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Daniel Levin

Rosie the Riveter
World War II American Home Front Oral History Project

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Interviews conducted by
Jess Rigelhaupt
in 2012

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Daniel Levin

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Interview 1: July 11, 2012

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Rigelhaupt: Okay. It is July 11, 2012. I'm in Arlington, Virginia, doing an oral history with Daniel Levin. The way I start is if I could ask you to say your full name and the year you were born.

01-00:00:23

Levin: My name is Daniel Lawrence Levin. I was born November the 22nd, 1931.

Rigelhaupt: And where were you born?

01-00:00:32

Levin: I was born in the hospital in Spring Lake, New Jersey.

Rigelhaupt: Where's Spring Lake near?

01-00:00:39

Levin: Spring Lake is a small, sleepy town on the coast, in central New Jersey, just south of Asbury Park, probably fifty miles north of Atlantic City. As a small child, after being born, the family resided in another little town called Neptune City. We lived there several years, and then eventually moved up to Asbury Park, which was a very busy town, back in those days. Probably about a population of 8,000 people. It was kind of the center, focus little town for that particular part of New Jersey. The town was in Monmouth County, which of course, goes way back to the Revolutionary War, so there's a lot of history there, too. But it was a nice place to grow up. We had a beautiful house. We lived about a block from a big, big lake, and we were about a mile from the ocean. There were two other little lakes in the town, and as a youngster— It was a great place to grow up. We had all kinds of outdoor activities going on, and my brother and myself kind of lived on the water. We had a little boat and we had friends that had canoes and rowboats, and we fished during the summer seasons. We were on the water just about, I'd say, almost every day. Then when we weren't on the lake, my mom used to pack lunch and take us down to the beach. We'd stay at the beach from probably ten o'clock in the morning till around four in the afternoon. Unbeknownst at the time, probably had the beginnings of a bad thing happening, because of the sun. As an older person and an old person, I now have a very low tolerance for sun and have had some battles—minor battles, I should say—with basal cell cancers and one case of melanoma. But [at] that time, they used to say, oh my gosh, look at that little boy; look at what a beautiful tan he's got. But in retrospect, it wasn't that great. But anyway, we grew up there and it was, as I say, a nice place to grow up.

01-00:03:18

Some of the recollections of World War II came along. Of course, all the older guys— Well, older guys, in those days, for me, were people, sixteen, seventeen and above. These were men that were taken out of the work force

and had joined up in the service, so it left a very large void for manpower. And Asbury Park still continued to function as a summer resort. People from the large cities, such as Philadelphia and Trenton and some out of North Jersey and New York and what have you, would vacation in the summertime in Asbury Park. I went to work; my first job, I was thirteen years old and I was a dishwasher for an uncle of my mother's, who had a restaurant right on the boardwalk in another little town called Bradley Beach, which was adjacent to Asbury Park. Good food was hard to get ahold of. I think most of the real good food was purchased under the counter, or under the table. Learned the restaurant business. Graduated from being a dishwasher to a cook's helper, learned how to do things in the kitchen. It was a pretty exciting time. I did that for a year, I guess almost two years, and then I went in the big time. I got a job in a restaurant, and in the restaurant they had a counter, as well as the tables and chairs, and I became a sandwich maker and waited on people. Did that up till about I was fourteen. Then I really became a real big-time operator and very knowledgeable and I graduated and went into another restaurant, for more money and better working conditions. I was making, at the last two jobs I had—I should say next to the last job I had—I was making sixty dollars a week. Now, sixty dollars a week back in 1944 was a lot of money. A dollar an hour. My mother was not happy with me working sixty hours a week. I got a lot of flak at home. But I convinced her I would only do it that one summer. Then the job I took after that went back to forty hours a week and less money, but my mom was happy.

01-00:06:00

Some of the things that were kind of different in the town during the war, we used to collect all kinds of goodies, like tin cans, aluminum foil, fat from cooking bacon or something like that—these were all collectibles during the war and you turned them in to different places where they were collected and recycled, even back in the forties. Oh, this was all for the war effort. One of the things that were peculiar to the area in Asbury Park, and I'm sure other locations, the headlights on automobiles in those days were just basically a round headlight. They were painted black on the top half, so it wouldn't reflect any light up into the sky or whatever, should there be one of the enemy happened to run by there or fly by there. As a kid, I used to work up in a area about a mile and a half off the beach—or actually, a couple miles off the beach. They called it the sand hills. It was a raised area, and the government had set up observations posts. We had schematics of what German airplanes—silhouettes, I should say—of German airplanes and Japanese airplanes, and we were real big-time kids. We had a powerful set of binoculars, and we would scan the skies for an hour or two at a time, till our eyes got bleary, and then somebody would relieve us. It was kind of a neat thing for a thirteen-year-old, fourteen-year-old kid. Down at the beach, they had erected— It's hard to explain what they were, but I called them curtains. They were hunks of black canvas that they hung from these metal railings that were up about ten feet high. This was to block out the lights from the general area on the ground, so it wouldn't reflect out into the ocean. During that period of time,

in '42, '43, '44, the German U-boats had a field day right off the coast of New Jersey. I remember we always had oil in the water. In fact, it was so bad that when you came out of the water after swimming, they used to keep a five-gallon can of kerosene and a bunch of rags there near the beach, near the sand— or not near the sand, but on the sand near the water, and you could wipe the oil off your body, if you got any on it. But it was a pretty treacherous time for the people that were aboard ships and the freighters and what have you. They were getting torpedoed pretty regularly. That was kind of a neat thing. It ran the whole course of the city. I don't remember whether it went into the next little towns or not. But I think most of the lights were generated in the Asbury Park area. They still had amusements going on and little restaurants and cotton candy and salt-water taffy and everything. It was business as usual, but they did cut down on the amount of stuff that they produced. Again, you didn't have the number of people that you would've had under normal circumstances, because of the war effort.

