

1 ORAL HISTORY OF: Carolyn Greenberg
2 INTERVIEWED BY: Cheryl Guyer
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5 Detroit
6 SUBJECT MATTER: Jewish community life

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8 MS. GUYER: Good morning. This is Cheryl Guyer. I
9 am conducting an oral history interview with Carolyn Greenberg
10 at the Max M. Fisher Building, at the offices of the Jewish
11 Federation of Metropolitan Detroit on June 20, 2005.

12 Carolyn, your dedication to the community is
13 extraordinary, and to me personally you're just such a
14 wonderful role model over the years. I am delighted to have
15 this opportunity to speak with you this morning.

16 We want to be certain that we have your permission
17 to use your words and thoughts so that in the future for
18 educational, historical and documentation purposes we can
19 quote you. Is that okay?

20 MS. GREENBERG: Fine with me.

21 MS. GUYER: Thank you. So let's start at the
22 beginning and talk about the Kaplan family, where you were
23 born and your early years and what family life was like in
24 your home.

25 MS. GREENBERG: My family goes back a long way. My

1 grandfather came to Detroit in the 1890s, and was a very
2 successful real estate developer in the Detroit community. He
3 built on Pingree and all the old Detroit streets that we're
4 all familiar with. He had five children. My mother was the
5 youngest. She was the first woman in her family to go to
6 college. She went to the University of Michigan.

7 **MS. GUYER:** That was extraordinary.

8 **MS. GREENBERG:** She became a teacher.

9 Her brother was Harry August, the eminent
10 psychiatrist in the city of Detroit. They were always
11 involved in community.

12 I grew up hearing about the community, what was
13 doing, what wasn't doing. My grandfather was one of the
14 founders of the Home for the Aged. Eventually he ended up
15 living in the home, which was rather ironic. He was on the
16 board for many, many years.

17 I grew up in a household where involvement was the
18 way it was. That was the family topic of conversation at the
19 dinner table. During the war years my family was very, very
20 concerned and upset. We had political discussions about what
21 was going on. I was a young girl, but I knew all about Father
22 Coughlin. I knew all about what was happening in Europe. I
23 was very aware of the terrible situation for the Jews around
24 the world, and very concerned. I grew up with that feeling of
25 responsibility for my brethren.

1 We lived in a neighborhood that was very Jewish. On
2 Webb. Half the world I know today at one point or another
3 lived on Webb. We all felt very comfortable in our milieu.
4 We went to Roosevelt Elementary School and Durfee Junior High.
5 Then I moved to Roselawn, where I happened to meet my husband,
6 who lived on Northlawn.

7 **MS. GUYER:** So you met him early on.

8 **MS. GREENBERG:** Oh, yes. We knew each other as
9 kids. We met when we were probably 9, 10 years old. And our
10 families knew each other.

11 **MS. GUYER:** How wonderful.

12 **MS. GREENBERG:** In fact my mother used to date his
13 uncle in college.

14 My husband, too, came from a very committed family.
15 His father and my grandfather served together on the board. I
16 understand that our grandmothers worked together in the shul
17 to make the gefilte fish for his father's bar mitzvah. That's
18 how far back our families go together.

19 Hugh and I started dating when we were about 16 at
20 Highland Park High School, and we were married when we were
21 not quite 21. We were very young. At that point I don't know
22 whether we ever discussed our shared interest in community or
23 our involvement, but we knew we had shared values, and that
24 was important to us. Family was important to us, our
25 community was important to us.

1 We spent a couple years in the army, and I say we
2 because I went with him to Texas, where our oldest child was
3 born. Then he went overseas for a year and I came back to
4 Detroit. When he came back to Detroit and we resumed our
5 married life here, that's when we both became involved. I
6 remember one of the first things he did when he came home is,
7 I remember going with him door to door soliciting for the
8 Allied Jewish Campaign.

9 **MS. GUYER:** Who asked you to do this, or you just
10 did it?

11 **MS. GREENBERG:** Oh, he got involved with the Junior
12 Division. I was already involved in the Women's Department,
13 in the Women's Division.

14 **MS. GUYER:** So right when you were married you were
15 involved.

16 **MS. GREENBERG:** Right from when we were married,
17 right from the get-go we started off. I think my mother took
18 me to my very first Women's Division meeting. It was the
19 annual meeting and my mother took me as her guest. I must
20 have been 22. I was very, very impressed by the work that
21 they did, by the women that were there in the room, by their
22 commitment, by their goals, and I felt this is where I want to
23 be, and I started involving myself in the Women's Division.

24 I remember we started out having "communitas", and
25 I had one at my house.

1 **MS. GUYER:** What were the programs in those days?

2 **MS. GREENBERG:** We would just gather together and
3 literally serve tea and we would talk and we would have
4 somebody from the Women's Division come and speak to us. It
5 wasn't very long before I was one of the speakers, and I would
6 ask my friends to get a group together in the evening usually
7 because these were all young women who had children, jobs,
8 whatever, and they would gather together and we would hold
9 these communitas in their homes. It was a wonderful way to
10 introduce people to the community on a very personally, almost
11 one-to-one basis, and they became very popular. I bet we held
12 30, 40 teas in a year. Obviously I wasn't responsible for all
13 of them, but we reached out to that many during the year.

14 **MS. GUYER:** I want to go back to your religious life
15 growing up and what synagogue or temple you were a part of and
16 your religious education, where your values came from.

