFFMANN: Seems like it starts earlier and earlier each year.

McMAHON: Of course.

June HOFFMANN: But, uh, I said it's...

McMAHON: Now, was Hine Junior High at the north end of that space at that time?

June HOFFMANN: Yes. Yes. Yes. There were three schools that were over there. There was Hine, there was Wallach, and what was the third one now...I'm trying to think...

McMAHON: Was that Cranch?

June HOFFMANN: Uh, no. What was that third...isn't that awful, I can't—But they had three schools on the property at one time, and two of them were on the Eighth Street side, and Hine was on the Seventh Street side. [ed: the third school was Towers.]

McMAHON: Okay.

June HOFFMANN: And, the Hine building that they have now is an entirely different building from what was there.

McMAHON: I realized, yes.

June HOFFMANN: It was an old red brick building.

Eva DAWSON: Wasn't Wallachs there first? I mean...

June HOFFMANN: Wallach was down on the...

Eva DAWSON: That was...

[Overlapping voices]

June HOFFMANN: Hine was the mid-, you know, grades. Wallach was the elementary.

Cap MONA: You know, I actually went to kindergarten at Wallach.

McMAHON: Oh, did you?

Cap MONA: Yeah, that was forty...what do you think, Mom, about '49, maybe, '48?

June HOFFMANN: But anyway...

Cap MONA: It was '47. It was kindergarten.

June HOFFMANN: They've still...I mean, do you ever notice the pictures they've got around here at the Sizzling Express? The old pictures?

McMAHON: Yes.

June HOFFMANN: They've got pictures of the schools.

McMAHON: And wasn't that Hine building originally Eastern High School, even before that?

June HOFFMANN: I think it was supposed to be...

McMAHON: And then they built Eastern...

June HOFFMANN: Eastern, yeah. And they used to have—there was a high school and a junior high. And then it became strictly junior high. And then they finally got rid of the other schools and just Hine was in there.

McMAHON: Let's go back to the Sanitary market because...was it at two different times that it was in the north building of the Market and then was it later that it moved across the street?

June HOFFMANN: Yeah, yeah. Yeah. They originally, when we first came back here, it was inside because you used to have to go inside to get there.

McMAHON: In Eastern Market.

June HOFFMANN: And back at that time, like every place you went, you didn't go take things off the shelves, they got it for you.

McMAHON: Okay.

June HOFFMANN: And...

McMAHON: But then Sanitary moved across the street.

June HOFFMANN: Yeah.

McMAHON: But still near the corner of North Carolina...

June HOFFMANN: Yeah.

McMAHON: Not further down where it later was...

June HOFFMANN: No, no.

McMAHON: ...in the 70s. And you were remembering the Kresge's at the corner of Seventh and Pennsylvania.

June HOFFMANN: Oh yes. I said, when they took that away [laughing] I thought it was the end of the world, because we used to go there for everything that we needed. Anything you needed you could get.

McMAHON: Do you know...was that there when you first moved here in '31?

June HOFFMANN: Yeah, so far as I can remember. I can't remember it being anything else but.

Eva DAWSON: I don't think so either, but...

Cap MONA: Kresge's at Seventh and Penn? Yeah, I remember walking by that. Do you remember the little doughnut machine they had out in front of the glass?

Loretta MONA: She's talking about when we moved here.

Cap MONA: Oh, yeah, I know that. But, I mean, after the 40s...

June HOFFMANN: Yeah, I'm pretty sure it was here...

Loretta MONA: I don't think so. When I was nine years old and we moved here, and Kresge's was there? I don't think so.

June HOFFMANN: I think so.

McMAHON: Well, there's a disagreement for the historians to figure out.

Loretta MONA: I don't think so, but Kresge's came later.

Bill DAWSON: Little Tavern was right next door.

June HOFFMANN: No that was across the street.

[Various voices agree that it was across the street]

Bill DAWSON: Oh, that's right.

Eva DAWSON: Next to Arundel.

Loretta MONA: Avenue Grand.

Bill DAWSON: Right.

McMAHON: Now, what's Arundel, that you mentioned?

Eva DAWSON: That was where you could get ice cream and sandwiches and stuff like that. People's was on the corner. Next to them, I think, was Arundel, and next to them was the...

McMAHON: Little Tavern?

Eva DAWSON: Little Tavern, or vice versa.

June HOFFMANN: Little Tavern was next to them.