01-00:09:30

Kind of a comical thing that happened, I remember. My mom and dad both worked for the government. My mother worked for Army security, out in a place called Fort Evans, which was in Belmar, New Jersey, up in the sand hills; and my dad worked for the Army Signal Corps, over at Fort Monmouth, which is up near Red Bank. During that period of time, my mother's sister and her husband was having a hard time finding housing. So we had a pretty good-sized house and my mom and dad offered one of the rooms, the bedroom, that they could live in. My uncle worked up in— I think it was Kearney, New Jersey or up in the North Jersey area, at a company called Tight Flex. The Tight Flex Company manufactured braided cables that they used in airplanes. During that same period of time, a lady who worked with my mother got very sick and my mother volunteered to take over the care of her dog, which was a half chow, half German shepherd. So we had the dog at the house and the first or second night, I don't remember exactly, but— My aunt and uncle didn't know about it. We didn't have paging and cell phones and all these good ways of communication back in those days. So my uncle used to work a crazy shift and he would get home like two o'clock in the morning. The first night we had the dog there— The dog used to sleep under my mother and father's bed. That's where he wanted to stay. My uncle came home at two o'clock in the morning, and as he came up on the porch and opened up the screen door and opened up the door, this twenty-five-pound dog came flying through the air, off of the stairs, and tackled him. Hit him right in the chest, knocked him down. It's kind of comical, but he was lucky he didn't get hurt or bit. My mom, fortunately, had woke up and was able to call the dog off. The dog's name was Sandy. We never gave Sandy a bath in two years. Sandy used to like to go down to the ocean and go swimming with us. So he was kind of squeaky clean with salt water all the time.

01-00:12:10

We used to have a lot of dirigibles flying over Asbury Park and over the beach—in the summertime, especially, we would notice them—coming out of Lakehurst, New Jersey. Lakehurst was a large, lighter-than-air station that the Navy had, and it was famous for—I guess for a negative thing. But I guess it must've been 1937, thereabouts, '36, '37, the Hindenburg blew up, burned up, over Lakehurst. But anyway, the Navy had set up their station there and they launched the blimps, and the blimps would go out for anti-submarine warfare, over the beachfront, and go I don't know how many miles out. They didn't go out too far. But they were out there looking for submarines all the time. How successful they were, I don't know. But we had a lot of blimps around. That was kind of a neat thing. Let me gather some thoughts here.

01-00:13:10

Like everybody else, we had gas rationing. I remember oleo margarine came out during World War II. It was a substitute for butter. Looked like butter, except it didn't have any color. But they gave you a little capsule that had coloring in it, and you would break the capsule open and put it in the oleo, and then whip it up and get it to look like butter. Didn't taste like butter, thought. Kind of gross-tasting stuff. But that was a substitute, what they came up with. We didn't have a problem. You couldn't get certain types of meat cuts, different types of things. Most things, you were rationed with, but the rationing was very fair and you didn't need much more than what you were allowed for a family and what have you. I lived in Asbury Park up till 1947. Obviously, the war had finished up and a lot of the guys came back. We heard some real crazy war stories from some of these fellows. Some of them were very, very sad; some of them were very funny. Most of them on the sad side.

01-00:14:27

My father was offered a job to move to Arlington, Virginia, to work for an upstart company called the Georator Corporation. The owner of it and the guy that started it all was his boss during World War II, when they both worked at the Signal Corps. They used to specialize in making microminiature generators and stuff like that. Their plant was right here in Arlington. Evidently, they offered my father so much money that he couldn't turn it down, so the family moved to Arlington, Virginia. Can we take a pause?

Rigelhaupt: Sure.

01-00:15:08

Levin: Or do you have some—

Rigelhaupt: I've got some questions, but feel free to— So going backwards a little bit, in terms of your family being in and around Asbury Park, New Jersey, had they been there for a long time?

01-00:15:23

Levin:

My mother and father were married in 1929. My father lived in Massachusetts, in Northampton, Massachusetts. My mother originally was from Connecticut. Windsor Park, Windsor Lake, Windsor-something. Anyway, it's kind of funny. My father had an uncle in Long Branch, New Jersey, and my mother had an aunt—and their families—in Long Branch, New Jersey. They were both visiting in Long Branch. Evidently, the families were friendly, and they met. Then they started dating, and then I think about a year or so later, they tied the knot, they got married. But they didn't settle in Long Branch. Long Branch is just about five miles from Asbury Park. But they wound up living initially, I think, in Neptune City, which is right next to Asbury Park. All these little towns around there; you go fifteen blocks and you're in another little town. That was how they got down to that area. My father, by trade, was an automobile mechanic. Had left home when he was eighteen years old, for bigger and better things. My grandfather, it's interesting, was a tailor and had a tailoring shop in Northampton. He was the tailor for Calvin Coolidge. His tailor shop and Calvin Coolidge's law offices were right next door to one another, on the second floor of this building in downtown Northampton. I have some relics from that place. You want to hear that story about Calvin Coolidge?

Rigelhaupt:

Yes.

01-00:17:27

Levin:

After Calvin Coolidge went out as president, he went back into law practice. He needed more space in his office. So there was a hallway that separated his office and my grandfather's shop, so they told my grandfather that they were going to block up one of his— He had two entrances to his shop. They were going to block up one of the entrances and they were going to expand Calvin Coolidge's law office—which they did. Which was no big deal for my grandfather; he didn't cut down the size of his operation or anything. Well, many, many years went by. That would've been probably back in the twenties. I have uncles, my father's brothers; one of them lived in St. Louis. About 1990, he received a phone call from the historical society of Northampton, which is a real big deal, up in New England. They tracked him down and told him that they had taken the extension of Calvin Coolidge's office apart and brought it back to the original size. In doing so, they came across this door that went into another office. On that door, was my grandfather's name, I. Levin, with the room number; and on the bottom it said, "Suits Made to Order." Would he like to have the door? He said, "Well, I didn't really want the door, but I'll take the glass." So he paid them to take the glass out of the door and they made a frame for the glass, out of the door, and shipped it to him in St. Louis. Well, my uncle got ready to move from St. Louis to Tacoma, Washington, to be closer to one of his daughters, and my wife and I went out. He asked us to come out to help him go through a lot of stuff and everything. He said, "Would you like to have that window?" I said, "Yeah, if you ever want to get rid of it." He said, "Well, one of these days, I'll

ship it to you.” I never thought too much of it. But I came home from work one day and here’s this big wooden box on my front porch. Couldn’t even hardly lift it; it must’ve weighed over a hundred pounds. I got a hand truck and took it off the porch. Make a long story short, I kept it in my family room for many years; and then in 2003, we sold the house and moved into a condo, and I gave the glass and the frame, the whole bit, to my oldest daughter, Maura, and she has it at her home. So she’s got some of the family relics. It’s kind of a neat thing, and it’s amazing the shape it’s in; it’s [in] beautiful condition. It had a little card there—or a large card, I should say—with a description of where it came from and where all the happenings were. Also my father had a clock. Looks like a wall clock, like the old schooldays clock, made by the New England Clock Company. Come to find out, it was made just prior to 1900. My father gave me that; it wasn’t working. Make a long story short, I took it to a clockmaker and they put in some new parts in it and redid the cabinet and it’s a beautiful thing. My daughter also has that, to go along with the window. Gave my other daughter some other items, to compensate for that. But it was kind of a neat thing, up in Northampton.