17 **MS. GREENBERG:** Well, I was a member of Temple Beth
18 El. I started there at the age of five or six, and continued
19 all the way through. I was confirmed. I did not go on to
20 high school for formal Jewish education. We had a study
21 group. It started out as a Hadassah study group, and Leah
22 Snider was the one who came to my house, we had a group
23 together, and we met for years, and we studied, and it was
24 basically a Jewish study group.

25 **MS. GUYER:** This was in high school?

1 **MS. GREENBERG:** Oh, no, no, this was after we were
2 married. Actually my formal education ended with my
3 confirmation when I was 15. So at that point I had no more
4 formal education, but I picked it up again through this
5 Hadassah study group. I really feel that we learned a
6 tremendous amount. We had guidance, different people led the
7 group at different times, and there must have been, I don't
8 know, 25, 30 women who studied in that group for many years.
9 So that was my religious education.

10 **MS. GUYER:** And college, you went to the University
11 of Michigan?

12 **MS. GREENBERG:** I went to the University of
13 Michigan.

14 **MS. GUYER:** And were you involved there Jewishly, or
15 was that like at those times?

16 **MS. GREENBERG:** I belonged to AE Phi, which was a
17 Jewish sorority. I did attend Hillel, but that was not a
18 major force in my life in those days I must say. I started
19 collecting for the Allied Jewish Campaign at the University of
20 Michigan. I can remember taking slips and going around and
21 soliciting people for contributions for the Allied Jewish
22 Campaign in those days.

23 **MS. GUYER:** So it's all the values that your parents
24 instilled in you.

25 **MS. GREENBERG:** Very naturally. It was the example.

1 My parents were involved, and as I said, it went all the way
2 back to my grandparents, so it was just a continuation of what
3 I believed in and where my heart was.

4 **MS. GUYER:** And who were your mentors? Who were
5 some of the women involved in the early years that you looked
6 up to?

7 **MS. GREENBERG:** Oh, well, Jenny Jones was a terrific
8 influence. She was so committed. One of the things that she
9 talked about, which was very interesting in those days is
10 we're back to having just hands-on volunteerism as being the
11 most effective. However, she used to say that the highest
12 form of philanthropy was being able to give when you didn't
13 know who the recipient was. You couldn't see who was being
14 helped. You didn't know. And yet you gave because you knew
15 that there were needs there and people there who you could not
16 see, but they were your brothers and they were in need and we
17 had to help them wherever. And I thought she was very
18 inspirational. She was a wonderful speaker.

19 There were many others. I go all the way back to
20 Dora Ehrlich, who was a friend of my mother's. I can remember
21 the thrill the first time I went to Israel and I went to the
22 Hadassah hospital, and I just accidentally sat in Dora
23 Ehrlich's chair. There was her name on the back of the chair.
24 And I really was so moved because I remember, as a young girl,
25 how inspirational she was and how well regarded she was in the

1 community.

2 One of the reasons I was so drawn to Federation was
3 that I revered the women who were involved. They were such
4 wonderful mentors and wonderful role models.

5 **MS. GUYER:** And what were the volunteers like at
6 that time? Did you think they were different than today in
7 terms of their commitments and visions?

8 **MS. GREENBERG:** No, I don't think their commitment
9 was different. I think the amount of work was different. We
10 were hands-on involved. I mean when you were chair of a
11 committee, there weren't all kinds of secretaries to aid you
12 at the Federation office. We did all the work. We took all
13 the minutes, we called all the speakers, we sent out the
14 invitations, we did all the preparation work, so we were very
15 hands-on involved.

16 **MS. GUYER:** In the early days I believe you were
17 involved in a Spring Forum or institute?

18 **MS. GREENBERG:** I was involved with the institute, I
19 was involved with Spring Forum. One of the things that I
20 personally was interested in, I was very interested in the
21 education. I felt if you educate a woman, you educate a
22 family. Our goal really was to reach out and to educate as
23 many women as we could. One of the things I was involved with
24 was the leadership training course.

25 **MS. GUYER:** How did that work?

1 **MS. GREENBERG:** Well, we started out with a small
2 group, and we would meet at the Federation building, and then
3 we would go out to different agencies. Each month we would
4 visit another agency. It would take maybe eight months until
5 we finished the entire course. It was really a course of
6 study. Not only did we educate them about what was going on
7 in the community, the needs and what was being offered and
8 what was being accomplished, but we also did other kinds of
9 training. For example, we did speaker training. We taught
10 how to organize a speech, how to get up and deliver a speech,
11 how to organize a program. We actually went into the details
12 of what it meant to be a leader.

13 **MS. GUYER:** Interesting.

14 **MS. GREENBERG:** We had different people come and
15 speak to us. At one point we had as many as 70, 80 women
16 participating, which was remarkable. Those were the days when
17 we did not have as many working women, we did not have as many
18 professional women, but most of these women were college women
19 who were not going into the work force. This was in the '50s
20 and early '60s. Federation was a wonderful place for them to
21 place their energies and their talents and their abilities.

22 **MS. GUYER:** And that's a period when you were
23 president.

24 **MS. GREENBERG:** Yes.

25 **MS. GUYER:** And what were some of the challenges or

1 big issues women were grappling with then?