McMAHON: Well that Tavern building is still there.

June HOFFMANN: Yeah. It's still there but it's not Little Tavern.

McMAHON: I'm not sure what it's called. You mean it was the hamburger Little Tavern?

June HOFFMANN: Yeah.

Eva DAWSON: Oh, yeah, the best thing you could get...mmmm.

June HOFFMANN: They were ten cents apiece!

John HOFFMANN: Buy them by the bag.

McMAHON: Right.

Eva DAWSON: Oh, they were delicious.

McMAHON: I do remember those.

Bill DAWSON: Nickel a piece.

June HOFFMANN: Good, yeah.

McMAHON: And you had mentioned to me earlier that you had liked the sliced ham at Kresge's.

June HOFFMANN: Oh yes, they used to—they had really good ham. And it was so good that I took some to the office when I was working at the Supreme Court, and one of the men there asked me where I had gotten that ham, and I told him. He said, "Well, the next time you go there would you please get me some." And I did. [Laughter]

McMAHON: Can you talk a little about entertainment that you had when you were teenagers? Now, your age spread is—you weren't all teenagers at the same time.

June HOFFMANN: Well, not exactly. We were...different ages...

Eva DAWSON: Well, Dorothy was ten years older than me and that was the oldest girl...

June HOFFMANN: And I'm seven years—

Eva DAWSON: ...and you're seven years older than I am. Seven.

June HOFFMANN: But, as teenagers, well, I mean, at any age we had—we always had company—people come to the house. We never really went out anyplace. Everybody just came and visited us. And Mother would play the piano, and we'd all sing and dance. And at that time we used to have rugs and we'd roll up the rugs, and we'd [laughing]...

Eva DAWSON: Well, now, see, we had other things to do. We roller skated...

June HOFFMANN: Yes, we roller skated...but I'm speaking about...

Eva DAWSON: ...five or six of us—yeah, going down to the Capitol Casino.

June HOFFMANN: We didn't have to, you know, go out, to get...anything.

Eva DAWSON: And ice-skating, and, you know...

McMAHON: But did your schools have dances, and...?

Eva DAWSON: Well, Catholic schools didn't.

McMAHON: ...when you were at high school?

June HOFFMANN: When we were in high school we didn't have those very often. But when you would have a prom or something, if we went out with our friends and went to a dance someplace. And afterwards it was a Saturday night and they had either a one or a two o'clock Mass at St—I mean, at Immaculate Conception down at Eighth and N [Streets] NW, and we'd go out and we'd go to the dance, and afterwards we'd go over to the church and go to the Mass, and then come home.

McMAHON: And were those well-attended Masses?

June HOFFMANN: Yes.

McMAHON: There'd be a pretty good crowd there?

June HOFFMANN: Yes, there were always a good crowd.

McMAHON: Very interesting. I wonder how long they did that?

June HOFFMANN: They did that every—as I can remember it was every weekend that they had a two o'clock—one or two o'clock Mass that you could go to. And then you could sleep in. [Laughter]

McMAHON: On Sunday morning. That was back before you could go to church on Saturday.

June HOFFMANN: Yeah.

McMAHON: This has been wonderful. I've enjoyed meeting all of you and talking with you and recording all these reminiscences, and is there anything else that we should talk about that we haven't covered?

Cap MONA: Can we pick up on what Aunt Dook said about roller-skating and ice-skating? Where'd you do that?

Eva DAWSON: Used to roller skate down at the Capitol Casino.

Cap MONA: Where is that?

Eva DAWSON: Used to be down at Canal Street.

Cap MONA: Oh.

Eva DAWSON: Used to walk. We'd walk all the way down there, and then we'd go—it's South Capitol and Canal, I think, wasn't it...

June HOFFMANN: Yes.

Eva DAWSON: ...or something like that. And we'd roller skate for about four hours and then come home, everybody'd have their skates over their shoulders, and just walk on home. And that's what we did. We walked, you know. You very seldom went anyplace when...

Cap MONA: No, no. It was the same when I was growing up. We'd walk everywhere.

Eva DAWSON: ...unless you went uptown. We, you know,... sometimes we'd even do that, but we...

June HOFFMANN: Did you tell them about the time Daddy went down?

Eva DAWSON: Oh, Daddy went skating one time. [Laughter] Mary was determined to get him on skates, so he got on skates [laughing] and Mary was trying to hold him up, but he was just going along slow so I don't know whether he fell or not, did he?