01-00:21:21

But getting back to New Jersey, again, it was a nice place to grow up. Fishing was good. Everything that you really want in a small community to grow up in, it really had it. Then when we moved down here, I was a little depressed that we were going to leave the area. But in retrospect, it was probably the best and smartest thing my father could ever have done. Especially financially. It made a big difference. A small town, you either have a lot of money or you don’t have a lot of money. Back in those days, if you didn’t have the money, you were never going to get that money. So financially, it was a good thing for the family.

Rigelhaupt: Well, what you just raised, in terms of money, was a question that came to my mind when you mentioned that your parents were born in 1929, which is obviously—

01-00:22:16

Levin: No, they were married in ’29.

Rigelhaupt: I’m sorry, married in ’29. Obviously, another famous year in US history, in terms of the beginning of the Depression.

01-00:22:24

Levin: Right.

Rigelhaupt: Did they talk with you about what it was like to start their marriage and a life together in the midst of the Depression?

01-00:22:33

Levin: Well, not really. My mom and dad both worked when they first got married. My mother worked in a furniture store. She was a bookkeeper. And my dad

was an automobile mechanic. I think he may have had his own shop then. I know there was a period of time when he did. But no, they didn't say too much about that. But I remember growing up, as a little, little kid, I probably was around maybe two or three years old, and I remember my father was leaving town to go find some work. He was going up to Massachusetts. In fact, he was going to Northampton. My grandfather had somehow found out that there were a lot of people around there that had automobiles that needed repairing, and he got the work for my father. It was nothing for my father to drive up to Northampton to work on these automobiles. I don't know how many cars were involved. But I remember as a little kid, I was very upset about him leaving. I can remember standing by the screen door in the front of the house, crying. Oh, my daddy's leaving. Of course, my mother explained he was just going to go out of town for while. I think he was probably up there for a couple weeks. But he evidently made a substantial amount of money. You had to do what you had to do, so to speak, to survive. But when I grew up, we were probably middleclass, lower-middleclass. You had one of a kind. I had an older brother and he got first dibs on everything. When he didn't use it, then you got to use it. I remember we had *a* sled, we had *a* bicycle. I didn't get my own bike until I was thirteen. You just didn't have a lot of frivolous things. You had a tough budget to maintain, and you didn't have lobster tails and filet mignon, that's for sure. But no, they never really talked too much about the hard times. I don't think we ever really wanted for anything. They were able to pay the rent; no one ever had to push them to pay the rent or anything like that. But they worked hard. They worked hard. They were lucky to have jobs.

Rigelhaupt: Was there a sense that other people in and around Asbury Park were losing jobs?

01-00:25:09

Levin: Oh, I've got a good one for you. My father was the service manager for a Buick dealership in 1938, I believe. And the dealership was getting ready to close, so my father figured, well, got to find another job. So he had got the word on this maybe six months before it actually happened. But previous to that, he had signed up for a job with the State of New Jersey, as an automobile inspector, safety inspector. We have them today, but way back when, New Jersey was probably one of the first states to come up with inspections for automobiles. They had a building in Asbury Park that was like a big covered tunnel, so to speak. You would drop the car off at one end and pick it up at the other end, and they would check your car out, make sure your lights were good, your brakes were good and so forth. So he had applied for this job, and just about that same time, when the dealership was going under, he got a telegram from the State of New Jersey—and I have that telegram in my den, hanging on the wall—from the commissioner of state inspections or whatever, offering him a job as a automobile inspector. You'd never guess how much money they offered him. The annual pay was \$1800 a year. That's \$1,800 a year. That's around \$35, \$34 a week. That was a good salary, back in the late

thirties in this country, and he was able to rent a house, had a car, feed his family and pay all the bills and what have you. So he was very fortunate. I found that telegram in a letter in some of his papers, after he had passed away. So I had it mounted and framed and I've got it in the house. But to answer your question, it was tight. But they were very fortunate; things worked out where they had work and they didn't have to stand in any soup lines or anything like that. I don't think you really had that Asbury Park. Well, name some of your large cities; things were a little tougher.

Rigelhaupt: Did you have a sense that—the economy, as you said, was tourism, service—there was a downturn in the—I ask in comparison to places like Detroit, where we know auto lines just shut down, thousands of people out of work all at once. It sounds like Asbury Park, in your memory and from what your parents talked about, perhaps your older brother, didn't go through a similar downturn.

01-00:28:21

Levin:

No, I don't think it hit that area that bad. People still wanted to take a vacation, and the economy of Asbury Park, back in those days, was a resort. People would spend the money to rent a room or a cottage or a hotel. Then that money sped off into other areas. If you worked there and you had a good job and you made some money, you'd buy a car or you could have a nice house or whatever. In Asbury Park itself, and most of the communities around there, I would say they were medium- to medium-low-class people. You had other towns like Deal and Interlaken and some of the other towns up there, where you had some very wealthy people that lived up in the big cities, and they had these big summer resorts, big houses—mansions, estates—that really didn't get broken up until after World War II. In fact, I was up there about three years ago, and a lot of the estates are still there. But there were a lot of manufacturers, and I guess stockbrokers or what have you, lived up in that area.

Rigelhaupt: Other than your immediate family in New Jersey, did you have extended family, aunts, uncles?

01-00:29:52

Levin:

A lot of them. Well, the aunts and uncles really were up in Massachusetts. We had, I mentioned earlier, an aunt and an uncle lived with us for I guess a couple years, during the war. Later, right at the end of the war, they moved to California. Pasadena, California. Then during that period of time, they had had a child; they had one son. But other than that, I had a lot of cousins—on my mother's side, mostly—in that area. They all worked and a couple of them were very wealthy. One of them had a very lucrative real estate and insurance business. A nice guy, and he did very well. When I moved to Arlington, I used to go back up there. I guess for about two years, three years, they would have me up there for a couple weeks in the summertime, to go around, piddle around with the kids and my cousins. It was kind of a neat thing.

Rigelhaupt: Do you have any memorable experiences from elementary school? Favorite subjects, things you liked in elementary school?