2 **MS. GREENBERG:** Well, of course one of the issue was
3 -- and this was really very funny -- one time we had Betty
4 Friedan come and speak to our institute, our major education
5 day, and she insulted every single woman sitting in that room.
6 Her statement was you shouldn't be volunteering, you shouldn't
7 be offering your services because you are taking away the job
8 of some Jewish woman, or any woman. She wasn't interested
9 just in Jewish women, but she was saying to us here at the
10 Federation if you weren't doing all these jobs, other women
11 would be having a paid position.

12 Well, I want to tell you, all hell broke loose. The
13 women marched out of that auditorium simply livid. They were
14 furious with Betty Friedan. It was really comical. And I
15 want to say I have lived long enough to read the second book
16 that Betty Friedan wrote, in which she apologized, in which
17 she said she was really grateful to all of these women who had
18 contributed so much because these jobs would not have been
19 done had there not been the volunteers.

20 **MS. GUYER:** Certainly. And our community couldn't
21 have afforded to do it without volunteers.

22 **MS. GREENBERG:** Of course not. It never would have
23 been done. So I have lived long enough to read her apology.

24 **MS. GUYER:** And then you won the Greenberg Award.
25 How fitting.

1 **MS. GREENBERG:** Yes, I won the Greenberg Award,
2 although, as I have said, there was no nepotism there. We're
3 not really related.

4 **MS. GUYER:** And what were your involvements at that
5 period of time?

6 **MS. GREENBERG:** That was the Young Leadership award.
7 What was I involved in at that time? Do you know how many
8 years ago that was?

9 **MS. GUYER:** Were you involved with the Jewish Family
10 Service at that time?

11 **MS. GREENBERG:** I was involved in Jewish Family
12 Service; I was a vice president of Jewish Family Service. I
13 had also been in Women's Division. I had been involved in
14 leadership training and in the communitas, and I think I was
15 on the board at that time.

16 **MS. GUYER:** So just many different things.

17 **MS. GREENBERG:** On many different levels. And of
18 course campaign.

19 **MS. GUYER:** Talk about the Israel Emergency Fund,
20 you chaired the Headliners Group I believe. What was it like
21 soliciting at that period of time?

22 **MS. GREENBERG:** Well, we did door-to-door
23 solicitation. I can remember that we used to meet at an
24 outdoor parking lot and get an inspirational talk on a Sunday
25 morning, and then we would all take our little bags and we

1 would go marching. Each one had a different block area to do,
2 and we would go door to door. The community was alerted to
3 the fact that Sunday was our day for campaign. In a way it
4 was much simpler.

5 **MS. GUYER:** How was it to knock on the door of a
6 stranger? It's such a different way to solicit. You were
7 comfortable?

8 **MS. GREENBERG:** Not uncomfortable, not uncomfortable
9 because I think the community had been well prepared to expect
10 us. So you would knock on the door and you would say I'm here
11 collecting for the Allied Jewish Campaign, and they would say,
12 oh, yes, I'm expecting you. So it was not an uncomfortable
13 situation. And I'll tell you, when I really felt the need and
14 felt what we were doing was so worthwhile, that I was very
15 happy to go out and solicit.

16 **MS. GUYER:** And you did it as a team or did you do
17 it individually?

18 **MS. GREENBERG:** I think there were two of us in a
19 team. Two people went together as a team.

20 **MS. GUYER:** How different the times were.

21 **MS. GREENBERG:** Yes, very, very different.

22 **MS. GUYER:** Let's talk about the Jewish Family
23 Service. I know you were ten years on their board and you
24 were vice president I believe.

25 **MS. GREENBERG:** Yes. I served there with Edyth

1 Jackier, who was another mentor of mine. A friend, role
2 model. We worked together at the Jewish Family Service, we
3 worked together on campaign. She is a terrific lady, a big
4 heart, and very capable. She was the president of Jewish
5 Family Services.

6 I think I mentioned to you that one of the most
7 important pieces of work that I think she and I did together
8 was to help the hungry of this community. I remember it was
9 Diane Klein and Emery who came to the board of the Jewish
10 Family Service and made an appeal on behalf of the hungry Jews
11 who they called the hidden yidden, who were really suffering
12 in Detroit, not over in Europe but in Detroit. The Family
13 Service was really not aware of the extent of the needs of the
14 elderly, mostly elderly Jews in Detroit. So we actually went
15 out on a campaign, again a door-to-door search for people. We
16 actually knocked on doors and visited people and assessed
17 their needs. It was quite an eye-opener because the needs
18 were great in the community. I think that became the
19 forerunner of the Meals on Wheels.

20 We did have to buck the leadership. The concept of
21 the Jewish Family Service was more of a case management, and
22 the idea of going out and searching for Jews who were needy
23 was not part of their agenda. They were there and they
24 expected people just to come to them. This outreach was
25 something totally new.

1 **MS. GUYER:** So how did you do that? How did you
2 even identify the people?

3 **MS. GREENBERG:** Well, it wasn't easy. As I say, we
4 actually went door to door, knocking and saying, who are your
5 neighbors and do you know your neighbors. One person would
6 tell of a friend and another person had a cousin, and it
7 because apparent that there was a whole subculture there that
8 was really in need.

9 **MS. GUYER:** Do you think that led to Yad Ezra also?

10 **MS. GREENBERG:** Yad Ezra came much later. I think
11 it led directly to Meals on Wheels.

12 **MS. GUYER:** I didn't know that. Very interesting.