June HOFFMANN: I don't know.

Eva DAWSON: I think he fell, but anyway that was enough for him right there, so, yeah, mm hmm. As I say, we'd go to ball games and you know, we had a lot of things we did on our own. When we were younger, we would play dodge ball... Take the ten. We'd play tag, yeah tag.

[Multiple Voices]: Tag.

Eva DAWSON: Hide and go seek.

[Multiple Voices]: Hide and go seek.

June HOFFMANN: Simon Says.

Eva DAWSON: Yeah, all of those things we played, you know.

Cap MONA: How about the bowling alley? Mom, I remember you taking me to the bowling alley.

Eva DAWSON: Oh yeah. It was on Eighth Street.

Cap MONA: The duckpins.

Eva DAWSON: That was Eighth Street.

Cap MONA: Of course, the guys put them up. They didn't have the automatics back then.

[Multiple voices]: No.

Cap MONA: You'd throw some coins down to him at the end of the game.

[Multiple voices]: Yeah.

Cap MONA: Mom, you were getting older back then?

McMAHON: Where was that, on Eighth...?

Eva DAWSON: Eighth Street, it was the second block. It was above...

June HOFFMANN: Yeah, you went upstairs.

Eva DAWSON: Mm hmmm. It was on the top floor.

John HOFFMANN: On Eighth Street.

McMAHON: A bowling alley upstairs?

June HOFFMANN: Mm hmmm. Yeah.

Eva DAWSON: It might have even had one underneath, but we always went upstairs.

John HOFFMANN: Yeah, right across from the fire house.

Eva DAWSON: Mm hmm.

McMAHON: On Eighth Street SE.

Eva DAWSON: No, the next block.

Cap MONA: Down one block. Maybe like F or something like that.

June HOFFMANN: Then we used to go up to the top of Pennsylvania Avenue hill, you know, over in, you know, in Hillcrest.

John HOFFMANN: Fort Davis.

June HOFFMANN: There used to be a...Fort Davis.

Cap MONA: Fort Davis?

June HOFFMANN: We used to go bowling up there.

McMAHON: What was the bowling alley called down here on Eighth?

Eva DAWSON: I'm trying—Kingpin, wasn't it?

June HOFFMANN: I think, yeah.

Eva DAWSON: It was Kingpin, or something like that. It was King something.

McMAHON: I suppose the building is still there.

June HOFFMANN: Oh yeah.

Eva DAWSON: Oh yeah, the building's still there. It's not a bowling alley but I don't know what it is now.

Cap MONA: What were some of the other things down Eighth Street? That's a jumping place now.

Eva DAWSON: Oh I know.

June HOFFMANN: Yeah. We've got so many different restaurants.

Cap MONA: The Navy Yard and the Marine Barracks was a real rowdy area, wasn't it back then?

Eva DAWSON: Well...

June HOFFMANN: Back years ago. I mean, you didn't...

Eva DAWSON: Ask Bill! He can tell you about some of those buildings! [Laughter]

McMAHON: Bill the fireman knew about those!

Cap MONA: Bill the fireman!

Bill DAWSON: Wasn't nothing wrong with it. [Laughter]

Eva DAWSON: Who was it, Sally Rand, or someone that used to go down there?

Bill DAWSON: Where?

Eva DAWSON: Who was it that...one of the women that...

June HOFFMANN: That was Ninth Street.

Eva DAWSON: ...used to sing down there too.

Bill DAWSON: Oh, uh...

Eva DAWSON: I know who...yeah, I know.

Bill DAWSON: [chuckling] Louise Potter.

Eva DAWSON: Was that it? I don't know.

Bill DAWSON: And Jack Rhodes.

Eva DAWSON: Oh yeah, Jack Rhodes, that was the one that was so tough.

McMAHON: Those are the names of places?

Bill DAWSON: It wasn't so tough.

Eva DAWSON: Jack Rhodes, yeah.

Bill DAWSON: Just cause we went down with four or five guys...

McMAHON: These are bars?

[Laughter]

John HOFFMANN: And that—around that corner of Sixth, Pennsylvania Avenue, is where the...

Eva DAWSON: Laskins.

John HOFFMANN: Lask...

June HOFFMANN: Laskins.

Eva DAWSON: And that used to be a bar.