01-00:31:14

Levin: Not really. My elementary school, up in Asbury Park, was about two blocks from where we lived. It was kind of a neat area. Easy to go to school. I enjoyed going to school; it was good. I was just an average student. I didn't set the world on fire. We were big into sports. We used play baseball, softball, basketball. My father had erected a real nice backboard and a rim, in the backyard. We had a large backyard. We could have many a softball game back there. We were both very active in athletics. My brother wound up being a very good basketball player and got a scholarship to the University of Maryland. I was more of a party guy, wasn't too interested—I was okay, but I wasn't any world setter. He was six-foot-six and I was only six-foot-one, so that made a big difference on the basketball court. Plus he had more of an ambition to be a super athlete than I did. I didn't really get that excited about it.

Rigelhaupt: Was religious life a part of your growing up?

01-00:32:39

Levin: Oh, yeah. Yeah, we're Jewish, and we went to the temple; it was Reform. We had bar mitzvahs and used to have to go to classes when I was a kid. I hated it. My best friend was Catholic, Kenny Sheehan, and we'd go to his classes for—I forget what they called it now. Kind of a confirmation type thing. We'd go to his classes on one day, then we'd go to my classes the next day. Then after classes, we'd go out and play. So we had some neat things. Oh, I remember kind of a thing that happened in high school. Right after the war, there was a lot of war surplus stuff. A buddy of mine had a five-man life raft, an inflatable life raft. This was in the late spring or early summer; school was still on. It was probably early June. He said, "We ought to take the life raft and go down to the beach and take the waves in, ride the waves in. It'd be really neat." So we decided we would skip seventh period, which was the last period of school, and we'd get the boat, we'd take it down— Right in the back of the baseball field was the lake, and the lake went all the way down to the ocean. Well, just across the street from the ocean. Anyway, we got the boat, paddled on down there. It was probably the equivalent of a little over a mile. Didn't take too long. Got the boat out of the water, took it over to the beach, got in there, we had a heck of a good time. Went home, everything's fine. Next day, went to school. They used to have telephones in all the rooms. Ever have that feeling that that phone call was about you or for you? It was. They said, "Come down to the office." I went down to the office and they gave me a letter, and the lady said, "Take this letter home. You can't come back to school unless your mother or father comes back with you. You've been expelled." I said, "For what?" She said, "Well, you skipped class yesterday and they caught you. You're out." So I went home and I gave my folks the letter. Gave it to my mother, I guess. They were still working. She was still

working at Camp Evans, for the Army. She was upset about it, because she had to take the day off of work. So she got me back in and come to find out the way they caught me was— They never called the roll in that class. It was gym. When they called my name, my brother said, “Oh, he’s not here; he skipped.” So my brother ratted on me. He still hasn’t lived that down. I still nail him every now and then, when we’re together and we’re talking. My own brother ratted on me, otherwise they never would’ve— All he had to do was say here and they would’ve never known the difference. There was about fifty or sixty kids in this class. But anyway, that’s how it goes. I think I was in the eighth grade at that time.

Rigelhaupt: So you said your mom was working when your parents got married. Is that right?

01-00:36:12

Levin: Yeah, definitely.

Rigelhaupt: And she worked throughout your childhood?

01-00:36:17

Levin: No. No, she worked up till the time— When the kids were born, I think she gave up the job. I’m sure she did. But she did work up till that time. Now, back in those days, moms didn’t work. It’s not like today. You lived off of your father or the breadwinner’s salary, and that was it. There were women who did work, don’t get me wrong; but generally, the trend was that women didn’t. They were at home, cooking and washing. They didn’t have all the fancy appliances, in those days, that we have today. But there were many kind of fun things that we used to do, in the fishing area, in the lakes. We used to have water battles out on Deal Lake. Back in the old days, we had water heaters in the houses, that were in the kitchen. They were gas-fired. They were probably about, oh, maybe fourteen, fifteen inches in diameter, about six feet tall, and had hoses or pipes going in on the bottom and the top. Eventually, or sometimes, it would wear out. Later on, we had a plumber lived next door, and he would store these old ones in his backyard. But we found out that we could get corks and cork up the input and the output hose that they had in them, with corks, and we could take them down to the lake and use them to— We’d straddle them and we’d paddle on them. We’d take a paddle with us, and we would fight the kids that lived on the other side of the lake. It wasn’t a matter of hurting any, it was a matter of who could push the other two into the water. So you’d have two guys on each one. My brother and I used to do real good. Then at the end of the day, we didn’t want to drag this— It was heavy; we had to put it on a wagon. We would pull the corks, or knock the corks out of it, and sit on them and get the water in the tanks, and just let them go down to the bottom. We’d get a couple more tanks the next time we wanted to do it. I don’t know how many tanks there were in the lake, but there’re quite a few down there. Then I guess they just rusted up, eventually.

Rigelhaupt: Do you have other siblings? You mentioned your brother.

01-00:38:42

Levin: Just one, just my brother.

Rigelhaupt: Is he older or younger?

01-00:38:45

Levin: Two years older. Two years older.

Rigelhaupt: So the question about your mother working, did she, like many other women, reenter the workforce during World War II?

01-00:38:49

Levin: Yeah. They were begging for people to work. As I said earlier, she was a bookkeeper for the furniture company. But she did more stenography type work, or secretarial type work, I should say. As we're sitting right here, if you walked across the parking lot in the back of this building, you'd run into a place that was called Arlington Hall. Arlington Hall was taken over. It was a private girls school before the war. During the war, it was taken over by Army security and what is now NSA, National Security Agency. It was their home, too. She worked for ASA. She worked for the commanding officer over there, as a secretary. She worked there, well, from the time we moved down here. She went back to work probably when we were maybe teenagers. Because she was working before we did move down here, and she was transferred down from one outfit up there to over here, Arlington Hall. But she worked in Arlington Hall probably about, I'd say fifteen years, and then retired from the government. That was way back.

Rigelhaupt: And your father had worked for the Army, in the Signal Corps.

01-00:40:27

Levin: During the war.

Rigelhaupt: And then was with a private corporation here.

01-00:40:31

Levin: Right, Georator. Up till 1970. He retired in 1970. He was born in 1900. He was seventy years old.

Rigelhaupt: Let's jump back a little bit to the beginning of World War II. How do you remember hearing about the bombing of Pearl Harbor?