13 And what were the other things at Jewish Family
14 Service?

15 **MS. GREENBERG:** We became very involved with
16 resettlement, and we were very involved in those years with
17 resettlement particularly of Russian Jews who were coming into
18 this country. We would actually establish apartments for
19 them.

20 **MS. GUYER:** How did you do that?

21 **MS. GREENBERG:** We would go out and rent apartments
22 and furnish them. We were busy running around collecting
23 furniture and dishes and supplying them, so that when they
24 arrived, they were met by a Family Service person right at the
25 plane. They were taken right to their apartment. Then we of

1 course would help them get jobs. Then they would go to the
2 Center to get English training. That was all a coordinated
3 effort to resettle them. We did a major job in this
4 community.

5 I don't know if this was a apocryphal story or not,
6 but a tailor came and we set him up in a little tailor shop.
7 Then a couple months later he called and said how come we
8 hadn't sent him the customers.

9 MS. GUYER: It was a magnificent time in Detroit
10 volunteering.

11 MS. GREENBERG: It was.

12 MS. GUYER: People really came together.

13 MS. GREENBERG: And you felt that what you were
14 doing was so appreciated and so needed, and they felt that you
15 were really doing a great service.

16 MS. GUYER: Tell me about HIAS. You were involved
17 with HIAS. Was that at the same time or a different time?

18 MS. GREENBERG: That was a little bit later. I was
19 on the board of HIAS for maybe about six years, and that was a
20 very interesting time. HIAS did a wonderful job of going over
21 to Europe and helping to actually transport people who were
22 homeless who needed to be relocated into the United States.

23 MS. GUYER: From what countries?

24 MS. GREENBERG: They were from all over Europe.
25 That was post-World War II. HIAS goes back to the previous

1 generation. HIAS helped all the immigrants who came. Even in
2 the early 1900s HIAS helped the Jews come over and helped
3 resettle them. They came into New York initially and then
4 they fanned them out. I think the majority stayed in New
5 York, but then they did fan them out to the rest of the
6 country.

7 One of the conflicts that came up when I was serving
8 on the HIAS board was that there was concern that there was a
9 conflict between HIAS and Joint Distribution Committee, and
10 Joint was trying to encourage these people to go to Israel,
11 and they felt that HIAS was interfering and encouraging them
12 to go to the United States. So that became a very, very hot
13 issue. It was finally resolved. I don't know to everyone's
14 satisfaction, but it was resolved in that HIAS was doing
15 family reunification. In other words, if people had relatives
16 in the United States, then they would help them come and join
17 their relatives.

18 What is interesting now of course is we still have
19 Russian immigrants coming in, but now the Russian people
20 themselves are so well established in this country, most of
21 them just help their relatives as a matter of course.

22 **MS. GUYER:** That is a success story.

23 **MS. GREENBERG:** That is a success story.

24 **MS. GUYER:** Did you travel to any of the places in
25 Europe?

1 **MS. GREENBERG:** It is interesting that you should
2 say that. I have, but not with HIAS. My husband, who you
3 will hear later today, Hugh has been on the Joint board for
4 the last eight years.

5 **MS. GUYER:** A mixed marriage; right?

6 **MS. GREENBERG:** No. But I have traveled with Joint
7 to those countries, so I have been to Bucharest and Rumania,
8 Bulgaria, Hungary, Russia. So we have seen a lot of what the
9 Joint does, which is fantastic work. He'll tell you about
10 that.

11 **MS. GUYER:** Talk about Israel. We haven't spoken
12 yet about Israel.

13 **MS. GREENBERG:** We went to Israel in 1969 on a
14 mission. That was our first time in Israel. It was a life-
15 altering experience. We were thrilled with Israel. I
16 remember going to the Wall and taking a paper and this time I
17 did cry. I put a paper in there on behalf of my grandparents,
18 who of course were too elderly to get there. I remember on
19 the wall of my grandparents' home, from the day Israel was
20 founded, was a plate that had the outline of the state of
21 Israel and the date of 1948, and that was one of their prized
22 possessions was that plate, commemorating the birth of the
23 state of Israel. So I felt I was there representing not just
24 myself, but my parents and my grandparents and the whole
25 family. So it was a real thrill.

1 We traveled up and down. We went to Masada. We did
2 the whole nine yards. We did Israel in depth.

3 **MS. GUYER:** This was a leadership mission, or what
4 kind of mission was it?

5 **MS. GREENBERG:** Yes. You mentioned you interviewed
6 Brewster Broder. The Broders were in the mission, Susie
7 Citrin and her husband were on the mission. Nancy and Jerry
8 Hirsch. Initially there were 44 people going on this mission.
9 There was fighting on the Jordanian border at that time, and
10 people were frightened to go. I think about half canceled.
11 So there were 22 of on this mission. I can remember my mother
12 being very upset. How can you leave your three young children
13 and go off to a war zone? And I said we're going. So we
14 went.

15 We went down to the Dead Sea and we had to turn
16 around because there was fighting, and they were shooting
17 across the border at that point from Jordan. The bus turned
18 around and we left. Of course they were not going to endanger
19 the lives of these 22 Americans who were visiting. But other
20 than that everything went very smoothly.