John HOFFMANN: And what's her name used to play the piano there.

June HOFFMANN: Oh but that wasn't...

Eva DAWSON: Oh, that was later.

June HOFFMANN: Yeah, that was Mr. Henry's. But before that it was Laskins. It was a restaurant.

McMAHON: Laskins, like...

June HOFFMANN: L-A-S-K-I-N.

McMAHON: So like the country, or state.

Eva DAWSON: They used to live on this block, didn't they? Or did they?

June HOFFMANN: No. That was Sinrod's.

Eva DAWSON: Oh, that was Sinrod's. Sinrod the tailor.

June HOFFMANN: You know where the mimeo gram place is now?

McMAHON: Kinkos?

June HOFFMANN: Kinkos. Well, no. Up above...what's his name, he used to do the bulletin for church.

McMAHON: I know who you mean.

June HOFFMANN: That's where the tailors used to be.

McMAHON: Carpinetti?

June HOFFMANN: Yeah. Carpinetti. That was Sinrod's tailor shop. And next door to that was Berlin's hardware store.

Eva DAWSON: Yeah, that's right.

McMAHON: So now we're talking about the 600 block of Pennsylvania.

June HOFFMANN: Yeah.

Eva DAWSON: Yeah.

June HOFFMANN: And then on the north side of the street were homes.

McMAHON: Oh.

June HOFFMANN: They were all homes, practically.

McMAHON: So where the bank is now? Where Citibank is?

June HOFFMANN: As a matter of fact, one of the girls I went to school with lived in the house on the corner there.

McMAHON: Oh. I didn't realize that wasn't always a commercial block.

June HOFFMANN: No.

Cap MONA: Which block you talking about, Aunt June?

June HOFFMANN: Between Sixth and Seventh, on Pennsylvania. Where the bank is now.

Cap MONA: Yeah.

June HOFFMANN: That used to be homes. Home all along there.

Cap MONA: Wow.

Eva DAWSON: Well...

McMAHON: All the way to where Sizzling Express is now?

June HOFFMANN: That was Audrey...

Eva DAWSON: Hammer?

June HOFFMANN: No, Audrey Hammer lived across the block.

Eva DAWSON: Yeah, I know that.

June HOFFMANN: Trying to think of her name...

Eva DAWSON: While you're trying to think of it, I was going to say, you know as you go down where the Capitol is...Capitol is? You know, you go down there, they've got the, is it the Senate or office building or whatever it is...Rayburn?

June HOFFMANN: Yeah. Rayburn building.

Eva DAWSON: I used to go down there...

June HOFFMANN: Those were homes all there, too.

Eva DAWSON: ...I'd go down and visit a girl down there when we went to St. Peter's. She lived on that block. And I remember when they were all homes and then they had another block in between, I don't know what it was...something.

June HOFFMANN: Yeah.

McMAHON: Well, and the block where the Madison building now is, that would have been across...right across from St. Peter's. That...

June HOFFMANN: Yeah, that was all homes.

McMAHON: ...was homes and then Independence, those were businesses and restaurants?

June HOFFMANN: They—yes. I can tell you a lot of the businesses that were along there then. And there used to be a drugstore at one end...at...

McMAHON: The First Street end?

June HOFFMANN: Yeah. First Street end they had a drugstore. I'm trying to think... it was one of the big ones that they eventually had there. And there was a couple of dress shops. As a matter of fact Nana used to own one of the shops... [ed: maybe inaccurate?]

Eva DAWSON: Yeah, and that one...

McMAHON: Do you remember the name of that?

June HOFFMANN: Klein's.

Eva DAWSON: Yeah, okay.

McMAHON: K-L-E-I-N?

June HOFFMANN: K-L-E-I-N. There was a dress shop, and there was a Chinese place, a restaurant, I don't remember what that was cause we didn't go there too much, but I know that there was one there. And...

June HOFFMANN: Neptune.

McMAHON: Was that a restaurant?

June HOFFMANN: Yes, that was up there. And I'm trying to think what else was along—Oh, the bookstore.

McMAHON: Trover.

June HOFFMANN: Trover's used to be up in that block.

McMAHON: I had heard that.

June HOFFMANN: Trover's was up in that block. What else was up there? There's Trover's, the drugstore, a Chinese...

Eva DAWSON: You mean—there was an Italian place, too, but I'm not sure.