01-00:40:52

Levin: I don't remember where I was that Sunday. Probably on the radio. The news traveled very, very fast. It went real fast. I remember my father-in-law telling me that—this is my wife's father—he was at a football game in Washington, watching the Redskins play. They tried to hold it off, I think, as long as they could, to tell the people, but they did announce it, finally. I think they lost half

the crowd. People had to leave right away. But I don't remember what I was doing. I remember thinking, way back when, after Roosevelt got elected for the fourth time, that he was the President of the United States my entire life, up to that time. It's kind of weird, being that we have elections every four years. Of course, he was reelected just before the war ended, actually. Your mode of communication back in those days was minimal. You had telephones, obviously, but you'd listen to the radio. There were no television sets. Not everybody had more than one radio. I remember we had several radios. But you had a big console radio. The big thing in those days was a three-way combination: a radio, record player. Actually, a two-way combination. You didn't have FM, you just had straight AM radio. Your consoles were probably about, I'd say three to four feet wide, big heavy wood monstrosity and huge speakers. Then the original phonograph records we had— I remember we had one and it didn't have a good needle on it. It was a little metal needle that you had to put on there, and they wore out every now and then. They were kind of a pain in the neck. The sound was minimal; it wasn't anything great. But that's the way you got around. You didn't know any better.

Rigelhaupt:

Did you have a sense—so you're probably about ten years old—that this was going to be a profound change? That the US was going to enter the war? Was it immediate, that it even got down to a kid, that would understand something has changed?

01-00:43:49

Levin:

A little bit. More, it affected your daily life as it related to what was available and what things weren't available, like in the clothes line and shoes and things of that type. They were all rationed, once the war started. From that effect. Other than that, I don't think there was too much of an effect on it. The parents were more into it than the kids. I remember we had a neighbor. Probably, they lived about three or four houses down from us. The oldest son was in the invasion of France. He was killed on D-Day, when they invaded France. I remember we heard that. That news got around real fast. I remember we went by the house to visit the family, because he had a brother that was my age. It was pretty sad. Then we had another neighbor that was in the Air Force. Then he got out of the Air Force. He actually came by one day, got me a job in a restaurant, the last job I had up there. I can't think of his last name now. First name was Bill. I don't think he was a pilot, but he had been over in England quite a while. I had a lot of relatives. All our relatives were in the service. I had cousins, two of them were in the Coast Guard. My Uncle Sidney, which was one of my— My father was the oldest son in his family. He had three brothers and two sisters. Two of them were in the service. One uncle was a major. He was in the Health Corps. he'd go into an area to make sure everything was sanitized and there were no diseases going around or anything. My Uncle Sidney had caught up in the Battle of the Bulge. He was a machine gunner, and was overrun by the Germans, and wound up with trench feet. They had to amputate his toes. He was in pretty bad shape there for a while. But he survived. He lived to be fairly old. So we had a lot of members

of the family in the service, cousins and what have you. It really affected the families, because of where the kids were and how they were doing, hoping they would get back and they would be safe.

Rigelhaupt: Now, you mentioned that there was an understanding that ships were being sunk off the New Jersey coast.

01-00:46:61

Levin: Big time.

Rigelhaupt: How did you learn about it? Was it in newspapers? Was it on the radio?

01-00:46:56

Levin: Yeah. Yeah, you heard it on the radio, and newspapers, and by the sheer evidence. Sometimes there was just junk coming ashore. And oil. Oil was the big thing. It left just like a black ring on the sand. The sands up there were beautiful. They would go by there periodically and rake it out and get as much of it out of the ground as they could. But there was a lot of oil. It was a big thing. And you had the blimps flying overhead. Everything was activated. I was in the Boy Scouts, but it wasn't the Boy Scouts; it was called the Sea Scouts. They used to hype us up on, once you get older, you can go in the Navy and all this stuff. There was a lot of military going on. It was in your mind and your thoughts and what you did. You were conserving stuff. You would find aluminum whatever, even a piece of aluminum foil. You'd pick it up and put it in a box, and when you got enough of it, you'd turn it in. In fact, I think, if I'm not mistaken, they used to pay you to bring fat in. It was a minimal— we were talking pennies. But just to get kids to do stuff like that.

Rigelhaupt: So the war was very tangible.

01-00:48:28

Levin: Oh, yeah. Definitely. Definitely. It wasn't ho-hum, it was a real thing. Especially when you had relatives that didn't come back, and friends and neighbors and what have you. Everybody, all areas were affected. Lost a lot of people during that time.

Rigelhaupt: Now, I would imagine most, or certainly a sizeable portion of the community, knew someone in the service or either had family.

01-00:49:00

Levin: Oh, yeah.

Rigelhaupt: But it sounds as though even if you didn't have a family member or know someone personally, your life was being touched by the war in meaningful ways, that it was affecting your daily life. You knew it was going on.

01-00:49:16

Levin: Definitely. Yeah. You didn't do anything to where there wasn't some effect coming out of it. Even a mundane thing, like you got in a car and in your

automobile, you had a sticker. You had your ration— You had A, B and C. A gave you so many gallons, B gave you so many gallons and C gave you so many gallons. Then you had a card; I think they used to punch it. But you could only get so much gasoline. Even just getting in the car, you knew there was a war going on. You didn't drive around. You kept your driving to a bare minimum. People used the gasoline for going to and from work. It wasn't like, oh, let's go down to see cousin so-and-so down here and take a nice little ride. You didn't do that. You eliminated a lot of that.

Rigelhaupt: When you first moved to Arlington and you were in high school, do you remember having any conversations with your classmates about some of the differences you saw? It sounds like seeing oil and pieces of ships come, you knew something was happening. Did you compare and contrast your experiences during the war with some of your classmates here in Arlington?

01-00:50:43

Levin: Not too much with the classmates. I remember in family conversations, especially in my wife's family later on— We got married in 1951, but I knew my in-laws prior to that time; we had dated on and off for a while. But my father-in-law had a very active role in Arlington during the war. He was a chief of an auxiliary police. They used to help the police patrol and do whatever they could do for the war effort. They were non-paid. He was very much into the community. But no, not too much with— In 1947, it was over with. The kids didn't really talk to much about it. It was kind of one of those, it's gone. They were glad.

Rigelhaupt: Did your father-in-law give you more details about what he did as an auxiliary police?

01-00:51:47

Levin: Other than patrolling, they were out checking whatever they could do for the police department, because the police departments throughout the country were hurting, too because a lot of their members were drafted and were in the service. So they were bare bones, so to speak. But in those days, we used to have blackouts. They would go around the communities to make sure you turned off your lights. That was, I guess, for many purposes—so that the lights didn't shine in the sky, and to conserve the usage of electricity. They didn't carry a gun, but they would go out. They didn't go out by themselves, they always went out with a uniformed officer.

Rigelhaupt: Now, it sounds like the blackouts in coastal New Jersey were about that being a potential target.