21 Then of course from there -- I think most missions
22 do it the other way around; they visit a concentration camp
23 and then go to Israel, which I think is a smarter way to do
24 it. We went from Israel to Vienna, and we met there with a
25 man who was an extraordinary man. He had been in the

1 underground during the war, and then he came back and he was
2 in charge of relocating all the Austrians. I remember his
3 driver had been hidden for four years by a Gentile family. He
4 had lived in the basement and never emerged for four years,
5 and that's how he survived.

6 Then we went to the concentration camp at
7 Mauthausen, and that was an unbelievable experience. It was
8 in 1969 that we were there and so it wasn't that many years
9 after the war, and it was an unbelievably emotional experience
10 for all of us. I will never forget it. It was so upsetting
11 to all of us that even though we were to meet for dinner, the
12 whole group, and none of us came down for dinner. Too
13 emotionally distraught.

14 Of course when we came back we were even more
15 committed to what we had to do and what our life goals were to
16 be. It became very obvious to us that we had a calling and
17 that we had to do what we could to help our fellow Jews.

18 **MS. GUYER:** So at that point in Detroit where were
19 your involvements? You were still with Women's Department?
20 When did you become involved with Sinai Hospital?

21 **MS. GREENBERG:** That was later. We did win an
22 award. We were also involved with the American Jewish
23 Committee at that time, and Hugh and I won a leadership award
24 together. I think that was in about the mid '70s. So we were
25 involved in that as well.

1 **MS. GUYER:** And I believe you worked for Hebrew
2 University for a period of time.

3 **MS. GREENBERG:** I did. In the late '70s I worked
4 for Hebrew University.

5 **MS. GUYER:** What kinds of things were you doing for
6 them?

7 **MS. GREENBERG:** I was doing outreach for them and
8 membership.

9 **MS. GUYER:** Kind of interrelated together, all these
10 things.

11 **MS. GREENBERG:** Yes.

12 **MS. GUYER:** Let's talk about Sinai Hospital. You
13 were involved at an exciting time I think.

14 **MS. GREENBERG:** Yes. Sinai had very exciting times.
15 Some of my friends were very involved. Meryl Harris and Bruce
16 Stahl and Bob Steinberg was president for a while. I was the
17 first woman officer of Sinai Hospital. ^{DOALIA} ~~Paula~~ Friedman was the
18 professional there at that time, and she and I worked together
19 on many educational programs. I think that was really my
20 forte with the hospital.

21 **MS. GUYER:** What kinds of things?

22 **MS. GREENBERG:** Well, I did board education, I did
23 outreach education. I was involved with the first ball that
24 we did, which was a major fund-raiser for us. We did about
25 six or seven balls. I think it was 1987, 1989, somewhere in

1 there, that we had our first ball. So that was my area of
2 interest with the hospital.

3 **MS. GUYER:** So it was really fund-raising and
4 education. And what were the challenges to the hospital at
5 that period of time?

6 **MS. GREENBERG:** Well, the challenge to the hospital
7 was that we were losing money and it became a real challenge
8 as to how to do that, and then for a period of time we were
9 involved in buying doctors' practices so the doctors then
10 became employees of the hospital. We attempted that. Many
11 cost cutting attempts were made, as you know not too
12 successfully.

13 Then we talked about joining up with Ford Hospital.
14 There were discussions about joining with the University of
15 Michigan Hospital. Then finally the DMC purchased Sinai. I'm
16 very sad about the fact that there is no longer a Sinai
17 Hospital; it was razed. However, when it was formed in the
18 '50s Jewish doctors were not able to get positions in other
19 hospitals, and that was not true at the time of its sale.
20 Jewish doctors were welcomed in the entire area to all
21 hospitals, so that need was not there.

22 In terms of the Jewish population going to Sinai
23 Hospital, the numbers were decreasing as the community moved
24 farther north and west. So the need for a Jewish hospital for
25 the neighborhood was no longer there. So from that standpoint

1 it had served its function in the community.

2 However, a lot of doctors miss that camaraderie they
3 had when they worked together at Sinai. There was a wonderful
4 feeling there of community. And it's a loss to our community
5 to no longer have that hospital.

6 **MS. GUYER:** In the work that you did for the
7 immigrants, the Jews coming to Detroit, Sinai was such an
8 important place.

9 **MS. GREENBERG:** Oh, of course. Absolutely. They
10 offered the immigrants a complete work-up, they offered them
11 dental, eye examinations, complete physical examinations.
12 There was a line item in the budget every year that was for
13 resettlement, so that was one of their major outreach
14 programs.

15 **MS. GUYER:** They really took care of their own.

16 **MS. GREENBERG:** Oh, absolutely.

17 **MS. GUYER:** Now we have the Jewish Fund as a result.

18 **MS. GREENBERG:** That's right.

19 **MS. GUYER:** Did they raise a lot of money in those
20 days?

21 **MS. GREENBERG:** Well, what we considered a lot of
22 money in those days. We would raise maybe \$400,000 with a
23 ball.

24 **MS. GUYER:** Let's talk about women volunteers, and
25 today your involvement with women volunteers. Has it changed

1 very much? It's much more difficult to engage women
2 volunteers. I wondered what your thoughts were.

3 **MS. GREENBERG:** Well, I think the climate has
4 changed in that most college-educated women, who were the
5 women that we were involved with in Women's Division, tend to
6 have professions today. They are working women. Now I'm 75
7 years old. Had I been in this generation, I would have done
8 something professionally. I would not have been just a stay-
9 at-home housewife, and I don't know that I could have had the
10 time to be a full-time volunteer plus a wife, mother, and my
11 other responsibilities. So the pool to draw from is much
12 smaller.