June HOFFMANN: Yeah, well, there was an Italian place, too.

McMAHON: A restaurant?

Eva DAWSON: Yeah, because I remember eating there.

June HOFFMANN: And then...

McMAHON: But you didn't eat out that much, did you?

June HOFFMANN: We used to eat out a good bit.

McMAHON: Did you?

June HOFFMANN: Well, Daddy would take us everywhere.

Eva DAWSON: We used to go down—it was O'Donnell's.

June HOFFMANN: O'Donnell's. That was...

Eva DAWSON: Oh yeah.

June HOFFMANN: ...12th and E.

Cap MONA: How did Pappy ever take you without a car or...?

June HOFFMANN: He had a car!

[overlapping voices]

June HOFFMANN: Daddy always had a big car...

Eva DAWSON: He had a Nash...

June HOFFMANN: ...One that would seat at least seven...

Cap MONA: Oh wow.

Eva DAWSON: Nash, a Buick, you know...

Bill DAWSON: If they couldn't ride inside they rode on the running board! [Laughter]

Eva DAWSON: You lie!

June HOFFMANN: No. If we'd go someplace...

Cap MONA: Everybody sitting on each other's lap.

June HOFFMANN: ...Daddy had big cars all the time.

Cap MONA: Well, I remember the Buick. The 52 Buick Roadmaster.

Eva DAWSON: Yeah.

June HOFFMANN: But I mean, before that even, he had cars that even had seats that you could pull down and...

Cap MONA: Wow.

Eva DAWSON: We used to go up to the Avalon, and we used to go up to the, like I say...the Earl Theater.

June HOFFMANN: Yeah, we used to...

Eva DAWSON: ...the movie theater, and we'd go out to...dinner.

June HOFFMANN: O'Donnell's.

Eva DAWSON: Yeah.

June HOFFMANN: Most of the time when we went out with Daddy we went down to O'Donnell's. The one at 12th and E. And later on they had one in the middle of the block, too, but the 12th and E was the favorite place.

McMAHON: And that was seafood, right?

June HOFFMANN: Seafood.

Eva DAWSON: Mm hmm.

June HOFFMANN: Daddy knew Tom O'Donnell, and boy, we got the royal treatment when we were there. [laughs] There were two head waiters that always took care of us. One was Gordon and the other one was Banks. That was the name of the two head waiters. And when they saw Daddy, they were front and center [Laughter] and they'd come and they'd say, "How many this evening, Mr. Hoffmann?" And Daddy would tell them the number and we'd eat. They'd give him the best table they could get and the best service. Everything was just wonderful.

John HOFFMANN: My favorite dish was Shrimp Norfolk.

June HOFFMANN: And anyway, during the war, we went down there and they had to, because you know, all the men were going off to war, they had girls as waitresses because they always had men waiters, and they had the girls as waitresses, and this one time, we went down and Daddy ordered his usual dozen oysters on the half shell, and then he ordered a second one. [Laughter] Daddy was a big eater. After he ordered all this, he ordered a steak and stuff, and finally when it ended he orders strawberry shortcake, and when they gave you strawberry shortcake, I mean, it was ...it's like this, it's about this high. Well, when he got through eating it, he asked the girl for the check. At this time I think it was only four of us that went. It was Mother and Dad, and a friend of ours and me. And then the waiter came over and she gave him the check. She says, "Mr. Hoffmann, you're a big man," she says. "But I'd rather clothe you than feed you." [Laughter]

McMAHON: What a good line.

Cap MONA: Let me quote something out of the Congress Heights Booster from March 29, 1924, when Grandpap bought the McKinna land, and they talked about how large and prestigious the property was, but they also talked about his personality. "He's the son of Carl Hoffmann of 915 Savannah Street SE. Young Mr. Hoffmann is an expert in finance and accounting work, and is well known in financial circles in Washington. For nine years Mr. Hoffmann was the Washington Post—was with the Washington Post, the last five years of which he was the auditor." And it talks about Crandall Theaters and whatever, but...

McMAHON: Oh, that's good, to have that recorded, because we didn't talk about his job earlier at the Washington Post. That's very good. Well, I think this would be a good time to conclude this. These have been wonderful stories, and I really appreciate your all taking so much time to do this with me. Thank you very much.

Eva DAWSON: Thank you for coming.

Cap MONA: That was very interesting for everybody...

END OF INTERVIEW