01-00:52:44

Levin: Right.

Rigelhaupt: Did you hear from your family that there were blackouts here in Arlington, as well?

01-00:52:52

Levin: Oh, yeah.

Rigelhaupt: Now, was there the same sense that the proximity to military installations in Arlington made *this* area a potential target?

01-00:53:05

Levin: I really don't know. I can't honestly say. I wouldn't be surprised if it was, because you had a lot of people in this area that had moved into this area on a temporary basis, for the war effort. Arlington Farms was down here, where Fort Myer is now. They built these temporary buildings to house people—most of them females, for clerical work and stuff like that. Thousands of people. I guess being in off the coast, though, I guess it was kind of self-protected. You didn't have the rockets and stuff like that, back in those days, that you would have today, to worry about.

Rigelhaupt: Now, you mentioned that your aunt and uncle lived with you because it sounded like there were housing shortages. Could you talk more about the housing shortages you saw?

01-00:54:15

Levin: Yeah. When we moved here in 1947, my mom and dad were looking for houses, and there weren't any. There were a few that you could rent, but there was basically very little construction going on. My mom and dad rented a house, just a small, two-bedroom, semi-detached house. They lived in that for about three years, and then they found a larger house and bought one. But during that period of time, even into the early fifties, housing was not readily available. They just started to build. I know when my wife and I got married in '51, Springfield and areas ten, fifteen miles out were way out. A house was very expensive. I remember we look at one for fourteen-nine-fifty. \$14,950. I looked at my wife as if she was crazy. How can you spend that much money on a house? But housing then, of course, everything boomed in the fifties and sixties, what have you. That pretty well went, I think, over most of the country. But there wasn't much going on until a little while after the war, because everything was going into the war effort.

Rigelhaupt: I'm just going to pause to change tapes real quick.

01-00:55:53

Levin: Sure.

Begin Audiofile 2 07-11-2012.mp3

Rigelhaupt: Okay, I'm on tape number two, with Mr. Levin, and still July 11, 2012. So you were saying that in your recollection, the boom in Arlington was really a fifties and sixties story.

02-00:00:21

Levin: Right.

Rigelhaupt: But there was certainly an expansion during World War II. So you weren't here and didn't see it; but did your family—I'm saying the family you married into—talk about what they saw changing in and around Arlington during the war?

02-00:00:41

Levin: I think with the advent of the building of the Pentagon, kind of tripped the whole thing to start building, and housing started to take place. Obviously, the Pentagon brought in thousands and thousands of people to work. Although some of them lived in other areas within the metropolitan area, there was still a great need for more housing in the Northern Virginia end of it. So we had a lot of apartments that went up during that time. Park Fairfax, Arlington Village, Fillmore Gardens, Colonial Village—these were all built prior to and during early World War II, in Arlington. But residential housing really didn't get going until after the war.

Rigelhaupt: What was your first impression of Arlington when you moved here?

02-00:01:48

Levin: I kind of liked it. The environment and everything was kind of like New Jersey, really. The housing wasn't that much different; you had Cape Cods and you lived in a Cape Cod or a house. As a kid, there wasn't a whole lot of difference. Actually, you were kind of on the edge of a metropolitan area, which was kind of nice, if you wanted to go see a good movie or a stage show or what have you. You could hop on a bus and go into Washington and go to a great museum and go to a football game, a professional football game, baseball game—which I didn't have the ability to do in New Jersey, because everything was fifty miles away or more. So it was kind of a nice, neat area. Arlington, it's near a big city, but it's not in a big city. It's very residential. The people were nice and the schools were good. It was a nice place to go. I finished up high school here in Arlington. It was nice to grow up here. I enjoyed it.

Rigelhaupt: Was there any sense that coming from New Jersey, you were a Northerner, that there was that North-South divide still?

02-00:03:12

Levin: Not really. You kind of have to work your way in. I played basketball. I was on the basketball team, I ran cross-country. I made friends pretty easy. We played in a commercial basketball league, so we got to know a lot of the guys. New Jersey, it wasn't really much of an issue. Because don't forget, you had a lot of people here, who they themselves were not originals. I married a girl who was born and raised here. That was very, very unusual. You had a lot of what we used to call outsiders that moved into Arlington over the years, so you really didn't have a real, real large community, prior to let's say the mid-thirties, that actually was here. It was very rural. My mother-in-law came from a large family, whose father had a general store on Columbia Pike and Fillmore Street—Walter Reade Drive now—and sold everything from

kerosene, horse collars, to canned tomatoes. That was back in the late twenties, and Columbia Pike was a dirt road. Then later on, I understand they put tar on it and made the road Columbia Pike. It was very rural, up till the mid-thirties. People knew one another. My father-in-law was in the grocery business back in the thirties, and they used to deliver groceries. You didn't have to come to the store to buy it; you'd get on the phone and call in and say, I need such-and-such, and then your delivery man would deliver them. In a lot of cases, it wasn't like delivering it to 1201 South 12th Street, it was, you go down to Mrs. Jones' house or barn and make a right-hand turn, and it's the second house on the left. That's how they got around in those days. It was very, very rural. So it was kind of a neat place to grow up in. It would've been nice to have been born here and grown up. My wife used to relate to me on a lot of stuff. But it was small-town-ish back in the thirties and the forties. But as I say, once the Pentagon came in and the war came along, it was a different world. Much different world.

Rigelhaupt: So it's fair to say Arlington was not the same before and after World War II.

02-00:06:14

Levin: No, no. No, big changes.

Rigelhaupt: Now, when you moved here, did your family also join a synagogue?

02-00:06:23

Levin: Yeah. Yeah.

Rigelhaupt: There was a Reform synagogue in Arlington?

02-00:06:27

Levin: Actually, the one we joined wasn't Reformed, it was a little more conservative than the Reformed. I didn't like it, particularly, but put up with it.

Rigelhaupt: But it was in Arlington?

02-00:06:38

Levin: Oh, yeah. Yeah.

Rigelhaupt: Were there other synagogues?

02-00:06:42

Levin: There was only one in Arlington, a small one. I don't think you had that many Jewish people living here. Well, I don't know how many there were. But then as the area developed, they had more and more people coming in and more and more temples and synagogues and what have you. I know there's a couple in Alexandria; there's a bunch of them out in Fairfax County today. But not in those days.

Rigelhaupt: So that the expansion of the Jewish community in Northern Virginia is, again, more of a fifties and sixties story.