13 On the other hand I think that the women who are
14 involved are extraordinary. They are women who in many cases
15 work as well as do a fantastic volunteer job. So my hats off
16 to them that they're able to accomplish so much.

17 I think that the women do less hands on work today.
18 There are more professionals who help them so that they are
19 not as involved on a day-to-day basis when I was a young
20 volunteer. But certainly I think it's amazing, and I'm always
21 amazed all the time. I say, who's going to come and take this
22 place and where are we going to find them, and they keep
23 coming. It's just wonderful and it's so heartening.

24 I was involved just the other night in the awards
25 evening. That's something we should talk about because that's

1 an innovation that will continue. Shall we go to that subject
2 now?

3 **MS. GUYER:** Sure.

4 **MS. GREENBERG:** Larry Jackier called me, oh,
5 probably a year and a half ago now, and said they had been
6 thinking about reworking the awards presentation, the Lifetime
7 Achievement Award and the Young Leadership Awards and the Ross
8 Award, the cultural award. They were all just given kind of
9 haphazardly at the end of a board meeting. It really wasn't
10 given the importance, it wasn't something that was really
11 special just for them, and he felt that we should do an awards
12 event. So I was the chair of the committee and we met on a
13 couple of occasions, and we decided the way to do it would be
14 to have a special evening just for awards. We wanted the
15 board there, so we would have an abbreviated board meeting
16 followed by a real special awards event, which we just held
17 this last month. I think if I can judge by the feedback, it
18 was a big hit.

19 **MS. GUYER:** Oh, it was wonderful.

20 **MS. GREENBERG:** You were there. Good. The way we
21 did it was we made it kind of like an Oscar night with posters
22 of the awardees with stars and we had the papparazzi taking
23 pictures, cardboard papparazzi, but flashing lights as
24 everybody entered to give them the feel that this was a very
25 special night.

1 I think that probably we did set a good precedent,
2 that this will continue. I hope it will. My goal is I would
3 like to live long enough to see the people who won the Young
4 Leadership Award, I'd like to see them win the Lifetime
5 Achievement Award.

6 **MS. GUYER:** That's great. We haven't talked about
7 your children. You have three wonderful children. I'd love
8 to know how you instilled values in them, you and Hugh.

9 **MS. GREENBERG:** What they've accomplished, it's
10 very, very interesting. I think we did pass on our value
11 system, our sense of family commitment and extended family
12 commitment. Our older son Danny and his wife Lana, who have
13 two boys. We just finished with Hillel with the second boy.
14 They both graduated from Hillel. Now they're both going to be
15 at Groves.

16 My son Danny has been very involved in Federation.
17 I think he was chairman of the budgeting department, and he's
18 just completed I think eight years on the Home for the Aged
19 board, which is interesting because he had a grandfather and
20 a great-grandfather who were both presidents of that board.
21 So I'm very proud of his association with that.

22 Then our youngest son, Ned, he's been very involved
23 with Gleaners, and he was responsible for engineering the
24 combination of Gleaners and Oakland County Food Bank. Those
25 two organizations have just combined, and he is the new chair.

1 So I'm very proud of his commitment as well.

2 **MS. GUYER:** He has children also?

3 **MS. GREENBERG:** He is married to Lisa, and they have
4 three children, twins who are six and a little one who is
5 four. They all attended the Jewish Community Center
6 preschool. We're very proud of them. They're a wonderful
7 family as well.

8 Our Amy daughter lives in California. She is active
9 with her temple. And this is interesting: she is a daughter
10 who hopes to be a rabbi. Her daughter is the president of
11 their youth group, and last summer she went to a special camp
12 in the East. She went to a Jewish leadership training session
13 for I think about four weeks, to learn to be a good Jewish
14 leader. And now she is president of their youth group. She's
15 very involved in their synagogue. She was on the rabbi search
16 committee. So she's not only president of the youth group,
17 but she sits on the board of the temple. So it's passed down.

18 **MS. GUYER:** And how did you do that? Did you speak
19 or just by example?

20 **MS. GREENBERG:** I think just by example. I don't
21 think we preached.

22 **MS. GUYER:** Did you have expectations of the kids to
23 do things in the Jewish community, or is it just the way the
24 Greenberg family functioned?

25 **MS. GREENBERG:** I think they just got it through

1 osmosis. I don't think we ever preached to them or told them
2 that they should do this or that. In fact my younger son the
3 other day said to me when he became chairman of this food
4 bank, "Well, Mother, I guess you really did pass your values
5 down to me."

6 **MS. GUYER:** That's magnificent. That is wonderful.
7 Talk about the centennial celebration. I know you
8 were chair of that, the hundredth anniversary in Detroit in
9 1999. What were some of the high points?

10 **MS. GREENBERG:** I worked with Mickey Maddin on that
11 one, and he was fun to work with. We had a wonderful time.
12 We were very excited about what we did. We had a wonderful
13 concert at the Max, and we had an art show out at the Center,
14 and we had a musical down at the JET theater, a jazz musical
15 evening. We just had many different venues where we were
16 celebrating the 350 years and the 100 years in Detroit. So it
17 was really a very exciting time.

18 **MS. GUYER:** What stands out in your mind in Detroit
19 as some of the most important moments in our 100 year history
20 of tzedaka and giving?