02-00:07:19

Levin: Oh, yeah. Yeah. In fact, prior to that, I think they used to meet in a office building up on Wilson Boulevard, initially. Then they finally got a piece of property and built the building. Yeah.

Rigelhaupt: Was anti-Semitism ever an issue?

02-00:07:36

Levin: No. No. No, we had a guy that lived here back in the— Must've been in the sixties. He was one of these hate-group guys. Rockwell. Finally, he went down by the wayside. That was the only thing I ever ran into. In fact, I would say most of my friends were not Jewish; they were just good friends. Even today. Most of my close friends are not Jewish, just good people.

Rigelhaupt: Now, certainly, when you moved here in '47, segregation was a part of Virginia.

02-00:08:27

Levin: Just starting to break down. Just starting to break down. When I moved to Arlington, my mom and dad drove the car down; the moving truck brought the furniture down; and my brother and I took a train down. Got off the train at Union Station and took the streetcar—we had streetcars in those days—down to 12th and Pennsylvania Avenue, where you caught a bus—AB&W Bus Company—to come out to Arlington, to come out Columbia Pike. I got on a bus and this black guy got on the bus. He was sitting up front. Make a long story short, bus driver wouldn't move the bus until the black guy got to the back of the bus. My brother looked at me and I looked at my brother; we had never seen nothing like that in New Jersey. Of course, you didn't have too many black people in that area anyhow. But still, segregation wasn't an issue. So the bus driver ordered this guy—he didn't ask him, he ordered him—to get down the back of the bus. Finally, the black guy said, "Look, I'm not moving." He said, "Well, if you don't move, I'm going to go get a cop, going to have you arrested and put in jail. Now, what do you want to do?" So the fellow mumbled a few words and got up and went to the back of the bus, and the bus driver got back in his seat, started up the bus, and we came out to Arlington. 1947. But even in those days, your railroad stations, you had for white only, for colored only. It was still in. You didn't have any black kids in school with you. We had a few up in New Jersey. But not here; it was still segregated. I don't remember exactly when that all broke down. In the fifties.

Rigelhaupt: Was it something that was talked about?

02-00:10:39

Levin: Not really. It probably was talked about in the black community, but I don't think it was a big deal in the— It was just, that's the way it is. It was a government thing and it was supported by the state and the local government. That's it.

Rigelhaupt: Part of the reason of asking is knowing that so much of that was by custom. There weren't always signs.

02-00:11:12

Levin: Right.

Rigelhaupt: As you described, there were sometimes signs, but people, if you grew up here, knew where you could go, where you couldn't.

02-00:11:21

Levin: Right.

Rigelhaupt: I'm trying to think about what it was like to come here, to try and learn that, which as you said, you had never seen this in New Jersey. How did you learn the rules of how this worked?

02-00:11:35

Levin: No, it wasn't really rules. I'll give you a little for instance. My father-in-law had a black man that worked for him. He had worked for him back in the late thirties, just before the war. Then during the war, my father-in-law shut down the business, because he expected to be drafted. So anyhow, the fellow's name was William Coles. After the war was over, my father-in-law opened up a new store, and William came back and said, "Look, I'd like to go to work for you." My father-in-law said, "Well, I can't pay you much." He said, "I'm just starting out. I had things a little tough. I wasn't making any money here for a long time." He said, "I really can't pay you much." And he said, "Well, you pay me anything you want to pay me. I want to work for you." So as the story goes, he worked for him for many, many years. Well, after I married his daughter and we're in the furniture business, I remember one time—this would've been probably in the mid-fifties—we were out on the truck, delivering some furniture. It was around lunchtime. He drove. I said, "Pull the truck over here. Let's go in and get a sandwich." So we went into this restaurant and I went up to the counter to order— No, I didn't either. I said, "We'll sit down over here." The fellow came over and he said, "You can't eat here." I said, "What do you mean, we can't eat here?" He said, "*You* can eat here," he said, "But he can't eat here." I said, "Well, if he can't eat here, I can't eat here." And I got up and we left. So William said, "Well, why don't we just get a sandwich to go?" I was mad. I said, "Oh, the heck with them," not in that language. I said, "If we can't eat in there," I said, "I'm not going to spend my money in there." So we went down the street and went to another place and got a sandwich to go. That's how it was. William worked for the family for many, many years. Wonderful man. You could trust him with every nickel and dime you ever owned, never have to worry about it. A very fine guy.

Rigelhaupt: Well, it sounds like, from your story, there were some lunch counters and restaurants that both you and he thought you could go in and get served.

02-00:14:16

Levin: Yeah.

Rigelhaupt: So it wasn't a strict—

02-00:14:17

Levin: It wasn't total, no. It wasn't a law; but it was a law. It was a custom. And it was supported by the state. Yeah. Segregation.

Rigelhaupt: Right, and that's why I was asking about trying to learn about it as a teenager.

02-00:14:34

Levin: It was just the way it was.

Rigelhaupt: But it had to have been hard to try and figure out and negotiate. That it doesn't make sense, right? There were times you would walk into situations just like you described.

02-00:14:49

Levin: Yeah. Well, people had become accustomed to it over the years. The black people had their restaurants, they had their stores, they had their schools. So as long as there was equality there, it wasn't too much of an issue, initially. And later on, it became an issue.

Rigelhaupt: So what were some of the most important experiences that your in-laws and your family talked about, in terms of the grocery store? This is a community center. They had to have known lots of people in and around the store.

02-00:15:42

Levin: Well, the original general store that my wife's grandfather had, during the Depression, he gave people food. If a family didn't have any money or they didn't have money till next week, he just wrote a little note. They kept a book. Then you the guy got some money, he would come in and pay on the bill. Then during the Depression, I know a lot of people that my wife and I both knew, that have since gone, but they have all said, if it wasn't Pop Sher, we could've starved to death during the Depression. He was very humane, a very humanistic person. Probably would've been very wealthy, if he had ever gotten all the money back. Then he lost a lot of property during the Depression. People would have a farm and they would deed over, say five acres to him, to pay the bill off. Then he had to pay taxes on that property. He couldn't afford to pay the taxes on it. So he eventually had to give it up, not knowing what would happen in Arlington County and what property is worth years ago. But things were tough in a lot of areas here during the Depression, for farmers and the average working guy. There was no way to earn a living. It's tough. I guess I got off the main track here. Like I said earlier, he sold everything from kerosene, horseshoes, you name it. You'd go down to the main store there and get it.

Rigelhaupt: So he's playing an important role in the community, vis-à-vis giving credit, for all intents and purposes, in terms of food and other supplies for people during the Depression. But I imagine that he would've needed credit to keep food and various other things on his shelves.