21 **MS. GREENBERG:** Well, I also served on the CJF
22 national board. I was on that board for several years. First
23 the women's board and then on the national board. Wherever we
24 went, everybody would say, oh, Detroit; oh, Detroit. You're
25 from Detroit? They were always so impressed. Wherever you go

1 throughout the country, Detroit is held in the highest esteem,
2 not only because we do such a good job of fund-raising, which
3 we always have. I think we're an exemplary community in that
4 regard. But because we did so many innovative things, and so
5 many of our programs.

6 I remember once -- oh, this goes back so many years
7 -- we had a program here called the Influence of Affluence. I
8 went to a national board meeting, and I was able to talk about
9 how we had this wonderful program called the Influence of
10 Affluence. Do you know I don't think there was a community in
11 the country that didn't go back and have a program called the
12 Influence of Affluence? So even our programming extended far
13 and wide.

14 **MS. GUYER:** So you enjoyed the national meetings.

15 **MS. GREENBERG:** And you know, it's a two-way street.
16 I was very inspired by them and they were by us.

17 **MS. GUYER:** You were on the national Women's Group
18 and the CJF?

19 **MS. GREENBERG:** No, I was on the Women's Division of
20 the CJF and then I was on the national board of the CJF.

21 **MS. GUYER:** So what were their challenges?

22 **MS. GREENBERG:** Well, they were all over the map.
23 They were educational, they were fund-raising, they were
24 immigration, they were concerned with everything.

25 **MS. GUYER:** And then you brought that back to

1 Detroit.

2 **MS. GREENBERG:** What we learned there we would bring
3 back to Detroit.

4 **MS. GUYER:** People don't seem to do so many of the
5 national things today in Detroit. Do you notice that? That
6 we tend to be more in Detroit than in the greater United
7 States Jewish community. Not so many people go to GAS like
8 years ago. Have you noticed that?

9 **MS. GREENBERG:** I really haven't noticed that, but
10 that's unfortunate if they haven't because there's wonderful
11 cross-communication that goes hand in hand with meeting people
12 from other communities. I know I've been attending the Lion
13 of Judah meetings that we've held in Washington, and I think
14 it's just so much fun to get together with the other women and
15 hear what's going on in other communities. Those meetings
16 have been really inspirational. We've had wonderful speakers.

17 Linda Klein was honored at the last meeting, and I
18 think there were 35 or 40 of us from Detroit who went, and
19 everybody had a grand time.

20 **MS. GUYER:** What do you think our biggest challenges
21 are in the Detroit Jewish community today? What should we be
22 focusing on?

23 **MS. GREENBERG:** Well, I think we have been losing
24 numbers of contributors, and I think that's a serious problem.

25 **MS. GUYER:** Why do you think that? Where do they

1 go?

2 **MS. GREENBERG:** I would be hard-pressed to answer
3 that. Off the top of my head I would just say that there are
4 so many places that people can be involved today, and it used
5 to be the Federation was the only place, and today there are
6 so many venues.

7 Also, I think more and more people are involved with
8 the general community. I think that there's so many people
9 involved with the Detroit Institute of Arts and the Detroit
10 Symphony and the University of Michigan. There are so many
11 avenues of interest. So I think we've got to really work hard
12 to make Federation still the number one address.

13 **MS. GUYER:** I think people give very differently
14 today. Do you think they give more to the organization than
15 to the Jewish community at large?

16 **MS. GREENBERG:** I think they probably single out
17 their area of interest and are concentrating more in a certain
18 area, rather than this concept of give once for all. I think
19 they are identifying their area of interest and zeroing in on
20 that.

21 **MS. GUYER:** I think that really is our biggest
22 challenge today.

23 **MS. GREENBERG:** I agree, because if we keep losing
24 numbers, it means that it's a heavier burden on each
25 individual, and not only that, we're not getting our word out

1 to the community. We're not doing a good education job.

2 **MS. GUYER:** Are you concerned about intermarriage
3 and things like that?

4 **MS. GREENBERG:** Well, that's a challenge. It always
5 is a challenge. Our son Ned is married to a young woman who
6 was Catholic. She converted. She even went to the mikva at
7 Temple Israel. They have a little tiny anteroom -- I'm
8 digressing -- for maybe three people, and 15 of us crowded in
9 there because we felt if she was doing this, we all had to be
10 there to support her. I remember there was a beautiful
11 blessing in the temple. Rabbi Loss did a wonderful job. Now
12 she has a Jewish home. So that's the plus side of
13 intermarriage if you can develop another Jewish family.

14 **MS. GUYER:** Probably one of the highlights of your
15 career was earning the Butzel award with your husband.

16 **MS. GREENBERG:** Absolutely.

17 **MS. GUYER:** So I'm curious how you work as a team
18 today in terms of your shared values or your shared goals or
19 you each do parallel things. How does it work in the
20 Greenberg family?

21 **MS. GREENBERG:** We're very supportive of each other
22 and we always have been. I mean if he's in a program that
23 he's interested in, I'm there and I support it. And the same
24 goes the other way around. I think it's added another
25 dimension to our marriage, to our life together, in that we

1 have this shared concern and interest and involvement with the
2 community. I think anything you do together that you love
3 doing together bonds you even closer. So I think it's been an
4 important component of our marriage and of our life together.
5 He's been very involved in the center movement and in
6 Federation. He's been involved in the Neighborhood Project,
7 and he's on the JDC board. So I've gone along with all those
8 activities as well.

9 **MS. GUYER:** Do you ever share things together or sit
10 on a committee together? Have you ever done anything like
11 that?

12 **MS. GREENBERG:** I don't think so.

13 **MS. GUYER:** Just very supportive parallel paths.

14 **MS. GREENBERG:** Yes. Right, right. But different
15 paths.

16 **MS. GUYER:** So are there any topics we have not
17 covered or stories or memories that you want to share?

18 **MS. GREENBERG:** The only other thing that I've been
19 involved with in the last couple of years is the Florida
20 event. We've been hosting that. That's very interesting in
21 that we have about 150 people. We invite those who give a
22 household gift of 10,000 or more to meet with us for just a
23 thank you event. It is not a fund-raiser. It is just a get-
24 together. And the purpose of that is so that everyone who has
25 spent their winter in Florida, and who is besieged by the

1 Florida community I might add, to give there, to remember
2 their roots and remember their connection with Detroit and
3 bond with their fellow Detroiters, and remember that this is
4 where their home is. That's our primary purpose.

5 There's no really quid pro quo. You can't really
6 see any effect for this meeting. You don't know how
7 successful you have been. However, I do think that everybody
8 has enjoyed getting together and being together. Whether or
9 not we continue it remains to be seen, but it's been
10 enjoyable.

11 **MS. GUYER:** It's important, I think, to say thank
12 you and keep people involved.

13 **MS. GREENBERG:** Yes. I think keeping people
14 together is always good.

15 **MS. GUYER:** That's wonderful. So when you look
16 back, you've been a career volunteer all of your years. What
17 do you think are some of your greatest accomplishments? What
18 were the one or two programs? Or what stands out where you
19 really feel you made a difference?

20 **MS. GREENBERG:** That's a good question. I think
21 where I've really made a difference, I've brought a lot of
22 people into Federation. I think because of my interest, I
23 have involved a lot of my friends. I think I passed on my
24 values to my children. And I think that I have influenced a
25 lot of people to have this concern and share the feeling that

1 I have for the community.

2 **MS. GUYER:** That's a beautiful legacy.

3 **MS. GREENBERG:** Well, I hope so.

4 **MS. GUYER:** And any message for children or
5 grandchildren on why it's important to be involved with the
6 community and give of your time generously?

7 **MS. GREENBERG:** Well, I feel the community has done
8 so much for us. We are long-time residents of Detroit, as I
9 told you, back to the 1890s, and Detroit has been a wonderful
10 community to us, and the Jewish community has been a wonderful
11 community to us. So I feel it's important to give back.

12 But on a larger scale, I feel that there we're an
13 endangered species as Jews, and that we must help ourselves.
14 If we don't help ourselves, who's going to help us? I think
15 it's wonderful to work for the DIA and the symphony, and I've
16 done that, too. And I've been involved in PTAs and all that
17 as well as Jewish causes. But we have to help our own,
18 because if we don't help ourselves, who will?

19 **MS. GUYER:** That is so true. And there is some
20 different passion and compelling reason for you I believe to
21 be involved Jewishly.

22 **MS. GREENBERG:** Absolutely.

23 **MS. GUYER:** So an other thoughts you would like to
24 share?

25 **MS. GREENBERG:** Well, I'm very proud of this

1 community. I think we have a terrific community and wonderful
2 leaders, and I hope we can continue to do it on the level that
3 we have up to now.

4 **MS. GUYER:** That's wonderful. And the priorities
5 you think will change as the dollars are slimmer?

6 **MS. GREENBERG:** It will have to change. I mean
7 priorities are always changing. We were involved in the
8 hospital; we're no longer involved in the hospital. Life
9 keeps changing and you have to keep evolving. I think Jewish
10 education is very important, and I think that will always be a
11 major value system here. How it's expressed may change, in
12 what way we choose to allocate our dollars may change.

13 Going back to what we did in the leadership
14 training, we always had a budget allocation meeting where we
15 would try to get people to allocate a certain amount of
16 dollars. That was always a fascinating meeting because you
17 can get ten Jews together, and they will never agree on how to
18 properly allocate the money. But I think that the strength of
19 our community is that we agree to accept the allocation that
20 the committee determines is what is right for us, and that
21 will always change. But I think the fact that by and large we
22 always support what the group does and the concept that a few
23 can make the decision for all of us and we all live by it I
24 think is what will carry us forward.

25 I remember, I stood up at a campaign meeting just a

1 few months ago, and I said, you know, I can't believe what I'm
2 going to say, but I have been active in Women's Division for
3 over 50 years, and everybody went wow, and they applauded me.
4 Oh, my gosh, I can't believe that I'm here at this point in my
5 life. It was a wonderful feeling.

6 **MS. GUYER:** And just as committed from the first
7 day.

8 **MS. GREENBERG:** I felt very good about that.

9 **MS. GUYER:** You should. You've been a role model
10 for all of us, and you continue to be, living by example. So
11 we thank you for all that you're doing and continue to do, and
12 hope you have great strength in your work.

13 Any other thoughts?

14 **MS. GREENBERG:** Well, I just want to say I love the
15 Detroit community and the Detroit Jewish community, and I just
16 hope it continues to roll on and continue to have strength and
17 go from strength to strength.

18 **MS. GUYER:** Thank you so much. Beautiful. Thank
19 you.