02-00:17:58

Levin: Yeah.

Rigelhaupt: Did he ever talk about if it was—

02-00:18:02

Levin: I don't know. The family didn't talk about it, if they did. I know my mother-in-law, she grew up with four brothers. When she married my father-in-law, she was always very hesitant to let him invest in property, because of her father losing all that property during the Depression because he couldn't pay the taxes on the property. She wasn't adamant about it, but she was very conservative, when it came to buying other properties. She didn't want that to happen to her or her husband. Yeah.

Rigelhaupt: Well, if we were to talk about the end of World War II, how do you remember hearing about it?

02-00:18:57

Levin: The end?

Rigelhaupt: Yeah. Particularly, say VE Day.

02-00:19:00

Levin: I was working down at the beach in Bradley Beach, at a restaurant, for my mother's uncle. It was just a big celebration. People were blowing whistles and tooting horns. Just a big, big celebration. Then of course, later on, if you turned the radio on, you could hear what was going on in the big cities and everything like that. It was a very joyous occasion.

Rigelhaupt: Then a few months later, the dropping of atomic bombs, in Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

02-00:19:36

Levin: Right. Right.

Rigelhaupt: How do you remember hearing about the use of atomic weapons?

02-00:19:41

Levin: I don't know how I learned about that. It must've been on the radio. They dropped a big bomb and now the Japs are going to give it up and stop fighting and what have you.

Rigelhaupt: Was there something different about those bombs?

02-00:20:00

Levin:

Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. They described it in detail, the immensity of it. There again, it was strictly what you heard on the radio or read in a newspaper. Days went by, you finally got pictures, where they would show the blast, in the newspaper. They really showed the enormity of the whole thing. Pretty bad. But it was a sense of relief, from us. We were facing a situation where we were going to have tens of thousands of our guys get killed invading Japan, and now we won't have to do it.

Rigelhaupt:

But was there a sense that something was different, now that atomic weapons— Or did that take some time?

02-00:20:51

Levin:

That took a while, yeah. Yeah. I don't think the whole impact was there initially. It was years later. The Russians got involved and the world scene became a whole different situation. Yeah.

Rigelhaupt:

What about the news of the holocaust and genocide being part of World War II?

02-00:21:27

Levin:

Didn't really hear too much about that until well after the war, until after our troops had gotten in there. You heard some rumbles, but you never really heard of anything definitely. It wasn't played up by the papers or anything like that.

Rigelhaupt:

Well, you were a teenager as the news hit.

02-00:21:48

Levin:

Right.

Rigelhaupt:

Do you remember your initial reactions of trying to make sense of what this meant, how it could've happened?

02-00:21:58

Levin:

Oh, yeah. Yeah. But it just hit you different. You got kind of a sickening feeling of the whole thing, that people could do things like that. And thank the good Lord that you weren't in there. A terrible, terrible situation.

Rigelhaupt:

Two last questions, if you have time. One of the other major things that happened during World War II was the internment of Japanese and Japanese Americans, but more on the West Coast.

02-00:22:46

Levin:

Right.

Rigelhaupt:

Primarily. Did that news make it to New Jersey? Did you know it was going on at the time?

02-00:22:53

Levin:

I remember hearing about it, vaguely. It was like, that's the way it is. Maybe these people won't be subversive. Put them out of the way and they can't do anything to hurt us. I think that was the general impression. They didn't give you the details, as to what these people did for a living or how they contributed to the West Coast society or anything; it was just that they were Japanese and they're going to be put into an area where they won't hurt anybody or can't do anything subversive. There was a feeling that they *would* be subversive. There was a lot of doubt about it. I know Italian people, going to war, felt very, very insecure in the United States—especially those that hadn't gotten their citizenship paper—that they were going to be shipped off someplace. People of German descent, as well. Yet they were good Americans.

Rigelhaupt:

Well, the last two questions I'll ask, because I know you're pressed for time—it's the way I usually end—is, one, was there anything I should've asked that I didn't? And two, is there anything you'd like to add?

02-00:24:16

Levin:

Not really. I think you did a very good job. I wish I had more knowledge of certain items that I could go into detail about; I just don't know. There's some subject matters that you can talk about and never finish. I myself, having lived through that era, I still watch the Military Channel and watch World War II. The immensity of what went on, I don't think it ever really sunk in, as a kid. The same thing in the battle in the South Pacific. I had neighbors and friends who were in the Marines and in the Army during that period of time, who lived through it. They would come back after the war and tell us kids—they were just older kids—about what they did and how many thousands of people got killed. It never really sunk in. Now, when I turn on the TV and I see these battles, like Tarawa and all these other islands that we lost tens of thousands of men on, it makes you wonder, why did we even go in there? There was nothing there to start off with. So the whole mentality of the war changes, too. What benefit did we get out of going in there annihilating 10,000 Japanese and losing 5,000 Americans? Then when they were gone and we were gone, it's nothing but a bunch of volcanoes and ash. So I don't know, you wonder sometimes. No, I think your questions were very apropos and I wish I could contribute more, but I don't want to give you hearsay or stuff like that.

Rigelhaupt:

Well, if I could ask one more question that came to mind. It was something we talked about over the phone. You seemed to give the impression over the phone that your work experiences as a young teenager in World War II, and the opportunities you were afforded, had a big impact going forward.

02-00:26:24

Levin:

Oh, yeah, definitely.

Rigelhaupt: I'm wondering if you could talk a little bit more about—perhaps it was the opportunity; I think you used the word independence—what those meant for a young man, or as an adolescent, to have those opportunities.

02-00:26:39

Levin: Well, not having rich parents, normal, average people, when I went to work, I was thirteen. I was making money. Now, I didn't go out and buy a car or spend a lot of money. I didn't make that kind of money. But I used to turn all my money in, to give it to my mother. My mother set up a savings account for me. All through the years that I grew up, whenever I worked, I had that money in the bank, so to speak. Then when I grew up and got married—I think it was before I got married—she gave me the check. I think I had \$3,000, which was a lot of money, but wasn't a lot of money. But it gave you, growing up, being the fact that you were saving money—and earning money, more than that—it gave you a sense of security, if you want to call it, that you were able to earn a living and you could go out and deal with the public as you grew up, which I did. I think it helps along your whole adult life, really, that you're able to communicate and be able to see what's going on and get a feel for it. I hate to cut you off, but I've got to get home.

Rigelhaupt: Okay. All right, thank you.

02-00:28:09

Levin: Okay. I hope I did you some good.